# Wesley's Notes on the Bible

by

*John Wesley*

# About *Wesley's Notes on the Bible* by John Wesley


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# JOHN WESLEYS NOTES

# ON THE WHOLE BIBLE

# THE NEW TESTAMENT

## by John Wesley

## PREFACE

1. For many years I have had a desire of setting down and laying together, what has occurred to my mind, either in reading, thinking, or conversation, which might assist serious persons, who have not the advantage of learning, in understanding the New Testament. But I have been continually deterred from attempting any thing of this kind, by a deep sense of my own inability: of my want, not only of learning for such a work, but much more, of experience and wisdom. This has often occasioned my laying aside the thought. And when, by much importunity, I have been prevailed upon to resume it, still I determined to delay it as long as possible, that (if it should please God) I might finish my work and my life together.

2. But having lately had a loud call from God to arise and go hence, I am convinced that if I attempt any thing of this kind at all, I must not delay any longer. My day is far spent, and (even in a natural way) the shadows of the evening come on apace. And I am the rather induced to do what little I can in this way, because I can do nothing else: being prevented, by my present weakness, from either travelling or preaching. But, blessed be God, I can still read, and write, and think. O that it may be to his glory!

3. It will be easily discerned, even from what I have said already, and much more from the notes themselves, that they were not principally designed for men of learning; who are provided with many other helps: and much less for men of long and deep experience in the ways and word of God. I desire to sit at their feet, and to learn of them. But I write chiefly for plain unlettered men, who understand only their mother tongue, and yet reverence and love the word of God, and have a desire to save their souls.

4. In order to assist these in such a measure as I am able, I design first to set down the text itself, for the most part, in the common English translation, which is, in general, (so far as I can judge) abundantly the best that I have seen. Yet I do not say it is incapable of being brought, in several places, nearer to the original. Neither will I affirm, that the Greek copies from which this translation was made, are always the most correct. And therefore I shall take the liberty, as occasion may require, to make here and there a small alteration.

5. I am very sensible this will be liable to objections: nay, to objections of quite opposite kinds. Some will probably think, the text is altered too much; and others, that it is altered too little. To the former I would observe, that I never knowingly, so much as in one place, altered it for altering sake: but there, and there only, where first, the sense was made better, stronger, clearer, or more consistent with the context: secondly, where the sense being equally good, the phrase was better or nearer the original. To the latter, who think the alterations too few, and that the translation might have been nearer still, I answer, this is true: I acknowledge it might. But what valuable end would it have answered, to multiply such trivial alterations as add neither clearness nor strength to the text? This I could not prevail upon myself to do: so much the less because there is, to my apprehension, I know not what, peculiarly solemn and venerable in the old language of our translation. And suppose this a mistaken apprehension, and an instance of human infirmity; yet, is it not an excusable infirmity, to be unwilling to part with what we have been long accustomed to; and to love the very words by which God has often conveyed strength or comfort to our souls!

6. I have endeavoured to make the notes as short as possible that the comment may not obscure or swallow up the text: and as plain as possible, in pursuance of my main design, to assist the unlearned reader: for this reason I have studiously avoided, not only all curious and critical inquiries, and all use of the learned languages, but all such methods of reasoning and modes of expression as people in common life are unacquainted with: for the same reason, as I rather endeavour to obviate than to propose and answer questions, so I purposely decline going deep into many difficulties, lest I should leave the ordinary reader behind me.

7. I once designed to write down barely what occurred, to my own mind, consulting none but the inspired writers. But no sooner was I acquainted with that great light of the Christian world, (lately gone to his reward, ) Bengelius, than I entirely changed my design, being thoroughly convinced it might be of more service to the cause of religion, were I barely to translate his Gnomon Novi Testamenti, than to write many volumes upon it. Many of his excellent notes I have therefore translated. Many more I have abridged, omitting that part which was purely critical, and giving the substance of the rest. Those various readings likewise, which he has showed to have a vast majority of ancient copies and translations on their side, I have without scruple incorporated with the text; which, after his manner, I have divided all along (though not omitting the common division into chapters and verses, which is of use on various accounts) according to the matter it contains, making a larger or smaller pause, just as the sense requires. And even this is such a help in many places, as one who has not tried it can scarcely conceive.

8. I am likewise indebted for some useful observations to Dr. Heylin's Theological Lectures: and for many more to Dr. Guyse, and to the Family Expositor of the late pious and learned Dr. Doddridge It was a doubt with me for some time, whether I should not subjoin to every note I received from them the name of the author from whom it was taken; especially considering I had transcribed some, and abridged many more, almost in the words of the author. But upon farther consideration, I resolved to name none, that nothing might divert the mind of the reader from keeping close to the point in view, and receiving what was spoken only according to its own intrinsic value.

9. I cannot flatter myself so far (to use the words of one of the above-named writers) as to imagine that I have fallen into no mistakes in a work of so great difficulty. But my own conscience acquits me of having designedly misrepresented any single passage of Scripture, or of having written one line with a purpose of inflaming the hearts of Christians against each other. God forbid that I

should make the words of the most gentle and benevolent Jesus a vehicle to convey such poison. Would to God that all the party names, and unscriptural phrases and forms, which have divided the Christian world, were forgot: and that we might all agree to sit down together, as humble, loving disciples, at the feet of our common Master, to hear his word, to imbibe his Spirit, and to transcribe his life in our own!

10. Concerning the Scriptures in general, it may be observed, the word of the living God, which directed the first patriarchs also, was, in the time of Moses, committed to writing. To this were added, in several succeeding generations, the inspired writings of the other prophets. Afterward, what the Son of God preached, and the Holy Ghost spake by the apostles, the apostles and evangelists wrote. - This is what we now style the Holy Scripture: this is that word of God which remaineth for ever: of which, though heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle shall not pass away. The Scripture therefore of the Old and New Testament, is a most solid and precious system of Divine truth. Every part thereof is worthy of God; and all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess. It is the fountain of heavenly wisdom, which they who are able to taste, prefer to all writings of men, however wise, or learned, or holy.

11. An exact knowledge of the truth was accompanied in the inspired writers with an exactly regular series of arguments, a precise expression of their meaning, and a genuine vigour of suitable affections. The chain of argument in each book is briefly exhibited in the table prefixed to it, which contains also the sum thereof, and may be of more use than prefixing the argument to each chapter; the division of the New Testament into chapters having been made in the dark ages, and very incorrectly; often separating things that are closely joined, and joining those that are entirely distinct from each other.

12. In the language of the sacred writings, we may observe the utmost depth, together with the utmost ease. All the elegancies of human composures sink into nothing before it: God speaks not as man, but as God. His thoughts are very deep: and thence his words are of inexhaustible virtue. And the language of his messengers also is exact in the highest degree: for the words which were given them accurately answered the impression made upon their minds: and hence Luther says, "Divinity is nothing but a grammar of the language of the Holy Ghost." To understand this thoroughly, we should observe the emphasis which lies on every word; the holy affections expressed thereby, and the tempers shown by every writer. But how little are these, the latter especially, regarded? Though they are wonderfully diffused through the whole New Testament, and are in truth a continued commendation of him who acts, or speaks, or writes.

13. The New Testament is all those sacred writings in which the New Testament or covenant is described. The former part of this contains the writings of the evangelists and apostles: the latter, the Revelation of Jesus Christ. In the former is, first, the history of Jesus Christ, from his coming in the flesh to his ascension into heaven; then the institution and history of the Christian Church, from the time of his ascension. The Revelation delivers what is to be, with regard to Christ, the Church, and the universe, till the consummation of all things. BRISTOL HOT-WELLS, January 4, 1754.

# NOTES ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

THE Gospel (that is, good tidings) means a book containing the good tidings of our salvation by Jesus Christ. St. Mark in his Gospel presupposes that of St. Matthew, and supplies what is omitted therein. St. Luke supplies what is omitted by both the former: St. John what is omitted by all the three. St. Matthew particularly points out the fulfilling of the prophecies for the conviction of the Jews. St. Mark wrote a short compendium, and yet added many remarkable circumstances omitted by St. Matthew, particularly with regard to the apostles, immediately after they were called. St. Luke treated principally of the office of Christ, and mostly in a historical manner. St. John refuted those who denied his Godhead: each choosing to treat more largely on those things, which most suited the time when, and the persons to whom, he wrote.

The Gospel according to St. Matthew contains,

I. The birth of Christ, and what presently followed it
- a. His genealogy Chap i. 1-17
- b. His birth 18-25
- c. The coming of the wise men ii, 1-12
- d. His flight into Egypt, and return 13-23

II. The introduction
- a. John the Baptist iii, 1-12
- b. The baptism of Christ 13-17
- c. His temptation and victory iv, 1-11

III. The actions and words by which Jesus proved he was the Christ
- a. At Capernaum 12-16

  Where we may observe
  1. His preaching 17
  2. Calling Andrew and Peter, James and John 18-22
  3. Preaching and healing, 23-25
  4. Sermon on the mount v, vi, vii
  5. Healing the leper viii, 1-4
  6. The centurion's servant 5-13
  7. Peter's mother-in-law 14-15
  8. Many that were sick 16-17
- b. In his journey (wherein he admonished two that offered to follow him) over the sea.

  Here we may observe
  1. His dominion over the winds and seas 18-27
  2. The devils passing from the men into the swine 28-34
- c. At Capernaum again Here, ix,
  1. He cures the paralytic 1-8
  2. Calls Matthew, and defends his conversing with publicans and sinners 9-13
  3. Answers concerning fasting 14-17
  4. Raises Jairus's daughter (after curing the issue of blood). 18-26
  5. Gives sight to two blind men 27-31
  6. Dispossesses the demoniac 32-34

7. Goes through the cities, and directs to pray for labourers. 35-38
8. Sends and instructs labourers, and preaches himself. x, 1; xi, 1
9. Answers the message of John 2-6
10. Commends John, reproves the unbelieving cities, invites the weary 7-30
11. Defends the disciples' plucking the corn Chap. xii, 1-8
12. Heals the withered hand 9-13
13. Retires from the Pharisees lying in wait 14-21
14. Cures the demoniac, while the people wonder, and the Pharisees blaspheming, are refuted 22-37
15. Reproves them that require a sign 38-45
16. Declares who are his relations, and 46-50
17. Teaches by parables xiii, 1-52

d. At Nazareth 53-58

e. In other places

1. Herod having killed John, doubts concerning Jesus. Jesus retiring, is sought for by the people xiv, 1-13
2. He heals the sick, and feeds five thousand 14-21
3. His voyage and miracles in the land of Gennesaret 22-36
4. Unwashen hands xv, 1-20
5. The woman of Canaan 21-28
6. Many sick healed 29-31
7. Four thousand fed 32-38
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## ST. MATTHEW

### I

1. The book of the generation of Jesus Christ - That is, strictly speaking, the account of his birth and genealogy. This title therefore properly relates to the verses that immediately follow: but as it sometimes signifies the history of a person, in that sense it may belong to the whole book. If there were any difficulties in this genealogy, or that given by St. Luke, which could not easily be removed, they would rather affect the Jewish tables, than the credit of the evangelists: for they act only as historians setting down these genealogies, as they stood in those public and allowed records. Therefore they were to take them as they found them. Nor was it needful they should correct the mistakes, if there were any. For these accounts sufficiently answer the end for which they are recited. They unquestionably prove the grand point in view, that Jesus was of the family from which the promised seed was to come. And they had more weight with the Jews for this purpose, than if alterations had been made by inspiration itself. For such alterations would have occasioned endless disputes between them and the disciples of our Lord. The son of David, the son of Abraham - He is so called, because to these he was more peculiarly promised; and of these it was often foretold the Messiah should spring. Luke iii, 31.

3. Of Thamar - St. Matthew adds the names of those women also, that were remarkable in the sacred history.

4. Naasson - Who was prince of the tribe of Judah, when the Israelites entered into Canaan.

5. Obed begat Jesse - The providence of God was peculiarly shown in this, that Salmon, Boaz, and Obed, must each of them have been near a hundred years old, at the birth of his son here recorded.

6. David the king - Particularly mentioned under this character, because his throne is given to the Messiah.

8. Jehoram begat Uzziah - Jehoahaz, Joash, and Amaziah coming between. So that he begat him mediately, as Christ is mediately the son of David and of Abraham. So the progeny of Hezekiah, after many generations, are called the sons that should issue from him, which he should beget, Isaiah xxxix, 7.

11. Josiah begat Jeconiah - Mediately, Jehoiakim coming between. And his brethren - That is, his uncles. The Jews term all kinsmen brethren. About the time they were carried away - Which was a little after the birth of Jeconiah.

16. The husband of Mary - Jesus was generally believed to be the son of Joseph. It was needful for all who believed this, to know, that Joseph was sprung from David. Otherwise they would not allow Jesus to be the Christ. Jesus, who is called Christ - The name Jesus respects chiefly the promise of blessing made to Abraham: the name Christ, the promise of the Messiah's kingdom, which was made to David. It may be farther observed, that the word Christ in Greek, and Messiah in Hebrews, signify anointed, and imply the prophetic, priestly, and royal characters, which were to meet in the Messiah. Among the Jews, anointing was the ceremony whereby prophets, priests, and kings were initiated into those offices. And if we look into ourselves, we shall find a want of Christ in all these respects. We are by nature at a distance from God, alienated from him, and incapable of a free access to him. Hence we want a mediator, an intercessor, in a word, a Christ, in his priestly office. This regards our state with respect to God. And with respect to ourselves, we find a total darkness, blindness, ignorance of God, and the things of God. Now here we want Christ in his prophetic office, to enlighten our minds, and teach us the whole will of God. We find also within us a strange misrule of appetites and passions. For these we want Christ in his royal character, to reign in our hearts, and subdue all things to himself.

17. So all the generations - Observe, in order to complete the three fourteens, David ends the first fourteen, and begins the second (which reaches to the captivity) and Jesus ends the third fourteen. When we survey such a series of generations, it is a natural and obvious reflection, how like the leaves of a tree one passeth away, and another cometh! Yet the earth still abideth. And with it the goodness of the Lord which runs from generation to generation, the common hope of parents and children. Of those who formerly lived upon earth, and perhaps made the most conspicuous figure, how many are there whose names are perished with them? How many, of whom only the names are remaining? Thus are we likewise passing away! And thus shall we shortly be forgotten! Happy are we, if, while we are forgotten by men, we are remembered by God! If our names, lost on earth, are at length found written in the book of life!

19. A just man - A strict observer of the law: therefore not thinking it right to keep her.

21. Jesus - That is, a Saviour. It is the same name with Joshua (who was a type of him) which properly signifies, The Lord, Salvation. His people - Israel. And all the Israel of God.

23. They shall call his name Emmanuel - To be called, only means, according to the Hebrews manner of speaking, that the person spoken of shall really and effectually be what he is called, and actually fulfil that title. Thus, Unto us a child is born - and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace - That is, he shall be all these, though not so much nominally, as really, and in effect. And thus was he called Emmanuel; which was no common name of Christ, but points out his nature and office; as he is God incarnate, and dwells by his Spirit in the hearts of his people. It is observable, the words in Isaiah are, Thou (namely, his mother) shalt call; but here, They - that is, all his people, shall call - shall acknowledge him to be Emmanuel, God with us. Which being interpreted - This is a clear proof that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel in Greek, and not in Hebrew. Isaiah vii, 14.

25. He knew her not, till after she had brought forth - It cannot be inferred from hence, that he knew her afterward: no more than it can be inferred from that expression, 2 Sam. vi, 23, Michal had no child till the day of her death, that she had children afterward. Nor do the words that follow, the first-born son, alter the case. For there are abundance of places, wherein the term first born is used, though there were no subsequent children. Luke ii, 7.

**II**

1. Bethlehem of Judea - There was another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulon. In the days of Herod - commonly called Herod the Great, born at Ascalon. The scepter was now on the point of departing from Judah. Among his sons were Archelaus, mentioned ver. 22; Herod Antipas, mentioned chap. xiv, and Philip, mentioned Luke iii, 19. Herod Agrippa, mentioned Acts xii, 1; &c., was his grandson. Wise men - The first fruits of the Gentiles. Probably they were Gentile philosophers, who, through the Divine assistance, had improved their knowledge of nature, as a means of leading to the knowledge of the one true God. Nor is it unreasonable to suppose, that God had favoured them with some extraordinary Revelations of himself, as he did Melchisedec, Job, and several others, who were not of the family of Abraham; to which he never intended absolutely to confine his favours. The title given them in the original was anciently given to all philosophers, or men of learning; those particularly who were curious in examining the works of nature, and observing the motions of the heavenly bodies. From the east - So Arabia is frequently called in Scripture. It lay to the east of Judea, and was famous for gold, frankincense, and myrrh. We have seen his star - Undoubtedly they had before heard Balaam's prophecy. And probably when they saw this unusual star, it was revealed to them that this prophecy was fulfilled. In the east - That is, while we were in the east.

2. To do him homage - To pay him that honour, by bowing to the earth before him, which the eastern nations used to pay to their monarchs.

4. The chief priests - That is, not only the high priest and his deputy, with those who formerly had born that office: but also the chief man in each of those twenty-four courses, into which the body of priests were divided, 1 Chron. xxiv, 6-19. The scribes were those whose peculiar business it was to explain the Scriptures to the people. They were the public preachers, or expounders of the law of Moses. Whence the chief of them were called doctors of the law.

6. Thou art in nowise the least among the princes of Judah - That is, among the cities belonging to the princes or heads of thousands in Judah. When this and several other quotations from the Old Testament are compared with the original, it plainly appears, the apostles did not always think it necessary exactly to transcribe the passages they cited, but contented themselves with giving the general sense, though with some diversity of language. The words of Micah, which we render, Though thou be little, may be rendered, Art thou little? And then the difference which seems to be here between the prophet and the evangelist vanishes away. Micah v, 2.

8. And if ye find him, bring me word - Probably Herod did not believe he was born; otherwise would not so suspicious a prince have tried to make sure work at once?

10. Seeing the star - Standing over where the child was.

11. They presented to him gifts - It was customary to offer some present to any eminent person whom they visited. And so it is, as travelers observe, in the eastern countries to this day. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh - Probably these were the best things their country afforded; and the presents ordinarily made to great persons. This was a most seasonable, providential assistance for a long and expensive journey into Egypt, a country where they were entirely strangers, and were to stay for a considerable time.

15. That it might be fulfilled - That is, whereby was fulfilled. The original word frequently signifies, not the design of an action, but barely the consequence or event of it. Which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet - on another occasion: Out of Egypt have I called my Son - which was

now fulfilled as it were anew; Christ being in a far higher sense the Son of God than Israel, of whom the words were originally spoken. Hosea xi, 1.

16. Then Herod, seeing that he was deluded by the wise men - So did his pride teach him to regard this action, as if it were intended to expose him to the derision of his subjects. Sending forth - a party of soldiers: In all the confines thereof - In all the neighbouring places, of which Rama was one.

17. Then was fulfilled - A passage of Scripture, whether prophetic, historical, or poetical, is in the language of the New Testament fulfilled, when an event happens to which it may with great propriety be accommodated.

18. Rachel weeping for her children - The Benjamites, who inhabited Rama, sprung from her. She was buried near this place; and is here beautifully represented risen, as it were out of her grave, and bewailing her lost children. Because they are not - that is, are dead. The preservation of Jesus from this destruction, may be considered as a figure of God's care over his children in their greatest danger. God does not often, as he easily could, cut off their persecutors at a stroke. But he provides a hiding place for his people, and by methods not less effectual, though less pompous, preserves them from being swept away, even when the enemy comes in like a flood. Jer. xxxi, 15.

22. He was afraid to go thither - into Judea; and so turned aside into the region of Galilee - a part of the land of Israel not under the jurisdiction of Archelaus.

23. He came and dwelt in Nazareth - (where he had dwelt before he went to Bethlehem) a place contemptible to a proverb. So that hereby was fulfilled what has been spoken in effect by several of the prophets, (though by none of them in express words, ) He shall be called a Nazarene - that is, he shall be despised and rejected, shall be a mark of public contempt and reproach.

## III

1. In those days - that is, while Jesus dwelt there. In the wilderness of Judea - This was a wilderness properly so called, a wild, barren, desolate place as was that also where our Lord was tempted. But, generally speaking, a wilderness in the New Testament means only a common, or less cultivated place, in opposition to pasture and arable land. Mark i, 1; Luke iii, 1.

2. The kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of God, are but two phrases for the same thing. They mean, not barely a future happy state, in heaven, but a state to be enjoyed on earth: the proper disposition for the glory of heaven, rather than the possession of it. Is at hand - As if he had said, God is about to erect that kingdom, spoken of by Daniel, Dan. ii, 44; vii, 13, 14; the kingdom of the God of heaven. It properly signifies here, the Gospel dispensation, in which subjects were to be gathered to God by his Son, and a society to be formed, which was to subsist first on earth, and afterward with God in glory. In some places of Scripture, the phrase more particularly denotes the state of it on earth: in, others, it signifies only the state of glory: but it generally includes both. The Jews understood it of a temporal kingdom, the seat of which they supposed would be Jerusalem; and the expected sovereign of this kingdom they learned from Daniel to call the Son of man. Both John the Baptist and Christ took up that phrase, the kingdom of heaven, as they found it, and gradually taught the Jews (though greatly unwilling to learn) to understand it right. The very demand

of repentance, as previous to it, showed it was a spiritual kingdom, and that no wicked man, how politic, brave, or learned soever, could possibly be a subject of it.

3. The way of the Lord - Of Christ. Make his paths straight - By removing every thing which might prove a hindrance to his gracious appearance. Isaiah xl, 3.

4. John had his raiment of camels' hair - Coarse and rough, suiting his character and doctrine. A leathern girdle - Like Elijah, in whose spirit and power he came. His food was locusts and wild honey - Locusts are ranked among clean meats, Lev. xi, 22. But these were not always to be had. So in default of those, he fed on wild honey.

6. Confessing their sins - Of their own accord; freely and openly. Such prodigious numbers could hardly be baptized by immerging their whole bodies under water: nor can we think they were provided with change of raiment for it, which was scarcely practicable for such vast multitudes. And yet they could not be immerged naked with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel with safety. It seems, therefore, that they stood in ranks on the edge of the river, and that John, passing along before them, cast water on their heads or faces, by which means he might baptize many thousands in a day. And this way most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them with the Holy Ghost and with fire, which John spoke of, as prefigured by his baptizing with water, and which was eminently fulfilled, when the Holy Ghost sat upon the disciples in the appearance of tongues, or flames of fire.

7. The Pharisees were a very ancient sect among the Jews. They took their name from a Hebrew word, which signifies to separate, because they separated themselves from all other men. They were outwardly strict observers of the law, fasted often, made long prayers, rigorously kept the Sabbath, and paid all tithe, even of mint, anise, and cummin. Hence they were in high esteem among the people. But inwardly, they were full of pride and hypocrisy. The Sadducees were another sect among the Jews, only not so considerable as the Pharisees. They denied the existence of angels, and the immortality of the soul, and by consequence the resurrection of the dead. Ye brood of vipers - In like manner, the crafty Herod is styled a fox, and persons of insidious, ravenous, profane, or sensual dispositions, are named respectively by him who saw their hearts, serpents, dogs, wolves, and swine; terms which are not the random language of passion, but a judicious designation of the persons meant by them. For it was fitting such men should be marked out, either for a caution to others, or a warning to themselves.

8. Repentance is of two sorts; that which is termed legal, and that which is styled evangelical repentance. The former (which is the same that is spoken of here) is a thorough conviction of sin. The latter is a change of heart (and consequently of life) from all sin to all holiness.

9. And say not confidently - The word in the original, vulgarly rendered, Think not, seems here, and in many places, not to diminish, but rather add to the force of the word with which it is joined. We have Abraham to our father - It is almost incredible, how great the presumption of the Jews was on this their relation to Abraham. One of their famous sayings was, "Abraham sits near the gates of hell, and suffers no Israelite to go down into it." I say unto you - This preface always denotes the importance of what follows. Of these stones - Probably pointing to those which lay before them.

10. But the axe also already lieth - That is, there is no room for such idle pretenses. Speedy execution is determined against all that do not repent. The comparison seems to be taken from a woodman that has laid down his axe to put off his coat, and then immediately goes to work to cut

down the tree. This refers to the wrath to come in verse 7. Is hewn down - Instantly, without farther delay.

11. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire - He shall fill you with the Holy Ghost, inflaming your hearts with that fire of love, which many waters cannot quench. And this was done, even with a visible appearance as of fire, on the day of pentecost.

12. Whose fan - That is, the word of the Gospel. His floor - That is, his Church, which is now covered with a mixture of wheat and chaff. He will gather the wheat into the garner - Will lay up those who are truly good in heaven.

13. Mark i, 9; Luke iii, 21

15. It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness - It becometh every messenger of God to observe all his righteous ordinances. But the particular meaning of our Lord seems to be, that it becometh us to do (me to receive baptism, and you to administer it) in order to fulfil, that is, that I may fully perform every part of the righteous law of God, and the commission he hath given me.

16. And Jesus being baptized - Let our Lord's submitting to baptism teach us a holy exactness in the observance of those institutions which owe their obligation merely to a Divine command. Surely thus it becometh all his followers to fulfil all righteousness. Jesus had no sin to wash away. And yet he was baptized. And God owned his ordinance, so as to make it the season of pouring forth the Holy Spirit upon him. And where can we expect this sacred effusion, but in an humble attendance on Divine appointments? Lo, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God - St. Luke adds, in a bodily form - Probably in a glorious appearance of fire, perhaps in the shape of a dove, descending with a hovering motion, till it rested upon him. This was a visible token of those secret operations of the blessed Spirit, by which he was anointed in a peculiar manner; and abundantly fitted for his public work.

17. And lo, a voice - We have here a glorious manifestation of the ever - blessed Trinity: the Father speaking from heaven, the Son spoken to, the Holy Ghost descending upon him. In whom I delight - What an encomium is this! How poor to this are all other kinds of praise! To be the pleasure, the delight of God, this is praise indeed: this is true glory: this is the highest, the brightest light, that virtue can appear in.

## IV

1. Then - After this glorious evidence of his Father's love, he was completely armed for the combat. Thus after the clearest light and the strongest consolation, let us expect the sharpest temptations. By the Spirit - Probably through a strong inward impulse. Mark i, 12; Luke iv, 1.

2. Having fasted - Whereby doubtless he received more abundant spiritual strength from God. Forty days and forty nights - As did Moses, the giver of the law, and Elijah, the great restorer of it. He was afterward hungry - And so prepared for the first temptation.

3. Coming to him - In a visible form; probably in a human shape, as one that desired to inquire farther into the evidences of his being the Messiah.

4. It is written - Thus Christ answered, and thus we may answer all the suggestions of the devil. By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God - That is, by whatever God commands to

sustain him. Therefore it is not needful I should work a miracle to procure bread, without any intimation of my Father's will. Deut. viii, 3.

5. The holy city - So Jerusalem was commonly called, being the place God had peculiarly chosen for himself. On the battlement of the temple - Probably over the king's gallery, which was of such a prodigious height, that no one could look down from the top of it without making himself giddy.

6. In their hands - That is, with great care. Psalm xci, 11, 12.

7. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God - By requiring farther evidence of what he hath already made sufficiently plain. Deut. vi, 16.

8. Showeth him all the kingdoms of the world - In a kind of visionary representation.

9. If thou wilt fall down and worship me - Here Satan clearly shows who he was. Accordingly Christ answering this suggestion, calls him by his own name, which he had not done before.

10. Get thee hence, Satan - Not, get thee behind me, that is, into thy proper place; as he said on a quite different occasion to Peter, speaking what was not expedient. Deut. vi, 13.

11. Angels came and waited upon him - Both to supply him with food, and to congratulate his victory.

12. He retired into Galilee - This journey was not immediately after his temptation. He first went from Judea into Galilee, John i, 43; ii, 1. Then into Judea again, and celebrated the passover at Jerusalem, John ii, 13. He baptized in Judea while John was baptizing at Enon, John iii, 22, 23. All this time John was at liberty, John iii, 24. But the Pharisees being offended, John iv, 1; and John put in prison, he then took this journey into Galilee. Mark i, 14.

13. Leaving Nazareth - Namely, when they had wholly rejected his word, and even attempted to kill him, Luke iv, 29.

15. Galilee of the Gentiles - That part of Galilee which lay beyond Jordan was so called, because it was in a great measure inhabited by Gentiles, that is, heathens. Isaiah ix, 1, 2.

16. Here is a beautiful gradation, first, they walked, then they sat in darkness, and lastly, in the region of the shadow of death.

17. From that time Jesus began to preach - He had preached before, both to Jews and Samaritans, John iv, 41, 45. But from this time begin his solemn stated preaching. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand - Although it is the peculiar business of Christ to establish the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men, yet it is observable, he begins his preaching in the same words with John the Baptist: because the repentance which John taught still was, and ever will be, the necessary preparation for that inward kingdom. But that phrase is not only used with regard to individuals in whom it is to be established, but also with regard to the Christian Church, the whole body of believers. In the former sense it is opposed to repentance; in the latter the Mosaic dispensation.

18. Mark i, 16; Luke v, 1.

23. The Gospel of the kingdom - The Gospel, that is, the joyous message, is the proper name of our religion: as will be amply verified in all who earnestly and perseveringly embrace it.

24. Through all Syria - The whole province, of which the Jewish country was only a small part. And demoniacs - Men possessed with devils: and lunatics, and paralytics - Men ill of the palsy, whose cases were of all others most deplorable and most helpless.

25. Decapolis - A tract of land on the east side of the sea of Galilee, in which were ten cities near each other.

## V

1. And seeing the multitudes - At some distance, as they were coming to him from every quarter. He went up into the mountain - Which was near: where there was room for them all. His disciples - not only his twelve disciples, but all who desired to learn of him.

2. And he opened his mouth - A phrase which always denotes a set and solemn discourse; and taught them - To bless men; to make men happy, was the great business for which our Lord came into the world. And accordingly he here pronounces eight blessings together, annexing them to so many steps in Christianity. Knowing that happiness is our common aim, and that an innate instinct continually urges us to the pursuit of it, he in the kindest manner applies to that instinct, and directs it to its proper object. Though all men desire, yet few attain, happiness, because they seek it where it is not to be found. Our Lord therefore begins his Divine institution, which is the complete art of happiness, by laying down before all that have ears to hear, the true and only true method of acquiring it. Observe the benevolent condescension of our Lord. He seems, as it were, to lay aside his supreme authority as our legislator, that he may the better act the part of: our friend and saviour. Instead of using the lofty style, in positive commands, he, in a more gentle and engaging way, insinuates his will and our duty, by pronouncing those happy who comply with it.

3. Happy are the poor - In the following discourse there is,

1. A sweet invitation to true holiness and happiness, ver. 3-12.
2. A persuasive to impart it to others, ver. 13-16.
3. A description of true Christian holiness, ver. 17; chap.vii, 12. (in which it is easy to observe, the latter part exactly answers the former.)
4. The conclusion: giving a sure mark of the true way, warning against false prophets, exhorting to follow after holiness. The poor in spirit - They who are unfeignedly penitent, they who are truly convinced of sin; who see and feel the state they are in by nature, being deeply sensible of their sinfulness, guiltiness, helplessness. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven - The present inward kingdom: righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, as well as the eternal kingdom, if they endure to the end. Luke vi, 20.

4. They that mourn - Either for their own sins, or for other men's, and are steadily and habitually serious. They shall be comforted - More solidly and deeply even in this world, and eternally in heaven.

5. Happy are the meek - They that hold all their passions and affections evenly balanced. They shall inherit the earth - They shall have all things really necessary for life and godliness. They shall enjoy whatever portion God hath given them here, and shall hereafter possess the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

6. They that hunger and thirst after righteousness - After the holiness here described. They shall be satisfied with it.

7. The merciful - The tender-hearted: they who love all men as themselves: They shall obtain mercy - Whatever mercy therefore we desire from God, the same let us show to our brethren. He will repay us a thousand fold, the love we bear to any for his sake.

8. The pure in heart - The sanctified: they who love God with all their hearts. They shall see God - In all things here; hereafter in glory.

9. The peace makers - They that out of love to God and man do all possible good to all men. Peace in the Scripture sense implies all blessings temporal and eternal. They shall be called the children of God - Shall be acknowledged such by God and man. One would imagine a person of this amiable temper and behaviour would be the darling of mankind. But our Lord well knew it would not be so, as long as Satan was the prince of this world. He therefore warns them before of the treatment all were to expect, who were determined thus to tread in his steps, by immediately subjoining, Happy are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Through this whole discourse we cannot but observe the most exact method which can possibly be conceived. Every paragraph, every sentence, is closely connected both with that which precedes, and that which follows it. And is not this the pattern for every Christian preacher? If any then are able to follow it without any premeditation, well: if not, let them not dare to preach without it. No rhapsody, no incoherency, whether the things spoken be true or false, comes of the Spirit of Christ.

10. For righteousness' sake - That is, because they have, or follow after, the righteousness here described. He that is truly a righteous man, he that mourns, and he that is pure in heart, yea, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution, 2 Tim. iii, 12. The world will always say, Away with such fellows from the earth. They are made to reprove our thoughts. They are grievous to us even to behold. Their lives are not like other men's; their ways are of another fashion.

11. Revile - When present: say all evil - When you are absent.

12. Your reward - Even over and above the happiness that naturally and directly results from holiness.

13. Ye - Not the apostles, not ministers only; but all ye who are thus holy, are the salt of the earth - Are to season others. Mark ix, 50; Luke xiv, 34.

14. Ye are the light of the world - If ye are thus holy, you can no more be hid than the sun in the firmament: no more than a city on a mountain - Probably pointing to that on the brow of the opposite hill.

15. Nay, the very design of God in giving you this light was, that it might shine. Mark iv, 21; Luke viii, 16; xi, 33.

16. That they may see - and glorify - That is, that seeing your good works, they may be moved to love and serve God likewise.

17. Think not - Do not imagine, fear, hope, that I am come - Like your teachers, to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy - The moral law, but to fulfil - To establish, illustrate, and explain its highest meaning, both by my life and doctrine.

18. Till all things shall be effected - Which it either requires or foretells. For the law has its effect, when the rewards are given, and the punishments annexed to it inflicted, as well as when its precepts are obeyed. Luke xvi, 17; xxi, 33.

19. One of the least - So accounted by men; and shall teach - Either by word or example; shall be the least - That is, shall have no part therein.

20. The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees - Described in the sequel of this discourse.

21. Ye have heard - From the scribes reciting the law; Thou shalt do no murder - And they interpreted this, as all the other commandments, barely of the outward act. The judgement - The Jews had in every city a court of twenty-three men, who could sentence a criminal to be strangled. But the sanhedrim only (the great council which sat at Jerusalem, consisting of seventy-two men, ) could sentence to the more terrible death of stoning. That was called the judgment, this the council. Exod. xx, 13.

22. But I say unto you - Which of the prophets ever spake thus? Their language is, Thus saith the Lord. Who hath authority to use this language, but the one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Whosoever is angry with his brother - Some copies add, without a cause - But this is utterly foreign to the whole scope and tenor of our Lord's discourse. If he had only forbidden the being angry without a cause, there was no manner of need of that solemn declaration, I say unto you; for the scribes and Pharisees themselves said as much as this. Even they taught, men ought not to be angry without a cause. So that this righteousness does not exceed theirs. But Christ teaches, that we ought not, for any cause, to be so angry as to call any man Raca, or fool. We ought not, for any cause, to be angry at the person of the sinner, but at his sins only. Happy world, were this plain and necessary distinction thoroughly understood, remembered, practiced! Raca means, a silly man, a trifler. Whosoever shall say, Thou fool - Shall revile, or seriously reproach any man. Our Lord specified three degrees of murder, each liable to a sorer punishment than the other: not indeed from men, but from God. Hell fire - In the valley of Hinnom (whence the word in the original is taken) the children were used to be burnt alive to Moloch. It was afterward made a receptacle for the filth of the city, where continual fires were kept to consume it. And it is probable, if any criminals were burnt alive, it was in this accursed and horrible place. Therefore both as to its former and latter state, it was a fit emblem of hell. It must here signify a degree of future punishment, as much more dreadful than those incurred in the two former cases, as burning alive is more dreadful than either strangling or stoning.

23. Thy brother hath aught against thee - On any of the preceding accounts: for any unkind thought or word: any that did not spring from love.

24. Leaving thy gift, go - For neither thy gift nor thy prayer will atone for thy want of love: but this will make them both an abomination before God.

25. Agree with thine adversary - With any against whom thou hast thus offended: while thou art in the way - Instantly, on the spot; before you part. Lest the adversary deliver thee to the judge - Lest he commit his cause to God. Luke xii, 58.

26. Till thou hast paid the last farthing - That is, for ever, since thou canst never do this. What has been hitherto said refers to meekness: what follows, to purity of heart.

27. Thou shalt not commit adultery - And this, as well as the sixth commandment, the scribes and Pharisees interpreted barely of the outward act. Exod. xx, 14.

29, 30. If a person as dear as a right eye, or as useful as a right hand, cause thee thus to offend, though but in heart. Perhaps here may be an instance of a kind of transposition which is frequently found in the sacred writings: so that the 29th verse may refer to 27, 28; and the 30th to ver. 21, 22. As if he had said, Part with any thing, however dear to you, or otherwise useful, if you cannot avoid sin while you keep it. Even cut off your right hand, if you are of so passionate a temper, that you cannot otherwise be restrained from hurting your brother. Pull out your eyes, if you can no otherwise be restrained from lusting after women. Chap. xviii, 8; Mark ix, 43.

31. Let him give her a writing of divorce - Which the scribes and Pharisees allowed men to do on any trifling occasion. Deut. xxiv, 1; Matt. xix, 7; Mark x, 2; Luke xvi, 18.

32. Causeth her to commit adultery - If she marry again.

33. Our Lord here refers to the promise made to the pure in heart of seeing God in all things, and points out a false doctrine of the scribes, which arose from their not thus seeing God. What he forbids is, the swearing at all, 1, by any creature, 2, in our ordinary conversation: both of which the scribes and Pharisees taught to be perfectly innocent. Exod. xx, 7.

36. For thou canst not make one hair white or black - Whereby it appears, that this also is not thine but God's.

37. Let your conversation be yea, yea; nay, nay - That is, in your common discourse, barely affirm or deny.

38. Ye have heard - Our Lord proceeds to enforce such meekness and love on those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake (which he pursues to the end of the chapter) as were utterly unknown to the scribes and Pharisees. It hath been said - In the law, as a direction to Judges, in ease of violent and barbarous assaults. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth - And this has been interpreted, as encouraging bitter and rigorous revenge. Deut. xix, 21.

39. But I say unto you, that ye resist not the evil man - Thus; the Greek word translated resist signifies standing in battle array, striving for victory. If a man smite thee on the right cheek - Return not evil for evil: yea, turn to him the other - Rather than revenge thyself.

40, 41. Where the damage is not great, choose rather to suffer it, though possibly it may on that account be repeated, than to demand an eye for an eye, to enter into a rigorous prosecution of the offender. The meaning of the whole passage seems to be, rather than return evil for evil, when the wrong is purely personal, submit to one bodily wrong after another, give up one part of your goods after another, submit to one instance of compulsion after another. That the words are not literally to be understood, appears from the behaviour of our Lord himself, John xviii, 22,

42. Thus much for your behaviour toward the violent. As for those who use milder methods, Give to him that asketh thee - Give and lend to any so far, (but no further, for God never contradicts himself) as is consistent with thy engagements to thy creditors, thy family, and the household of faith. Luke vi, 30.

43. Thou shalt love thy neighbour; And hate thy enemy - God spoke the former part; the scribes added the latter. Lev. xix, 18.

44. Bless them that curse you - Speak all the good you can to and of them, who speak all evil to and of you. Repay love in thought, word, and deed, to those who hate you, and show it both in word and deed. Luke vi, 27, 35.

45. That ye may be the children - That is, that ye may continue and appear such before men and angels. For he maketh his sun to rise - He gives them such blessings as they will receive at his hands. Spiritual blessings they will not receive.

46. The publicans - were officers of the revenue, farmers, or receivers of the public money: men employed by the Roman to gather the taxes and customs, which they exacted of the nations they had conquered. These were generally odious for their extortion and oppression, and were reckoned by the Jews as the very scum of the earth.

47. And if ye salute your friends only - Our Lord probably glances at those prejudices, which different sects had against each other, and intimates, that he would not have his followers imbibe that narrow spirit. Would to God this had been more attended to among the unhappy divisions and subdivisions, into which his Church has been crumbled! And that we might at least advance so far, as cordially to embrace our brethren in Christ, of whatever party or denomination they are!

48. Therefore ye shall be perfect; as your Father who is in heaven is perfect - So the original runs, referring to all that holiness which is described in the foregoing verses, which our Lord in the beginning of the chapter recommends as happiness, and in the close of it as perfection. And how wise and gracious is this, to sum up, and, as it were, seal all his commandments with a promise! Even the proper promise of the Gospel! That he will put those laws in our minds, and write them

in our hearts! He well knew how ready our unbelief would be to cry out, this is impossible! And therefore stakes upon it all the power, truth, and faithfulness of him to whom all things are possible.

## VI

1. In the foregoing chapter our Lord particularly described the nature of inward holiness. In this he describes that purity of intention without which none of our outward actions are holy. This chapter contains four parts,

1. The right intention and manner of giving alms, ver. 1-4.
2. The right intention, manner, form, and prerequisites of prayer, ver. 5-15.
3. The right intention, and manner of fasting, ver. 16-18.
4. The necessity of a pure intention in all things, unmixed either with the desire of riches, or worldly care, and fear of want, ver. 19-34. This verse is a general caution against vain glory, in any of our good works: All these are here summed up together, in the comprehensive word righteousness. This general caution our Lord applies in the sequel to the three principal branches of it, relating to our neighbour, ver. 2-iv, to God, ver. 5, vi, and to ourselves, ver. 16-18. To be seen - Barely the being seen, while we are doing any of these things, is a circumstance purely indifferent. But the doing them with this view, to be seen and admired, this is what our Lord condemns.

2. As the hypocrites do - Many of the scribes and Pharisees did this, under a pretense of calling the poor together. They have their reward - All they will have; for they shall have none from God.

3. Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth - A proverbial expression for doing a thing secretly. Do it as secretly as is consistent,

1. With the doing it at all.
2. With the doing it in the most effectual manner.

5. The synagogues - These were properly the places where the people assembled for public prayer, and hearing the Scriptures read and expounded. They were in every city from the time of the Babylonish captivity, and had service in them thrice a day on three days in the week. In every synagogue was a council of grave and wise persons, over whom was a president, called the ruler of the synagogue. But the word here, as well as in many other texts, signifies any place of public concourse.

6. Enter into thy closet - That is, do it with as much secrecy as thou canst.

7. Use not vain repetitions - To repeat any words without meaning them, is certainly a vain repetition. Therefore we should be extremely careful in all our prayers to mean what we say; and to say only what we mean from the bottom of our hearts. The vain and heathenish repetitions which we are here warned against, are most dangerous, and yet very common; which is a principal cause why so many, who still profess religion, are a disgrace to it. Indeed all the words in the world are not equivalent to one holy desire. And the very best prayers are but vain repetitions, if they are not the language of the heart.

8. Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of - We do not pray to inform God of our wants. Omniscient as he is, he cannot be informed of any thing which he knew not before: and he

is always willing to relieve them. The chief thing wanting is, a fit disposition on our part to receive his grace and blessing. Consequently, one great office of prayer is, to produce such a disposition in us: to exercise our dependence on God; to increase our desire of the things we ask for; to us so sensible of our wants, that we may never cease wrestling till we have prevailed for the blessing.

9. Thus therefore pray ye - He who best knew what we ought to pray for, and how we ought to pray, what matter of desire, what manner of address would most please himself, would best become us, has here dictated to us a most perfect and universal form of prayer, comprehending all our real wants, expressing all our lawful desires; a complete directory and full exercise of all our devotions. Thus - For these things; sometimes in these words, at least in this manner, short, close, full. This prayer consists of three parts, the preface, the petitions, and the conclusion. The preface, Our Father, who art in heaven, lays a general foundation for prayer, comprising what we must first know of God, before we can pray in confidence of being heard. It likewise points out to us our that faith, humility, love, of God and man, with which we are to approach God in prayer.

10. Our Father - Who art good and gracious to all, our Creator, our Preserver; the Father of our Lord, and of us in him, thy children by adoption and grace: not my Father only, who now cry unto thee, but the Father of the universe, of angels and men: who art in heaven - Beholding all things, both in heaven and earth; knowing every creature, and all the works of every creature, and every possible event from everlasting to everlasting: the almighty Lord and Ruler of all, superintending and disposing all things; in heaven - Eminently there, but not there alone, seeing thou fillest heaven and earth. II.

1. Hallowed be thy name - Mayest thou, O Father, he truly known by all intelligent beings, and with affections suitable to that knowledge: mayest thou be duly honoured, loved, feared, by all in heaven and in earth, by all angels and all men.

2. Thy kingdom come - May thy kingdom of grace come quickly, and swallow up all the kingdoms of the earth: may all mankind, receiving thee, O Christ, for their king, truly believing in thy name, be filled with righteousness, and peace, and joy; with holiness and happiness, till they are removed hence into thy kingdom of glory, to reign with thee for ever and ever.

3. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven - May all the inhabitants of the earth do thy will as willingly as the holy angels: may these do it continually even as they, without any interruption of their willing service; yea, and perfectly as they: mayest thou, O Spirit of grace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make them perfect in every good work to do thy will, and work in them all that is well pleasing in thy sight.

4. Give us - O Father (for we claim nothing of right, but only of thy free mercy) this day - (for we take no thought for the morrow) our daily bread - All things needful for our souls and bodies: not only the meat that perisheth, but the sacramental bread, and thy grace, the food which endureth to everlasting life.

5. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors - Give us, O Lord, redemption in thy blood, even the forgiveness of sins: as thou enablest us freely and fully to forgive every man, so do thou forgive all our trespasses.

6. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil - Whenever we are tempted, O thou that helpest our infirmities, suffer us not to enter into temptation; to be overcome or suffer loss thereby; but make a way for us to escape, so that we may be more than conquerors, through thy love, over sin and all the consequences of it. Now the principal desire of a Christian's heart being the glory of God, (ver. 9, 10, ) and all he wants for himself or his brethren being the daily bread of

soul and body, (or the support of life, animal and spiritual, ) pardon of sin, and deliverance from the power of it and of the devil, (ver. 11, 12, 13, ) there is nothing beside that a Christian can wish for; therefore this prayer comprehends all his desires. Eternal life is the certain consequence, or rather completion of holiness.

III. For thine is the kingdom - The sovereign right of all things that are or ever were created: The power - the executive power, whereby thou governest all things in thy everlasting kingdom: And the glory - The praise due from every creature, for thy power, and all thy wondrous works, and the mightiness of thy kingdom, which endureth through all ages, even for ever and ever. It is observable, that though the doxology, as well as the petitions of this prayer, is threefold, and is directed to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost distinctly, yet is the whole fully applicable both to every person, and to the ever - blessed and undivided trinity. Luke xi, 2.

14. Mark xi, 25.

16. When ye fast? - Our Lord does not enjoin either fasting, alms- deeds, or prayer: all these being duties which were before fully established in the Church of God. Disfigure - By the dust and ashes which they put upon their heads, as was usual at the times of solemn humiliation.

17. Anoint thy head - So the Jews frequently did. Dress thyself as usual.

19. Lay not up for yourselves - Our Lord here makes a transition from religious to common actions, and warns us of another snare, the love of money, as inconsistent with purity of intention as the love of praise. Where rust and moth consume - Where all things are perishable and transient. He may likewise have a farther view in these words, even to guard us against making any thing on earth our treasure. For then a thing properly becomes our treasure, when we set our affections upon it. Luke xii, 33.

21. Luke xi, 34.

22. The eye is the lamp of the body - And what the eye is to the body, the intention is to the soul. We may observe with what exact propriety our Lord places purity of intention between worldly desires and worldly cares, either of which directly tend to destroy. If thine eye be single - Singly fixed on God and heaven, thy whole soul will be full of holiness and happiness. If thine eye be evil - Not single, aiming at any thing else.

24. Mammon - Riches, money; any thing loved or sought, without reference to God. Luke xvi, 13.

25. And if you serve God, you need be careful for nothing. Therefore take not thought - That is, be not anxiously careful. Beware of worldly cares; for these are as inconsistent with the true service of God as worldly desires. Is not the life more than meat? - And if God give the greater gift, will he deny the smaller? Luke xii, 22.

27. And which of you - If you are ever so careful, can even add a moment to your own life thereby? This seems to be far the most easy and natural sense of the words.

29. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these - Not in garments of so pure a white. The eastern monarchs were often clothed in white robes.

30. The grass of the field - is a general expression, including both herbs and flowers. Into the still - This is the natural sense of the passage. For it can hardly be supposed that grass or flowers should be thrown into the oven the day after they were cut down. Neither is it the custom in the hottest countries, where they dry fastest, to heat ovens with them. If God so clothe - The word properly implies, the putting on a complete dress, that surrounds the body on all sides; and beautifully expresses that external membrane, which (like the skin in a human body) at once adorns the tender

fabric of the vegetable, and guards it from the injuries of the weather. Every microscope in which a flower is viewed gives a lively comment on this text.

31. Therefore take not thought - How kind are these precepts! The substance of which is only this, Do thyself no harm! Let us not be so ungrateful to him, nor so injurious to ourselves, as to harass and oppress our minds with that burden of anxiety, which he has so graciously taken off. Every verse speaks at once to the understanding, and to the heart. We will not therefore indulge these unnecessary, these useless, these mischievous cares. We will not borrow the anxieties and distresses of the morrow, to aggravate those of the present day. Rather we will cheerfully repose ourselves on that heavenly Father, who knows we have need of these things; who has given us the life, which is more than meat, and the body, which is more than raiment. And thus instructed in the philosophy of our heavenly Master, we will learn a lesson of faith and cheer. fulness from every bird of the air, and every flower of the field.

33. Seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness - Singly aim at this, that God, reigning in your heart, may fill it with the righteousness above described. And indeed whosoever seeks this first, will soon come to seek this only.

34. The morrow shall take thought for itself - That is, he careful for the morrow when it comes. The evil thereof - Speaking after the manner of men. But all trouble is, upon the whole, a real good. It is good physic which God dispenses daily to his children, according to the need and the strength of each.

## VII

Our Lord now proceeds to warn us against the chief hindrances of holiness. And how wisely does he begin with judging? wherein all young converts are so apt to spend that zeal which is given them for better purposes.

1. Judge not - any man without full, clear, certain knowledge, without absolute necessity, without tender love. Luke vi, 37.

2. With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you - Awful words! So we may, as it were, choose for ourselves, whether God shall be severe or merciful to us. God and man will favour the candid and benevolent: but they must expect judgment without mercy, who have showed no mercy.

3. In particular, why do you open your eyes to any fault of your brother, while you yourself are guilty of a much greater? The mote - The word properly signifies a splinter or shiver of wood. This and a beam, its opposite, were proverbially used by the Jews, to denote, the one, small infirmities, the other, gross, palpable faults. Luke vi, 41.

4. How sayest thou - With what face?

5. Thou hypocrite - It is mere hypocrisy to pretend zeal for the amendment of others while we have none for our own. Then - When that which obstructed thy sight is removed.

6. Here is another instance of that transposition, where of the two things proposed, the latter is first treated of. Give not - to dogs - lest turning they rend you: Cast not - to swine - lest they trample them under foot. Yet even then, when the beam is cast out of thine own eye, Give not - That is, talk not of the deep things of God to those whom you know to be wallowing in sin. neither declare the

great things God hath done for your soul to the profane, furious, persecuting wretches. Talk not of perfection, for instance, to the former; not of your experience to the latter. But our Lord does in nowise forbid us to reprove, as occasion is, both the one and the other.

7. But ask - Pray for them, as well as for yourselves: in this there can be no such danger. Seek - Add your own diligent endeavours to your asking: and knock - Persevere importunately in that diligence. Luke xi, 9.

8. For every one that asketh receiveth - Provided he ask aright, and ask what is agreeable to God's will.

11. To them that ask him - But on this condition, that ye follow the example of his goodness, by doing to all as ye would they should do to you. For this is the law and the prophets - This is the sum of all, exactly answering Chap. v, 17. The whole is comprised in one word, Imitate the God of love. Thus far proceeds the doctrinal part of the sermon. In the next verse begins the exhortation to practice it.

12. Luke vi, 31.

13. The strait gate - The holiness described in the foregoing chapters. And this is the narrow way. Wide is the gate, and many there are that go in through it - They need not seek for this; they come to it of course. Many go in through it, because strait is the other gate - Therefore they do not care for it; they like a wider gate. Luke xiii, 24.

15. Beware of false prophets - Who in their preaching describe a broad way to heaven: it is their prophesying, their teaching the broad way, rather than their walking in it themselves, that is here chiefly spoken of. All those are false prophets, who teach any other way than that our Lord hath here marked out. In sheep's clothing - With outside religion and fair professions of love: Wolves - Not feeding, but destroying souls.

16. By their fruits ye shall know them - A short, plain, easy rule, whereby to know true from false prophets: and one that may be applied by people of the weakest capacity, who are not accustomed to deep reasoning. True prophets convert sinners to God, or at least confirm and strengthen those that are converted. False prophets do not. They also are false prophets, who though speaking the very truth, yet are not sent by the Spirit of God, but come in their own name, to declare it: their grand mark is, "Not turning men from the power of Satan to God." Luke vi, 43, 44.

18. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither a corrupt tree good fruit - But it is certain, the goodness or badness here mentioned respects the doctrine, rather than the personal character. For a bad man preaching the good doctrine here delivered, is sometimes an instrument of converting sinners to God. Yet I do not aver, that all are true prophets who speak the truth, and thereby convert sinners. I only affirm, that none are such who do not.

19. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire - How dreadful then is the condition of that teacher who hath brought no sinners to God!

21. Not every one - That is, no one that saith, Lord, Lord - That makes a mere profession of me and my religion, shall enter - Whatever their false teachers may assure them to the contrary: He that doth the will of my Father - as I have now declared it. Observe: every thing short of this is only saying, Lord, Lord. Luke vi, 46.

22. We have prophesied - We have declared the mysteries of thy kingdom, wrote books; preached excellent sermons: In thy name done many wonderful works - So that even the working of miracles is no proof that a man has saving faith.

23. I never knew you - There never was a time that I approved of you: so that as many souls as they had saved, they were themselves never saved from their sins. Lord, is it my case? Luke xiii, 27.

24. Luke vi, 47.

29. He taught them - The multitudes, as one having authority - With a dignity and majesty peculiar to himself as the great Lawgiver, and with the demonstration and power of the Spirit: and not as the scribes - Who only expounded the law of another; and that in a lifeless, ineffectual manner.

## VIII

2. A leper came - Leprosies in those countries were seldom curable by natural means, any more than palsies or lunacy. Probably this leper, though he might not mix with the people, had heard our Lord at a distance. Mark i, 40; Luke v, 12.

4. See thou tell no man - Perhaps our Lord only meant here, Not till thou hast showed thyself to the priest-who was appointed to inquire into the case of leprosy. But many others he commanded, absolutely, to tell none of the miracles he had wrought upon them. And this he seems to have done, chiefly for one or more of these reasons:

1. To prevent the multitude from thronging him, in the manner related Mark i, 45.
2. To fulfil the prophecy, Isaiah xlii, 1, that he would not be vain or ostentatious. This reason St. Matthew assigns, chap. xii, 17, &c.
3. To avoid the being taken by force and made a king, John vi, 15. And,
4. That he might not enrage the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, who were the most bitter against him, any more than was unavoidable, Matt. xvi, 20, 21. For a testimony - That I am the Messiah; to them - The priests, who otherwise might have pleaded want of evidence. Lev. xiv, 2.

5. There came to him a centurion - A captain of a hundred Roman soldiers. Probably he came a little way toward him, and then went back. He thought himself not worthy to come in person, and therefore spoke the words that follow by his messengers. As it is not unusual in all languages, so in the Hebrew it is peculiarly frequent, to ascribe to a person himself the thing which is done, and the words which are spoken by his order. And accordingly St. Matthew relates as said by the centurion himself, what others said by order from him. An instance of the same kind we have in the case of Zebedee's children. From St. Matthew xx, 20, we learn it was their mother that spoke those words, which, Mark x, 35, 37, themselves are said to speak; because she was only their mouth. Yet from ver. 13, Go thy way home, it appears he at length came in person, probably on hearing that Jesus was nearer to his house than he apprehended when he sent the second message by his friends. Luke vii, 1.

8. The centurion answered - By his second messengers.

9. For I am a man under authority - I am only an inferior officer: and what I command, is done even in my absence: how much more what thou commandest, who art Lord of all!

10. I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel - For the centurion was not an Israelite.

11. Many from the farthest parts of the earth shall embrace the terms and enjoy the rewards of the Gospel covenant established with Abraham. But the Jews, who have the first title to them, shall be shut out from the feast; from grace here, and hereafter from glory. Luke xiii, 29.

12. The outer darkness - Our Lord here alludes to the custom the ancients had of making their feast in the night time. Probably while he was speaking this, the centurion came in person. Matt. xiii, 42, 50; xxii, 13; xxiv, 51; xxv, 30.

14. Peter's wife's mother - St. Peter was then a young man, as were all the apostles. Mark i, 29; Luke iv, 38.

16. Mark i, 32; Luke iv, 40.

17. Whereby was fulfilled what was spoken by the Prophet Isaiah - He spoke it in a more exalted sense. The evangelist here only alludes to those words, as being capable of this lower meaning also. Such instances are frequent in the sacred writings, and are elegancies rather than imperfections. He fulfilled these words in the highest sense, by bearing our sins in his own body on the tree: in a lower sense, by sympathizing with us in our sorrows, and healing us of the diseases which were the fruit of sin. Isaiah liii, 4.

18. He commanded to go to the other side - That both himself and the people might have a little rest.

19. Luke ix, 57.

20. The Son of man - The expression is borrowed from Dan. vii, 13, and is the appellation which Christ generally gives himself: which he seems to do out of humility, as having some relation to his mean appearance in this world. Hath not where to lay his head - Therefore do not follow me from any view of temporal advantage.

21. Another said - I will follow thee without any such view; but I must mind my business first. It is not certain that his father was already dead. Perhaps his son desired to stay with him, being very old, till his death.

22. But Jesus said - When God calls, leave the business of the world to them who are dead to God.

23. Mark iv, 35; Luke viii, 22.

24. The ship was covered - So man's extremity is God's opportunity.

26. Why are ye fearful - Then he rebuked the winds - First, he composed their spirits, and then the sea.

28. The country of the Gergesenes - Or of the Gadarenes - Gergesa and Gadara were towns near each other. Hence the country between them took its name, sometimes from the one, sometimes from the other. There met him two demoniacs - St. Mark and St. Luke mention only one, who was probably the fiercer of the two, and the person who spoke to our Lord first. But this is no way inconsistent with the account which St. Matthew gives. The tombs - Doubtless those malevolent spirits love such tokens of death and destruction. Tombs were usually in those days in desert places, at a distance from towns, and were often made in the sides of caves, in the rocks and mountains. No one could pass - Safely. Mark v, 1; Luke viii, 26.

29. What have we to do with thee - This is a Hebrew phrase, which signifies. Why do you concern yourself about us? 2 Sam. xvi, 10. Before the time - The great day.

30. There was a herd of many swine - Which it was not lawful for the Jews to keep. Therefore our Lord both justly and mercifully permitted them to be destroyed.

31. He said, Go - A word of permission only, not command.

34. They besought him to depart out of their coasts - They loved their swine so much better than their souls! How many are of the same mind!

## IX

1. His own city - Capernaum, chap. iv, 13; Mark v, 18; Luke viii, 37.

2. Seeing their faith - Both that of the paralytic, and of them that brought him. Son - A title of tenderness and condescension. Mark ii, 3; Luke v, 18.

3. This man blasphemeth - Attributing to himself a power (that of forgiving sins) which belongs to God only.

5. Which is easier - Do not both of them argue a Divine power? Therefore if I can heal his disease, I can forgive his sins: especially as his disease is the consequence of his sins. Therefore these must be taken away, if that is.

6. On earth - Even in my state of humiliation.

8. So what was to the scribes an occasion of blaspheming, was to the people an incitement to praise God.

9. He saw a man named Matthew - Modestly so called by himself. The other evangelists call him by his more honourable name, Levi. Sitting - In the very height of his business, at the receipt of custom - The custom house, or place where the customs were received. Mark ii, 14; Luke v, 27.

10. As Jesus sat at table in the house - Of Matthew, who having invited many of his old companions, made him a feast, Mark ii, 15; and that a great one, though he does not himself mention it. The publicans, or collectors of the taxes which the Jews paid the Romans, were infamous for their illegal exactions: Sinners - Open, notorious, sinners.

11. The Pharisees said to his disciples, Why eateth your Master? - Thus they commonly ask our Lord, Why do thy disciples this? And his disciples, Why doth your Master?

13. Go ye and learn - Ye that take upon you to teach others. I will have mercy and not sacrifice - That is, I will have mercy rather than sacrifice. I love acts of mercy better than sacrifice itself. Hosea vi, 6.

14. Then - While he was at table. Mark ii, 18; Luke v, 33.

15. The children of the bride chamber - The companions of the bridegroom. Mourn - Mourning and fasting usually go together. As if he had said, While I am with them, it is a festival time, a season of rejoicing, not mourning. But after I am gone, all my disciples likewise shall be in fastings often.

16. This is one reason, - It is not a proper time for them to fast. Another is, they are not ripe for it. New cloth - The words in the original properly signify cloth that hath not passed through the fuller's hands, and which is consequently much harsher than what has been washed and worn; and therefore yielding less than that, will tear away the edges to which it is sewed.

17. New - Fermenting wine will soon burst those bottles, the leather of which is almost worn out. The word properly means vessels made of goats' skins, wherein they formerly put wine, (and do in some countries to this day) to convey it from place to place. Put new wine into new bottles - Give harsh doctrines to such as have strength to receive them.

18. Just dead - He had left her at the point of death, Mark v, 23. Probably a messenger had now informed him she was dead. Mark v, 22; Luke viii, 41.

20. Coming behind - Out of bashfulness and humility.

22. Take courage - Probably she was struck with fear, when he turned and looked upon her, Mark v, 33; Luke viii, 47; lest she should have offended him, by touching his garment privately; and the more so, because she was unclean according to the law, Lev. xv, 25.

23. The minstrels - The musicians. The original word means flute players. Musical instruments were used by the Jews as well as the heathens, in their Lamentations for the dead, to soothe the melancholy of surviving friends, by soft and solemn notes. And there were persons who made it their business to perform this, while others sung to their music. Flutes were used especially on the death of children; louder instruments on the death of grown persons.

24. Withdraw - There is no need of you now; for the maid is not dead - Her life is not at an end; but sleepeth - This is only a temporary suspension of sense and motion, which should rather be termed sleep than death.

25. The maid arose - Christ raised three dead persons to life; this child, the widow's son, and Lazarus: one newly departed, another on the bier, the third smelling in the grave: to show us that no degree of death is so desperate as to be past his help.

32. Luke xi, 14.

33. Even in Israel - Where so many wonders have been seen.

36. Because they were faint - In soul rather than in body. As sheep having no shepherd - And yet they had many teachers; they had scribes in every city. But they had none who cared for their souls, and none that were able, if they had been willing, to have wrought any deliverance. They had no pastors after God's own heart.

37. The harvest truly is great - When Christ came into the world, it was properly the time of harvest; till then it was the seed time only. But the labourers are few - Those whom God sends; who are holy, and convert sinners. Of others there are many. Luke x, 2.

38. The Lord of the harvest - Whose peculiar work and office it is, and who alone is able to do it: that he would thrust forth - for it is an employ not pleasing to flesh and blood; so full of reproach, labour, danger, temptation of every kind, that nature may well be averse to it. Those who never felt this, never yet knew what it is to be labourers in Christ's harvest. He sends them forth, when he calls them by his Spirit, furnishes them with grace and gifts for the work, and makes a way for them to be employed therein.

## X

1. His twelve disciples - Hence it appears that he had already chosen out of his disciples, those whom he afterward termed apostles. The number seems to have relation to the twelve patriarchs, and the twelve tribes of Israel. Mark iii, 14; vi, 7; Luke vi, 13; ix, 1.

2. The first, Simon - The first who was called to a constant attendance on Christ; although Andrew had seen him before Simon. Acts i, 13.

3. Lebbeus - Commonly called Judas, the brother of James.

4. Iscariot - So called from Iscarioth, (the place of his birth, ) a town of the tribe of ephraim, near the city of Samaria.

5. These twelve Jesus sent forth - Herein exercising his supreme authority, as God over all. None but God can give men authority to preach his word. Go not - Their commission was thus confined now, because the calling of the Gentiles was deferred till after the more plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost. Enter not - Not to preach; but they might to buy what they wanted, John iv, 9.

8. Cast out devils - It is a great relief to the spirits of an infidel, sinking under a dread, that possibly the Gospel may be true, to find it observed by a learned brother, that the diseases therein ascribed to the operation of the devil have the very same symptoms with the natural diseases of lunacy, epilepsy, or convulsions; whence he readily and very willingly concludes, that the devil had no hand in them. But it were well to stop and consider a little. Suppose God should suffer an evil spirit to usurp the same power over a man's body, as the man himself has naturally; and suppose him actually to exercise that power; could we conclude the devil had no hand therein, because his body was bent in the very same manner wherein the man himself might have bent it naturally? And suppose God gives an evil spirit a greater power, to effect immediately the organ of the nerves in the brain, by irritating them to produce violent motions, or so relaxing them that they can produce little or no motion; still the symptoms will be those of over tense nerves, as in madness, epilepsies, convulsions; or of relaxed nerves, as in paralytic cases. But could we conclude thence that the devil had no hand in them? Will any man affirm that God cannot or will not, on any occasion whatever, give such a power to an evil spirit? Or that effects, the like of which may be produced by natural causes, cannot possibly be produced by preternatural? If this be possible, then he who affirms it was so, in any particular case, cannot be justly charged with falsehood, merely for affirming the reality of a possible thing. Yet in this manner are the evangelists treated by those unhappy men, who above all things dread the truth of the Gospel, because, if it is true, they are of all men the most miserable. Freely ye have received - All things; in particular the power of working miracles; freely give - Exert that power wherever you come. Mark vi, 7; Luke ix, 2.

9. Provide not - The stress seems to lie on this word: they might use what they had ready; but they might not stay a moment to provide any thing more, neither take any thought about it. Nor indeed were they to take any thing with them, more than was strictly necessary.

1. Lest it should retard them.
2. Because they were to learn hereby to trust to God in all future exigencies.

10. Neither scrip - That is, a wallet, or bag to hold provisions: Nor yet a staff - We read, Mark vi, 8, Take nothing, save a staff only. He that had one might take it; they that had none, might not provide any. For the workman is worthy of his maintenance - The word includes all that is mentioned in the 9th and 10th verses; all that they were forbidden to provide for themselves, so far as it was needful for them. Luke x, 7.

11. Inquire who is worthy - That you should abide with him: who is disposed to receive the Gospel. There abide - In that house, till ye leave the town. Mark vi, 10; Luke ix, 4.

12. Salute it - In the usual Jewish form, "Peace (that is, all blessings) be to this house."

13. If the house be worthy - of it, God shall give them the peace you wish them. If not, he shall give you what they refuse. The same will be the case, when we pray for them that are not worthy.

14. Shake off the dust from your feet - The Jews thought the land of Israel so peculiarly holy, that when they came home from any heathen country, they stopped at the borders and shook or

wiped off the dust of it from their feet, that the holy land might not be polluted with it. Therefore the action here enjoined was a lively intimation, that those Jews who had rejected the Gospel were holy no longer, but were on a level with heathens and idolaters.

16. Luke x, 3.

17. But think not that all your innocence and all your wisdom will screen you from persecution. They will scourge you in their synagogues - In these the Jews held their courts of judicature, about both civil and ecclesiastical affairs. Matt. xxiv, 9.

19. Take no thought - Neither at this time, on any sudden call, need we be careful how or what to answer. Luke xii, 11.

21. Luke xxi, 16.

22. Of all men - That know not God. Matt. xxiv, 13.

23. Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel - Make what haste ye will; till the Son of man be come - To destroy their temple and nation.

24. Luke vi, 30; John xv, 20.

25. How much more - This cannot refer to the quantity of reproach and persecution: (for in this the servant cannot be above his Lord:) but only to the certainty of it. Matt. xii, 24.

26. Therefore fear them not - For ye have only the same usage with your Lord. There is nothing covered - So that however they may slander you now, your innocence will at length appear. Mark iv, 22; Luke viii, 17; xii, 2.

27. Even what I now tell you secretly is not to be kept secret long, but declared publicly. Therefore, What ye hear in the ear, publish on the house-top - Two customs of the Jews seem to be alluded to here. Their doctors used to whisper in the ear of their disciples what they were to pronounce aloud to others. And as their houses were low and flat roofed, they sometimes preached to the people from thence. Luke xii, 3.

28. And be not afraid - of any thing which ye may suffer for proclaiming it. Be afraid of him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell - It is remarkable, that our Lord commands those who love God, still to fear him, even on this account, under this notion.

29, 30. The particular providence of God is another reason for your not fearing man. For this extends to the very smallest things. And if he has such care over the most inconsiderable creatures, how much more will he take care of you, (provided you confess him before men, before powerful enemies of the truth, ) and that not only in this life, but in the other also?

32. Whosoever shall confess me - Publicly acknowledge me for the promised Messiah. But this confession implies the receiving his whole doctrine, Mark viii, 38, and obeying all his commandments. Luke ix, 26.

33, 34. Whosoever shall deny me before men - To which ye will be strongly tempted. For Think not that I am come - That is, think not that universal peace will be the immediate consequence of my coming. Just the contrary. Both public and private divisions will follow, wheresoever my Gospel comes with power. Ye - this is not the design, though it be the event of his coming, through the opposition of devils and men.

36. And the foes of a man - That loves and follows me. Micah vii, 6.

37. He that loveth father or mother more than me - He that is not ready to give up all these, when they stand in competition with his duty.

38. He that taketh not his cross - That is, whatever pain or inconvenience cannot be avoided, but by doing some evil, or omitting some good. Matt. xvi, 24; Luke xiv, 27.

39. He that findeth his life shall lose it - He that saves his life by denying me, shall lose it eternally; and he that loseth his life by confessing me, shall save it eternally. And as you shall be thus rewarded, so in proportion shall they who entertain you for my sake. Matt. xvi, 25; John xii, 25.

40. Matt. xviii, 5; Luke x, 16; John xiii, 20.

41. He that entertaineth a prophet - That is, a preacher of the Gospel: In the name of a prophet - That is, because he is such, shall share in his reward.

42. One of these little ones - The very least Christian. Mark ix, 41.

## XI

1. In their cities - The other cities of Israel.

2. He sent two of his disciples - Not because he doubted himself; but to confirm their faith. Luke vii, 18.

3. He that is to come - The Messiah.

4. Go and tell John the things that ye hear and see - Which are a stronger proof of my being the Messiah, than any bare assertion can be.

5. The poor have the Gospel preached to them - The greatest mercy of all. Isaiah xxix, 18; xxxv, 5.

6. Happy is he who shall not be offended at me - Notwithstanding all these proofs that I am the Messiah.

7. As they departed, he said concerning John - Of whom probably he would not have said so much when they were present. A reed shaken by the wind? - No; nothing could ever shake John in the testimony he gave to the truth. The expression is proverbial.

8. A man clothed in soft, delicate raiment - An effeminate courtier, accustomed to fawning and flattery? You may expect to find persons of such a character in palaces; not in a wilderness.

9. More than a prophet - For the prophets only pointed me out afar off; but John was my immediate forerunner.

10. Mal. iii, 1.

11. But he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he - Which an ancient author explains thus: - "One perfect in the law, as John was, is inferior to one who is baptized into the death of Christ. For this is the kingdom of heaven, even to be buried with Christ, and to be raised up together with him. John was greater than all who had been then born of women, but he was cut off before the kingdom of heaven was given." [He seems to mean, that righteousness, peace, and joy, which constitute the present inward kingdom of heaven.] "He was blameless as to that righteousness which is by the law; but he fell short of those who are perfected by the spirit of life which is in Christ. Whosoever, therefore, is least in the kingdom of heaven, by Christian regeneration, is greater than any who has attained only the righteousness of the law, because the law maketh nothing perfect." It may farther mean, the least true Christian believer has a more perfect knowledge of Jesus Christ, of his redemption and kingdom, than John the Baptist had, who died before the full manifestation of the Gospel.

12. And from the days of John - That is, from the time that John had fulfilled his ministry, men rush into my kingdom with a violence like that of those who are taking a city by storm.

13. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John - For all that is written in the law and the prophets only foretold as distant what is now fulfilled. In John the old dispensation expired, and the new began. Luke xvi, 16.

14. Mal. iv, 5.

15. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear - A kind of proverbial expression; requiring the deepest attention to what is spoken.

16. This generation - That is, the men of this age. They are like those froward children of whom their fellows complain, that they will be pleased no way.

18. John came neither eating nor drinking - In a rigorous austere way, like Elijah. And they say, He hath a devil - Is melancholy, from the influence of an evil spirit.

19. The Son of man came eating and drinking - Conversing in a free, familiar way. Wisdom is justified by her children - That is, my wisdom herein is acknowledged by those who are truly wise.

20. Then began he to upbraid the cities - It is observable he had never upbraided them before. Indeed at first they received him with all gladness, Capernaum in particular.

21. Wo to thee, Chorazin - That is, miserable art thou. For these are not curses or imprecations, as has been commonly supposed; but a solemn, compassionate declaration of the misery they were bringing on themselves. Chorazin and Bethsaida were cities of Galilee, standing by the lake Gennesareth. Tyre and Sidon were cities of Phenicia, lying on the sea shore. The inhabitants of them were heathens. Luke x, 13.

22, 24. Moreover I say unto you - Beside the general denunciation of wo to those stubborn unbelievers, the degree of their misery will be greater than even that of Tyre and Sidon, yea, of Sodom.

23. Thou Capernaum, who hast been exalted to heaven - That is, highly honoured by my presence and miracles.

25. Jesus answering - This word does not always imply, that something had been spoken, to which an answer is now made. It often means no more than the speaking in reference to some action or circumstance preceding. The following words Christ speaks in reference to the case of the cities above mentioned: I thank thee - That is, I acknowledge and joyfully adore the justice and mercy of thy dispensations: Because thou hast hid - That is, because thou hast suffered these things to be hid from men, who are in other respects wise and prudent, while thou hast discovered them to those of the weakest understanding, to them who are only wise to Godward. Luke x, 21.

27. All things are delivered to me - Our Lord, here addressing himself to his disciples, shows why men, wise in other things, do not know this: namely, because none can know it by natural reason: none but those to whom he revealeth it.

28. Come to me - Here he shows to whom he is pleased to reveal these things to the weary and heavy laden; ye that labour - After rest in God: and are heavy laden - With the guilt and power of sin: and I will give you rest - I alone (for none else can) will freely give you (what ye cannot purchase) rest from the guilt of sin by justification, and from the power of sin by sanctification.

29. Take my yoke upon you - Believe in me: receive me as your prophet, priest, and king. For I am meek and lowly in heart - Meek toward all men, lowly toward God: and ye shall find rest - Whoever therefore does not find rest of soul, is not meek and lowly. The fault is not in the yoke of

Christ: but in thee, who hast not taken it upon thee. Nor is it possible for any one to be discontented, but through want of meekness or lowliness.

30. For my yoke is easy - Or rather gracious, sweet, benign, delightful: and my burden - Contrary to those of men, is ease, liberty, and honour.

## XII

1. His disciples plucked the ears of corn, and ate - Just what sufficed for present necessity: dried corn was a common food among the Jews. Mark ii, 23; Luke vi, 1.

3. Have ye not read what David did - And necessity was a sufficient plea for his transgressing the law in a higher instance.

4. He entered into the house of God - Into the tabernacle. The temple was not yet built. The show bread - So they called the bread which the priest, who served that week, put every Sabbath day on the golden table that was in the holy place, before the Lord. The loaves were twelve in number, and represented the twelve tribes of Israel: when the new were brought, the stale were taken away, but were to be eaten by the priests only. 1 Sam. xxi, 6.

5. The priests in the temple profane the Sabbath - That is, do their ordinary work on this, as on a common day, cleansing all things, and preparing the sacrifices. A greater than the temple - If therefore the Sabbath must give way to the temple, much more must it give way to me.

7. I will have mercy and not sacrifice - That is, when they interfere with each other, I always prefer acts of mercy, before matters of positive institution: yea, before all ceremonial institutions whatever; because these being only means of religion, are suspended of course, if circumstances occur, wherein they clash with love, which is the end of it. Matt. ix, 13.

8. For the Son of man - Therefore they are guiltless, were it only on this account, that they act by my authority, and attend on me in my ministry, as the priests attended on God in the temple: is Lord even of the Sabbath - This certainly implies, that the Sabbath was an institution of great and distinguished importance; it may perhaps also refer to that signal act of authority which Christ afterward exerted over it, in changing it from the seventh to the first day of the week. If we suppose here is a transposition of the 7th and 8th verses, then the 8th verse is a proof of the 6th. Matt. xii, 7, 8, 6.

9. Mark iii, 1; Luke vi, 6.

12. It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day - To save a beast, much more a man.

18. He shall show judgment to the heathens - That is, he shall publish the merciful Gospel to them also: the Hebrew word signifies either mercy or justice. Isaiah xlii, 1, &c.

19. He shall not strive, nor clamour; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets - That is, he shall not be contentious, noisy, or ostentatious: but gentle, quiet, and lowly. We may observe each word rises above the other, expressing a still higher degree of humility and gentleness.

20. A bruised reed - A convinced sinner: one that is bruised with the weight of sin: smoking flax - One that has the least good desire, the faintest spark of grace: till he send forth judgment unto victory - That is, till he make righteousness completely victorious over all its enemies.

21. In his name - That is, in him.

22. A demoniac, blind and dumb - Many undoubtedly supposed these defects to be merely natural. But the Spirit of God saw otherwise, and gives the true account both of the disorder and the cure. How many disorders, seemingly natural, may even now be owing to the same cause? Luke xi, 14.

23. Is not this the son of David - That is, the Messiah.

24. Mark iii, 22.

25. Jesus knowing their thoughts - It seems they had as yet only said it in their hearts.

26. How shall his kingdom be established - Does not that subtle spirit know thin is not the way to establish his kingdom?

27. By whom do your children - That is, disciples, cast them out - It seems, some of them really did this; although the sons of Sceva could not. Therefore shall they be your judge - Ask them, if Satan will cast out Satan: let even them be Judg. in this matter. And they shall convict you of obstinacy and partiality, who impute that in me to Beelzebub, which in them you impute to God. Beside, how can I rob him of his subjects, till I have conquered him? The kingdom of God is come upon you - Unawares; before you expected: so the word implies.

29. How can one enter into the strong one's house, unless he first bind the strong one - So Christ coming into the world, which was then eminently the strong one's, Satan's house, first bound him, and then took his spoils.

30. He that is not with me is against me - For there are no neuters in this war. Every one must be either with Christ or against him; either a loyal subject or a rebel. And there are none upon earth, who neither promote nor obstruct his kingdom. For he that does not gather souls to God, scatters them from him.

31. The blasphemy against the Spirit - How much stir has been made about this? How many sermons, yea, volumes, have been written concerning it? And yet there is nothing plainer in all the Bible. It is neither more nor less than the ascribing those miracles to the power of the devil, which Christ wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost. Mark iii, 28; Luke xii, 10.

32. Whosoever speaketh against the Son of man - In any other respects: It shall be forgiven him - Upon his true repentance: But whosoever speaketh thus against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come - This was a proverbial expression among the Jews, for a thing that would never be done. It here means farther, He shall not escape the punishment of it, either in this world, or in the world to come. The judgment of God shall overtake him, both here and hereafter.

33. Either make the tree good and its fruit good: or make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt - That is, you must allow, they are both good, or both bad.- For if the fruit is good, so is the tree; if the fruit is evil, so is the tree also. For the tree is known by its fruit - As if he had said, Ye may therefore know me by my fruits. By my converting sinners to God, you may know that God hath sent me. Matt. vii, 16; Luke vi, 43.

34. In another kind likewise, the tree is known by its fruit - Namely, the heart by the conversation.

36. Ye may perhaps think, God does not so much regard your words. But I say to you - That not for blasphemous and profane words only, but for every idle word which men shall speak - For want of seriousness or caution; for every discourse which is not conducive to the glory of God, they shall give account in the day of judgment.

37. For by thy words (as well as thy tempers and works) thou shalt then be either acquitted or condemned. - Your words as well as actions shall be produced in evidence for or against you, to

prove whether you was a true believer or not. And according to that evidence you will either be acquitted or condemned in the great day.

38. We would see a sign - Else we will not believe this. Matt. xvi, 1; Luke xi, 16, 29.

39. An adulterous generation - Whose heart wanders from God, though they profess him to be their husband. Such adulterers are all those who love the world, and all who seek the friendship of it. Seeketh a sign - After all they have had already, which were abundantly sufficient to convince them, had not their hearts been estranged from God, and consequently averse to the truth. The sign of Jonah - Who was herein a type of Christ.

40. Three days and three nights - It was customary with the eastern nations to reckon any part of a natural day of twenty-four hours, for the whole day. Accordingly they used to say a thing was done after three or seven days, if it was done on the third or seventh day, from that which was last mentioned. Instances of this may be seen, 1 Kings xx, 29; and in many other places. And as the Hebrews had no word to express a natural day, they used night and day, or day and night for it. So that to say a thing happened after three days and three nights, was with them the very same, as to say, it happened after three days, or on the third day. See Esther iv, 16; v, 1; Gen. vii, 4, 12; Exod. xxiv, 18; xxxiv, 28. Jonah ii, 1.

42. She came from the uttermost parts of the earth - That part of Arabia from which she came was the uttermost part of the earth that way, being bounded by the sea. 1 Kings x, 1.

43. But how dreadful will be the consequence of their rejecting me? When the unclean spirit goeth out - Not willingly, but being compelled by one that is stronger than he. He walketh - Wanders up and down; through dry places - Barren, dreary, desolate; or places not yet watered with the Gospel: Seeking rest, and findeth none - How can he, while he carries with him his own hell? And is it not the case of his children too? Reader, is it thy case? Luke xi, 24.

44. Whence he came out - He speaks as if he had come out of his own accord: See his pride! He findeth it empty - of God, of Christ, of his Spirit: Swept - from love, lowliness, meekness, and all the fruits of the Spirit: And garnished - With levity and security: so that there is nothing to keep him out, and much to invite him in.

45. Seven other spirits - That is, a great many; a certain number being put for an uncertain: More wicked than himself - Whence it appears, that there are degrees of wickedness among the devils themselves: They enter in and dwell - For ever in him who is forsaken of God. So shall it be to this wicked generation - Yea, and to apostates in all ages.

46. His brethren - His kinsmen: they were the sons of Mary, the wife of Cleopas, or Alpheus, his mother's sister; and came now seeking to take him, as one beside himself, Mark iii, 21. Mark iii, 31; Luke viii, 19.

48. And he answering, said - Our Lord's knowing why they came, sufficiently justifies his seeming disregard of them.

49, 50. See the highest severity, and the highest goodness! Severity to his natural, goodness to his spiritual relations! In a manner disclaiming the former, who opposed the will of his heavenly Father, and owning the latter, who obeyed it.

## XIII

1. Mark iv, 1; Luke viii, 4.

2. He went into the vessel - Which constantly waited upon him, while he was on the sea coast.

3. In parables - The word is here taken in its proper sense, for apt similes or comparisons. This way of speaking, extremely common in the eastern countries, drew and fixed the attention of many, and occasioned the truths delivered to sink the deeper into humble and serious hearers. At the same time, by an awful mixture of justice and mercy, it hid them from the proud and careless. In this chapter our Lord delivers seven parables; directing the four former (as being of general concern) to all the people; the three latter to his disciples. Behold the sower - How exquisitely proper is this parable to be an introduction to all the rest! In this our Lord answers a very obvious and a very important question. The same sower, Christ, and the same preachers sent by him, always sow the same seed: why has it not always the same effect? He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!

4. And while he sowed, some seeds fell by the highway side, and the birds came and devoured them - It is observable, that our Lord points out the grand hindrances of our bearing fruit, in the same order as they occur. The first danger is, that the birds will devour the seed. If it escape this, there is then another danger, namely, lest it be scorched, and wither away. It is long after this that the thorns spring up and choke the good seed. A vast majority of those who hear the word of God, receive the seed as by the highway side. Of those who do not lose it by the birds, yet many receive it as on stony places. Many of them who receive it in a better soil, yet suffer the thorns to grow up, and choke it: so that few even of these endure to the end, and bear fruit unto perfection: yet in all these cases, it is not the will of God that hinders, but their own voluntary perverseness.

8. Good ground - Soft, not like that by the highway side; deep, not like the stony ground; purged, not full of thorns.

11. To you, who have, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven - The deep things which flesh and blood cannot reveal, pertaining to the inward, present kingdom of heaven. But to them who have not, it is not given - Therefore speak I in parables, that ye may understand, while they do not understand.

12. Whosoever hath - That is, improves what he hath, uses the grace given according to the design of the giver; to him shall be given - More and more, in proportion to that improvement. But whosoever hath not - Improves it not, from him shall be taken even what he hath - Here is the grand rule of God's dealing with the children of men: a rule fixed as the pillars of heaven. This is the key to all his providential dispensations; as will appear to men and angels in that day. Matt. xxv, 29; Mark iv, 25; Luke viii, 18; xix, 26.

13. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not - In pursuance of this general rule, I do not give more knowledge to this people, be. cause they use not that which they have already: having all the means of seeing, hearing, and understanding, they use none of them: they do not effectually see, or hear, or understand any thing.

14. Hearing ye will hear, but in nowise understand - That is, Ye will surely hear. All possible means will be given you: yet they will profit you nothing; because your heart is sensual, stupid, and insensible; your spiritual senses are shut up; yea, you have closed your eyes against the light; as being unwilling to understand the things of God, and afraid, not desirous that he should heal you. Isaiah vi, 9; John xii, 40; Acts xxviii, 26.

16. But blessed are your eyes - For you both see and understand. You know how to prize the light which is given you. Luke x, 23.

19. When any one heareth the word, and considereth it not - The first and most general cause of unfruitfulness. The wicked one cometh - Either inwardly; filling the mind with thoughts of other things; or by his agent. Such are all they that introduce other subjects, when men should be considering what they have heard.

20. The seed sown on stony places, therefore sprang up soon, because it did not sink deep, ver. 5. He receiveth it with joy - Perhaps with transport, with ecstacy: struck with the beauty of truth, and drawn by the preventing grace of God.

21. Yet hath he not root in himself - No deep work of grace: no change in the ground of his heart. Nay, he has no deep conviction; and without this, good desires soon wither away. He is offended - He finds a thousand plausible pretenses for leaving so narrow and rugged a way.

22. He that received the seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word and considereth it - In spite of Satan and his agents: yea, hath root in himself is deeply convinced, and in a great measure inwardly changed; so that he will not draw back, even when tribulation or persecution ariseth. And yet even in him, together with the good seed, the thorns spring up, ver. 7. (perhaps unperceived at first) till they gradually choke it, destroy all its life and power, and it becometh unfruitful. Cares are thorns to the poor: wealth to the rich; the desire of other things to all. The deceitfulness of riches - Deceitful indeed! for they smile, and betray: kiss, and smite into hell. They put out the eyes, harden the heart, steal away all the life of God; fill the soul with pride, anger, love of the world; make men enemies to the whole cross of Christ! And all the while are eagerly desired, and vehemently pursued, even by those who believe there is a God!

23. Some a hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty - That is, in various proportions; some abundantly more than others.

24. He proposed another parable - in which he farther explains the case of unfruitful hearers. The kingdom of heaven (as has been observed before) sometimes signifies eternal glory: sometimes the way to it, inward religion; sometimes, as here, the Gospel dispensation: the phrase is likewise used for a person or thing relating to any one of those: so in this place it means, Christ preaching the Gospel, who is like a man sowing good seed - The expression, is like, both here and in several other places, only means, that the thing spoken of may be illustrated by the following similitude. Who sowed good seed in his field - God sowed nothing but good in his whole creation. Christ sowed only the good seed of truth in his Church.

25. But while men slept - They ought to have watched: the Lord of the field sleepeth not. His enemy came and sowed darnel - This is very like wheat, and commonly grows among wheat rather than among other grain: but tares or vetches are of the pulse kind, and bear no resemblance to wheat.

26. When the blade was sprung up, then appeared the darnel - It was not discerned before: it seldom appears, as soon as the good seed is sown: all at first appears to be peace, and love, and joy.

27. Didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? Whence then hath it darnel? - Not from the parent of good. Even the heathen could say, "No evil can from thee proceed: 'Tis only suffer'd, not decreed: As darkness is not from the sun, Nor mount the shades, till he is gone."

28. He said, An enemy hath done this - A plain answer to the great question concerning the origin of evil. God made men (as he did angels) intelligent creatures, and consequently free either to choose good or evil: but he implanted no evil in the human soul: An enemy (with man's concurrence) hath done this. Darnel, in the Church, is properly outside Christians, such as have the

form of godliness, without the power. Open sinners, such as have neither the form nor the power, are not so properly darnel, as thistles and brambles: these ought to be rooted up without delay, and not suffered in the Christian community. Whereas should fallible men attempt to gather up the darnel, they would often root up the wheat with them.

31. He proposed to them another parable - The former parables relate chiefly to unfruitful hearers; these that follow, to those who bear good fruit. The kingdom of heaven - Both the Gospel dispensation, and the inward kingdom. Mark iv, 30; Luke xiii, 18.

32. The least - That is, one of the least: a way of speaking extremely common among the Jews. It becometh a tree - In those countries it grows exceeding large and high. So will the Christian doctrine spread in the world, and the life of Christ in the soul.

33. Three measures - This was the quantity which they usually baked at once: till the whole was leavened - Thus will the Gospel leaven the world and grace the Christian. Luke xiii, 20.

34. Without a parable spake he not unto them - That is, not at that time; at other times he did.

35. Psalm lxxviii, 2.

38. The good seed are the children of the kingdom - That is, the children of God, the righteous.

41. They shall gather all things that offend - Whatever had hindered or grieved the children of God; whatever things or persons had hindered the good seed which Christ had sown from taking root or bearing fruit. The Greek word is, All scandals.

44. The three following parables are proposed, not to the multitude, but peculiarly to the apostles: the two former of them relate to those who receive the Gospel; the third, both to those who receive, and those who preach it. The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hid in a field - The kingdom of God within us is a treasure indeed, but a treasure hid from the world, and from the most wise and prudent in it. He that finds this treasure, (perhaps when he thought it far from him, ) hides it deep in his heart, and gives up all other happiness for it.

45. The kingdom of heaven - That is, one who earnestly seeks for it: in verse 47 it means, the Gospel preached, which is like a net gathering of every kind: just so the Gospel, wherever it is preached, gathers at first both good and bad, who are for a season full of approbation and warm with good desires. But Christian discipline, and strong, close exhortation, begin that separation in this world, which shall be accomplished by the angels of God in the world to come.

52. Every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven - That is, every duly prepared preacher of the Gospel has a treasure of Divine knowledge, out of which he is able to bring forth all sorts of instructions. The word treasure signifies any collection of things whatsoever, and the places where such collections are kept.

53. He departed thence - He crossed the lake from Capernaum: and came once more into his own country - Nazareth: but with no better success than he had had there before.

54. Whence hath HE - Many texts are not understood, for want of knowing the proper emphasis; and others are utterly misunderstood, by placing the emphasis wrong. To prevent this in some measure, the emphatical words are here printed in capital letters. Mark vi, 1; Luke iv, 16, 22.

55. The carpenter's son - The Greek, word means, one that works either in wood, iron, or stone. His brethren - Our kinsmen. They were the sons of Mary, sister to the virgin, and wife of Cleophas or Alpheus. James - Styled by St. Paul also, the Lord's brother, Gal. i, 19. Simon - Surnamed the Canaanite.

57. They were offended at him - They looked on him as a mean, ignoble man, not worthy to be regarded. John iv, 44; Luke vii, 23.

58. He wrought not many mighty works, because of their unbelief - And the reason why many mighty works are not wrought now, is not, that the faith is not every where planted; but, that unbelief every where prevails.

## XIV

1. At that time - When our Lord had spent about a year in his public ministry. Tetrarch - King of a fourth part of his father's dominions. Mark vi, 14.

2. He is risen from the dead - Herod was a Sadducee: and the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead. But Sadduceeism staggers when conscience awakes.

3. His brother Philip's wife - Who was still alive. Mark vi, 17.

4. It is not lawful for thee to have her - It was not lawful indeed for either of them to have her. For her father Aristobulus was their own brother. John's words were rough, like his raiment. He would not break the force of truth by using soft words, even to a king.

5. He would have put him to death - ln his fit of passion; but he was then restrained by fear of the multitude; and afterward by the reverence he bore him.

6. The daughter of Herodias - Afterward infamous for a life suitable to this beginning.

8. Being before instructed by her mother - Both as to the matter and manner of her petition: She said, Give me here - Fearing if he had time to consider, he would not do it: John the Baptist's head in a charger - A large dish or bowl.

9. And the king was sorry - Knowing that John was a good man. Yet for the oath's sake - So he murdered an innocent man from mere tenderness of conscience.

10. And he sent and beheaded John in the prison, and his head was given to the damsel - How mysterious is the providence, which left the life of so holy a man in such infamous hands! which permitted it to be sacrificed to the malice of an abandoned harlot, the petulancy of a vain girl, and the rashness of a foolish, perhaps drunken prince, who made a prophet's head the reward of a dance! But we are sure the Almighty will repay his servants in another world for what ever they suffer in this.

13. Jesus withdrew into a desert place -

1. To avoid Herod:
2. Because of the multitude pressing upon him, Mark vi, xxxii, and
3. To talk with his disciples, newly returned from their progress, Luke ix, x, apart - From all but his disciples. John vi, 1.

15. The time is now past - The usual meal time. Mark vi, 35; Luke ix, 12.

22. He constrained his disciples - Who were unwilling to leave him. Mark vi, 45; John vi, 15.

24. In the evening - Learned men say the Jews reckoned two evenings; the first beginning at three in the afternoon, the second, at sunset. If so, the latter is meant here.

25. The fourth watch - The Jews (as well as the Romans) usually divided the night into four watches, of three hours each. The first watch began at six, the second at nine, the third at twelve, the fourth at three in the morning. If it be thou - It is the same as, Since it is thou. The particle if frequently bears this meaning, both in ours and in all languages. So it means, John xiii, 14, 17. St. Peter was in no doubt, or he would not have quitted the ship.

30. He was afraid - Though he had been used to the sea, and was a skilful swimmer. But so it frequently is. When grace begins to act, the natural courage and strength are withdrawn.

33. Thou art the Son of God - They mean, the Messiah.

35. Mark vi, 45.

## XV

1. Mark vii, 1.

2. The elders - The chief doctors or, teachers among the Jews.

3. They wash not their hands when they eat bread - Food in general is termed bread in Hebrew; so that to eat bread is the same as to make a meal.

4. honour thy father and mother - Which implies all such relief as they stand in need of. Exod. xx, 12; xxi, 17.

5. It is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest have been profited by me - That is, I have given, or at least, purpose to give to the treasury of the temple, what you might otherwise have had from me.

7. Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying - That is, the description which Isaiah gave of your fathers, is exactly applicable to you. The words therefore which were a description of them, are a prophecy with regard to you.

8. Their heart is far from me - And without this all outward worship is mere mockery of God. Isaiah xxix, 13.

9. Teaching the commandments of men - As equal with, nay, superior to, those of God. What can be a more heinous sin?

13. Every plant - That is, every doctrine.

14. Let them alone - If they are indeed blind leaders of the blind; let them alone: concern not yourselves about them: a plain direction how to behave with regard to all such. Luke vi, 39.

17. Are ye also yet without understanding - How fair and candid are the sacred historians? Never concealing or excusing their own blemishes.

19. First evil thoughts - then murders - and the rest. Railings - The Greek word includes all reviling, backbiting, and evil speaking.

21. Mark vii, 24.

22. A woman of Canaan - Canaan was also called Syrophenicia, as lying between Syria properly so called, and Phenicia, by the sea side. Cried to him - From afar, Thou Son of David - So she had some knowledge of the promised Messiah.

23. He answered her not a word - He sometimes tries our faith in like manner.

24. I am not sent - Not primarily; not yet.

25. Then came she - Into the house where he now was.

28. Thy faith - Thy reliance on the power and goodness of God.

29. The sea of Galilee - The Jews gave the name of seas to all large lakes. This was a hundred furlongs long, and forty broad. It was called also, the sea of Tiberias. It lay on the borders of Galilee, and the city of Tiberias stood on its western shore. It was likewise styled the lake of Gennesareth: perhaps a corruption of Cinnereth, the name by which it was anciently called, Num. xxxiv, 11. Mark vii, 31.

32. They continue with me now three days - It was now the third day since they came. Mark viii, 1.

36. He gave thanks, or blessed the food - That is, he praised God for it, and prayed for a blessing upon it.

## XVI

1. A sign from heaven - Such they imagined Satan could not counterfeit. Mark viii, 11; Matt. xii, 38.

2. Luke xii, 54.

3. The signs of the times - The signs which evidently show, that this is the time of the Messiah.

4. A wicked and adulterous generation - Ye would seek no farther sign, did not your wickedness, your love of the world, which is spiritual adultery, blind your understanding.

5. Mark viii, 14.

6. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees - That is, of their false doctrine: this is elegantly so called; for it spreads in the soul, or the Church, as leaven does in meal. Luke xii, 1.

7. They reasoned among themselves - What must we do then for bread, since we have taken no bread with us?

8. Why reason ye - Why are you troubled about this? Am I not able, if need so require, to supply you by a word?

11. How do ye not understand - Beside, do you not understand, that I did not mean bread, by the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?

13. And Jesus coming - There was a large interval of time between what has been related, and what follows. The passages that follow were but a short time before our Lord suffered. Mark viii, 27; Luke ix, 18.

14. Jeremiah, or one of the prophets - There was at that time a current tradition among the Jews, that either Jeremiah, or some other of the ancient prophets would rise again before the Messiah came.

16. Peter - Who was generally the most forward to speak.

17. Flesh and blood - That is, thy own reason, or any natural power whatsoever.

18. On this rock - Alluding to his name, which signifies a rock, namely, the faith which thou hast now professed; I will build my Church - But perhaps when our Lord uttered these words, he pointed to himself, in like manner as when he said, Destroy this temple, John ii, 19; meaning the temple of his body. And it is certain, that as he is spoken of in Scripture, as the only foundation of the Church, so this is that which the apostles and evangelists laid in their preaching. It is in respect of laying this, that the names of the twelve apostles (not of St. Peter only) were equally inscribed on the twelve foundations of the city of God, Rev. xxi, 14. The gates of hell - As gates and walls were the strength of cities, and as courts of judicature were held in their gates, this phrase properly signifies the power and policy of Satan and his instruments. Shall not prevail against it - Not against the Church universal, so as to destroy it. And they never did. There hath been a small remnant in all ages.

19. I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven - Indeed not to him alone, (for they were equally given to all the apostles at the same time, John xx, 21, 22, 23;) but to him were first given the keys both of doctrine and discipline. He first, after our Lord's resurrection, exercised the apostleship, Acts i, 15. And he first by preaching opened the kingdom of heaven, both to the Jews, Acts ii, , and to the Gentiles, Acts x, . Under the term of binding and loosing are contained all those acts of discipline which Peter and his brethren performed as apostles: and undoubtedly what they thus performed on earth, God confirmed in heaven. Matt. xviii, 18.

20. Then charged he his disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ - Jesus himself had not said it expressly even to his apostles, but left them tb infer it from his doctrine and miracles. Neither was it proper the apostles should say this openly, before that grand proof of it, his resurrection. If they had, they who believed them would the more earnestly have sought to take and make him a king: and they who did not believe them would the snore vehemently have rejected and opposed such a Messiah.

21. From that time Jesus began to tell his disciples, that he must suffer many things - Perhaps this expression, began, always implied his entering on a set and solemn discourse. Hitherto he had mainly taught them only one point, That he was the Christ. From this time he taught them another, That Christ must through sufferings and death enter into his glory. From the elders - The most honourable and experienced men; the chief priests - Accounted the most religious; and the scribes - The most learned body of men in the nation. Would not one have expected, that these should have been the very first to receive him? But not many wise, not many noble were called. favour thyself - The advice of the world, the flesh, and the devil, to every one of our Lord's followers. Mark viii, 31; Luke ix, 22.

23. Get thee behind me - Out of my sight. It is not improbable, Peter might step before him, to stop him. Satan - Our Lord is not recorded to have given so sharp a reproof to any other of his apostles on any occasion. He saw it was needful for the pride of Peter's heart, puffed up with the commendation lately given him. Perhaps the term Satan may not barely mean, Thou art my enemy, while thou fanciest thyself most my friend; but also, Thou art acting the very part of Satan, both by endeavouring to hinder the redemption of mankind, and by giving me the most deadly advice that can ever spring from the pit of hell. Thou savourest not - Dost not relish or desire. We may learn from hence,

1. That whosoever says to us in such a case, favour thyself, is acting the part of the devil:
2. That the proper answer to such an adviser is, Get thee behind me:
3. That otherwise he will be an offense to us, an occasion of our stumbling, if not falling:
4. That this advice always proceeds from the not relishing the things of God, but the things of men. Yea, so far is this advice, favour thyself, from being fit for a Christian either to give or take, that if any man will come after Christ, his very first step is to deny, or renounce himself: in the room of his own will, to substitute the will of God, as his one principle of action.

24. If any man be willing to come after me - None is forced; but if any will be a Christian, it must be on these terms, Let him deny himself, and take up his cross - A rule that can never be too much observed: let him in all things deny his own will, however pleasing, and do the will of God, however painful. Should we not consider all crosses, all things grievous to flesh and blood, as what

they really are, as opportunities of embracing God's will at the expense of our own? And consequently as so many steps by which we may advance toward perfection? We should make a swift progress in the spiritual life, if we were faithful in this practice. Crosses are so frequent, that whoever makes advantage of them, will soon be a great gainer. Great crosses are occasions of great improvement: and the little ones, which come daily, and even hourly, make up in number what they want in weight. We may in these daily and hourly crosses make effectual oblations of our will to God; which oblations, so frequently repeated, will soon amount to a great sum. Let us remember then (what can never be sufficiently inculcated) that God is the author of all events: that none is so small or inconsiderable, as to escape his notice and direction. Every event therefore declares to us the will of God, to which thus declared we should heartily submit. We should renounce our own to embrace it; we should approve and choose what his choice warrants as best for us. Herein should we exercise ourselves continually; this should be our practice all the day long. We should in humility accept the little crosses that are dispensed to us, as those that best suit our weakness. Let us bear these little things, at least for God's sake, and prefer his will to our own in matters of so small importance. And his goodness will accept these mean oblations; for he despiseth not the day of small things. Matt. x, 38.

25. Whosoever will save his life - At the expense of his conscience: whosoever, in the very highest instance, that of life itself, will not renounce himself, shall be lost eternally. But can any man hope he should be able thus to renounce himself, if he cannot do it in the smallest instances? And whosoever will lose his life shall find it - What he loses on earth he shall find in heaven. Matt. x, 39; Mark viii, 35; Luke ix, 24; xvii, 33; John xii, 25.

27. For the Son of man shall come - For there is no way to escape the righteous judgment of God.

28. And as an emblem of this, there are some here who shall live to see tho Messiah coming to set up his mediatorial kingdom, with great power and glory, by the increase of his Church, and the destruction of the temple, city, and polity of the Jews.

## XVII

1. A high mountain - Probably Mount Tabor. Mark ix, 2; Luke ix, 28.

2. And was transfigured - Or transformed. The indwelling Deity darted out its rays through the veil of the flesh; and that with such transcendent splendour, that he no longer bore the form of a servant. His face shone with Divine majesty, like the sun in its strength; and all his body was so irradiated by it, that his clothes could not conceal its glory, but became white and glittering as the very light, with which he covered himself as with a garment.

3. There appeared Moses and Elijah - Here for the full confirmation of their faith in Jesus, Moses, the giver of the law, Elijah, the most zealous of all the prophets, and God speaking from heaven, all bore witness to him.

4. Let us make three tents - The words of rapturous surprise. He says three, not six: because the apostles desired to be with their Master.

5. Hear ye him - As superior even to Moses and the prophets. See Deut. xviii, 17.

7. Be not afraid - And doubtless the same moment he gave them courage and strength.

9. Tell the vision to no man - Not to the rest of the disciples, lest they should be grieved and discouraged because they were not admitted to the sight: nor to any other persons, lest it should enrage some the more, and his approaching sufferings shall make others disbelieve it; till the Son of man be risen again - Till the resurrection should make it credible, and confirm their testimony about it.

10. Why then say the scribes, that Elijah must come first - Before the Messiah? If no man is to know of his coming? Should we not rather tell every man, that he is come, and that we have seen him, witnessing to thee as the Messiah?

11. Regulate all things - In order to the coming of Christ.

12. Elijah is come already - And yet when the Jews asked John, Art thou Elijah? He said, I am not, John i, 21. His meaning was, I am not Elijah the Tishbite, come again into the world. But he was the person of whom Malachi prophesied under that name.

14. Mark ix, 14; Luke xi, 37.

15. He is lunatic - This word might with great propriety he used, though the case was mostly preternatural; as the evil spirit would undoubtedly take advantage of the influence which the changes of the moon have on the brain and nerves.

17. O unbelieving and perverse generation - Our Lord speaks principally this to his disciples. How long shall I be with you? - Before you steadfastly believe?

20. Because of your unbelief - Because in this particular they had not faith. If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed - That is, the least measure of it. But it is certain, the faith which is here spoken of does not always imply saving faith. Many have had it who thereby cast out devils, and yet will at last have their portion with them. It is only a supernatural persuasion given a man, that God will work thus by him at that hour. Now, though I have all this faith so as to remove mountains, yet if I have not the faith which worketh by love, I am nothing. To remove mountains was a proverbial phrase among the Jews, and is still retained in their writings, to express a thing which is very difficult, and to appearance impossible. Matt. xxi, 21; Luke xvii, 6.

21. This kind of devils - goeth not out but by prayer and fasting - What a testimony is here of the efficacy of fasting, when added to fervent prayer! Some kinds of devils the apostles had cast out before this, without fasting.

22. Mark ix, 30; Luke ix, 44.

24. When they were come to Capernaum - Where our Lord now dwelt. This was the reason why they stayed till he came thither, to ask him for the tribute. Doth not your Master pay tribute? - This was a tribute or payment of a peculiar kind, being half a shekel, (that is, about fifteen pence, ) which every master of a family used to pay yearly to the service of the temple, to buy salt, and little things not otherwise provided for. It seems to have been a voluntary thing, which custom rather than any law had established.

25. Jesus prevented him - Just when St. Peter was going to ask him for it. Of their own sons, or of strangers? - That is, such as are not of their own family.

26. Then are the sons free - The sense is, This is paid for the use of the house of God. But I am the Son of God. Therefore I am free from any obligation of paying this to my own Father.

27. Yet that, we may not offend them - Even those unjust, unreasonable men, who claim what they have no manner of right to: do not contest it with them, bat rather yield to their demand, than violate peace or love. O what would not one of a loving spirit do for peace! Any thing which is not expressly forbidden in the word of God. A piece of money - The original word is a stater, which

was in value two shillings and sixpence: just the sum that was wanted. Give for me and thee - Peter had a family of his own: the other apostles were the family of Jesus. How illustrious a degree of knowledge and power did our Lord here discover! Knowledge, penetrating into this animal, though beneath the waters; and power, in directing this very fish to Peter's hook, though he himself was at a distance! How must this have encouraged both him and his brethren in a firm dependence on Divine Providence.

## XVIII

1. Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? - Which of us shall be thy prime minister? They still dreamed of a temporal kingdom.

2. And Jesus calling to him a little child - This is supposed to have been the great Ignatius, whom Trajan, the wise, the good Emperor Trajan, condemned to be cast to the wild beasts at Rome! Mark ix, 36; Luke ix, 47.

3. Except ye be converted - The first step toward entering into the kingdom of grace, is to become as little children: lowly in heart, knowing yourselves utterly ignorant and helpless, and hanging wholly on your Father who is in heaven, for a supply of all your wants. We may farther assert, (though it is doubtful whether this text implies so much, ) except ye be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God:, except ye be entirely, inwardly changed, renewed in the image of God, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of glory. Thus must every man be converted in this life, or he can never enter into life eternal. Ye shall in no wise enter - So far from being great in it. Matt. xix, 14.

5, 6. And all who are in this sense little children are unspeakably dear to me. Therefore help them all you can, as if it were myself in person, and see that ye offend them not; that is, that ye turn them not out of the right way, neither hinder them in it. Matt. x, 40; Luke x, 16; John xiii, 20.

7. Wo to the world because of offenses - That is, unspeakable misery will be in the world through them; for it must needs be that offenses come - Such is the nature of things, and such the weakness, folly, and wickedness of mankind, that it cannot be but they will come; but wo to that man - That is, miserable is that man, by whom the offense cometh. Offenses are, all things whereby any one is turned out of, or hindered in the way of God.

8, 9. If thy hand, foot, eye, cause thee to offend - If the most dear enjoyment, the most beloved and useful person, turn thee out of, or hinder thee in the way Is not this a hard saying? Yes; if thou take counsel with flesh and blood. Matt. v, 29; Mark ix, 43.

10. See that ye despise not one of these little ones - As if they were beneath your notice. Be careful to receive and not to offend, the very weakest believer in Christ: for as inconsiderable as some of these may appear to thee, the very angels of God have a peculiar charge over them: even those of the highest order, who continually appear at the throne of the Most High. To behold the face of God seems to signify the waiting near his throne; and to be an allusion to the office of chief ministers in earthly courts, who daily converse with their princes.

11. Another, and yet a stronger reason for your not despising them is, that I myself came into the world to save them. Luke xix, 10.

12. Luke xv, 4.

14. So it is not the will of your Father - Neither doth my Father despise the least of them. Observe the gradation. The angels, the Son, the Father.

15. But how can we avoid giving offense to some? or being offended at others! Especially suppose they are quite in the wrong? Suppose they commit a known sin? Our Lord here teaches us how: he lays down a sure method of avoiding all offenses. Whosoever closely observes this threefold rule, will seldom offend others, and never be offended himself. If any do any thing amiss, of which thou art an eye or ear witness, thus saith the Lord, If thy brother - Any who is a member of the same religious community: Sin against thee,

1. Go and reprove him alone - If it may be in person; if that cannot so well be done, by thy messenger; or in writing. Observe, our Lord gives no liberty to omit this; or to exchange it for either of the following steps. If this do not succeed,
2. Take with thee one or two more - Men whom he esteems or loves, who may then confirm and enforce what thou sayest; and afterward, if need require, bear witness of what was spoken. If even this does not succeed, then, and not before,
3. Tell it to the elders of the Church - Lay the whole matter open before those who watch over yours and his soul. If all this avail not, have no farther intercourse with him, only such as thou hast with heathens. Can any thing be plainer? Christ does here as expressly command all Christians who see a brother do evil, to take this way, not another, and to take these steps, in this order, as he does to honour their father and mother. But if so, in what land do the Christians live? If we proceed from the private carriage of man to man, to proceedings of a more public nature, in what Christian nation are Church censures conformed to this rule? Is this the form in which ecclesiastical judgments appear, in the popish, or even the Protestant world? Are these the methods used even by those who boast the most loudly of the authority of Christ to confirm their sentences? Let us earnestly pray, that this dishonour to the Christian name may be wiped away, and that common humanity may not, with such solemn mockery, be destroyed in the name of the Lord! Let him be to thee as the heathen - To whom thou still owest earnest good will, and all the offices of humanity. Luke xvii, 3.

18. Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth - By excommunication, pronounced in the spirit and power of Christ. Whatsoever ye shall loose - By absolution from that sentence. In the primitive Church, absolution meant no more than a discharge from Church censure. Again I say - And not only your intercession for the penitent, but all your united prayers, shall be heard. How great then is the power of joint prayer! If two of you - Suppose a man and his wife. Matt. xvi, 19.

20. Where two or three are gathered together in my name - That is, to worship me. I am in the midst of them - By my Spirit, to quicken their prayers, guide their counsels, and answer their petitions.

22. Till seventy times seven - That is, as often as there is occasion. A certain number is put for an uncertain.

23. Therefore - In this respect.

24. One was brought who owed him ten thousand talents - According to the usual computation, if these were talents of gold, this would amount to seventy-two millions sterling. If they were talents of silver, it must have been four millions, four hundred thousand pounds. Hereby our Lord intimates

the vast number and weight of our offenses against God, and our utter incapacity of making him any satisfaction.

25. As he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold - Such was the power which creditors anciently had over their insolvent debtors in several countries.

30. Went with him before a magistrate, and cast him into prison, protesting he should lie there, till he should pay the whole debt.

34. His Lord delivered him to the tormentors - Imprisonment is a much severer punishment in the eastern countries than in ours. State criminals, especially when condemned to it, are not only confined to a very mean and scanty allowance, but are frequently loaded with clogs or heavy yokes, so that they can neither lie nor sit at ease: and by frequent scourgings and sometimes rackings are brought to an untimely end. Till he should pay all that was due to him - That is, without all hope of release, for this he could never do. How observable is this whole account; as well as the great inference our Lord draws from it:

1. The debtor was freely and fully forgiven;
2. He wilfully and grievously offended;
3. His pardon was retracted, the whole debt required, and the offender delivered to the tormentors for ever. And shall we still say, but when we are once freely and fully forgiven, our pardon can never be retracted? Verily, verily, I say unto you, So likewise will my heavenly Father do to you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

## XIX

1. He departed - and from that time walked no more in Galilee. Mark x, 1.

2. Multitudes followed him, and he healed them there - That is, wheresoever they followed him.

3. The Pharisees came tempting him - Trying to make him contradict Moses. For every cause - That is, for any thing which he dislikes in her. This the scribes allowed.

4. He said, Have ye not read - So instead of contradicting him, our Lord confutes them by the very words of Moses. He who made them, made them male and female from the beginning - At least from the beginning of the Mosaic creation. And where do we read of any other? Does it not follow, that God's making Eve was part of his original design, and not a consequence of Adam's beginning to fall? By making them one man and one woman, he condemned polygamy: by making them one flesh, he condemned divorce.

5. And said - By the mouth of Adam, who uttered the words. Gen. ii, 24.

7. Why did Moses command - Christ replies, Moses permitted (not commanded) it, because of the hardness of your hearts - Because neither your fathers nor you could bear the more excellent way. Deut. xxiv, 1; Matt. v, 31; Mark x, 2; Luke xvi, 18.

9. And I say to you - I revoke that indulgence from this day, so that from henceforth, Whosoever, &c.

11. But he said to them - This is not universally true; it does not hold, with regard to all men, but with regard to those only to whom is given this excellent gift of God. Now this is given to three

sorts of persons to some by natural constitution, without their choice: to others by violence, against their choice; and to others by grace with their choice: who steadily withstand their natural inclinations, that they may wait upon God without distraction.

12. There are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake - Happy they! who have abstained from marriage (though without condemning or despising it) that they might walk more closely with God! He that is able to receive it, let him receive it - This gracious command (for such it is unquestionably, since to say, such a man may live single, is saying nothing. Who ever doubted this?) is not designed for all men: but only for those few who are able to receive it. O let these receive it joyfully!

13. That he should lay his hands on them - This was a rite which was very early used, in praying for a blessing on young persons. See Gen. xlviii, 14, 20. The disciples rebuked them - That is, them that brought them: probably thinking such an employ beneath the dignity of their Master. Mark x, 13; Luke xviii, 15.

14. Of such is the kingdom of heaven - Little children, either in a natural or spiritual sense, have a right to enter into my kingdom. Matt. xviii, 3.

16. And behold one came - Many of the poor had followed him from the beginning. One rich man came at last. Mark x, 17; Luke xviii, 18.

17. Why callest thou me good - Whom thou supposest to be only a man. There is none good - Supremely, originally, essentially, but God. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments - From a principle of loving faith. Believe, and thence love and obey. And this undoubtedly is the way to eternal life. Our Lord therefore does not answer ironically, which had been utterly beneath his character, but gives a plain, direct, serious answer to a serious question.

19. Exod. xx, 12. &c.

20. The young man saith, All these have I kept from my childhood - So he imagined; and perhaps he had, as to the letter; but not as to the spirit, which our Lord immediately shows.

21. If thou desirest to be perfect - That is, to be a real Christian: Sell what thou hast - He who reads the heart saw his bosom sin was love of the world; and knew he could not be saved from this, but by literally renouncing it. To him therefore he gave this particular direction, which he never designed for a general rule. For him that was necessary to salvation: to us it is not. To sell all was an absolute duty to him; to many of us it would be ali absolute sin. The young man went away - Not being willing to have salvation at so high a price.

24. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, (a proverbial expression, ) than for a rich man to go through the strait gate: that is, humanly speaking, it is an absolute impossibility. Rich man! tremble! feel this impossibility; else thou art lost for ever!

25. His disciples were amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? - If rich men, with all their advantages, cannot? Who? A poor man; a peasant; a beggar: ten thousand of them, sooner than one that is rich.

26. Jesus looking upon them - To compose their hurried spirits. O what a speaking look was there! Said to them - With the utmost sweetness: With men this is impossible - It is observable, he does not retract what he had said: no, nor soften it in the least degree, but rather strengthens it, by representing the salvation of a rich man as the utmost effort of Omnipotence.

28. In the renovation - In the final renovation of all things: Ye shall sit - In the beginning of the judgment they shall stand, 2 Cor. v, 10. Then being absolved, they shall sit with the Judge, 1 Cor. vi, ii, On twelve thrones - So our Lord promised, without expressing any condition: yet as absolute

as the words are, it is certain there is a condition implied, as in many scriptures, where none is expressed. In consequence of this, those twelve did not sit on those twelve thrones: for the throne of Judas another took, so that he never sat thereon.

29. And every one - In every age and country; not you my apostles only; That hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or wife, or children - Either by giving any of them up, when they could not be retained with a clear conscience or by willingly refraining from acquiring them: Shall receive a hundred-fold - In value, though not in kind, even in the present world.

30. But many first - Many of those who were first called, shall be last - Shall have the lowest reward: those who came after them being preferred before them: and yet possibly both the first and the last may be saved, though with different degrees of glory. Matt. xx, 16; Mark x, 31; Luke xiii, 30.

## XX

1. That some of those who were first called may yet be last, our Lord confirms by the following parable: of which the primary scope is, to show, That many of the Jews would be rejected, and many of the Gentiles accepted; the secondary, That of the Gentiles, many who were first converted would be last and lowest in the kingdom of glory; and many of those who were last converted would be first, and highest therein. The kingdom of heaven is like - That is, the manner of God's proceeding in his kingdom resembles that of a householder. In the morning - At six, called by the Roman and Jews, the first hour. From thence reckoning on to the evening, they called nine, the third hour; twelve, the sixth; three in the afternoon, the ninth; and five, the eleventh. To hire labourers into his vineyard - All who profess to be Christians are in this sense labourers, and are supposed during their life to be working in God's vineyard.

2. The Roman penny was about seven pence halfpenny. [About thirteen and three quarter cents, American.] This was then the usual price of a day's labour.

6. About the eleventh hour - That is, very late; long after the rest were called.

8. In the evening - Of life; or of the world.

9. Who were hired about the eleventh hour - Either the Gentiles, who were called long after the Jews into the vineyard of the Church of Christ; or those in every age who did not hear, or at least understand the Gospel call, till their day of life was drawing to a period. Some circumstances of the parable seem best to suit the former, some the latter of these senses.

10. The first supposed they should have received more - Probably the first here may mean the Jews, who supposed they should always be preferred before the Gentiles.

12. Thou hast made them equal to us - So St. Peter expressly, Acts xv, 9. God-hath put no difference between us (Jews) and them, (Gentiles, ) purifying their hearts by faith. And those who were equally holy here, whenever they were called, will be equally happy hereafter.

14. It is my will to give to this last called among the heathens even as to the first called among the Jews: yea, and to the late converted publicans and sinners, even as to those who, were called long before.

15. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? - Yea, doubtless, to give either to Jew or Gentile a reward infinitely greater than he deserves. But can it be inferred from hence, that

it is lawful, or possible, for the merciful Father of spirits to "Consign an unborn soul to hell? Or damn him from his mother's womb?" Is thine eye evil because I am good - Art thou envious, because I am gracious? Here is an evident reference to that malignant aspect, which is generally the attendant of a selfish and envious temper.

16. So the last shall be first, and the first last - Not only with regard to the Jews and Gentiles, but in a thousand other instances. For many are called - All who hear the Gospel; but few chosen - Only those who obey it. Matt. xix, 30; xxii, 14.

17. Mark x, 32; Luke xviii, 31.

20. Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children - Considering what he had been just speaking, was ever any thing more unreasonable? Perhaps Zebedee himself was dead, or was not a follower of Christ. Mark x, 35.

21. In thy kingdom - Still they expected a temporal kingdom.

22. Ye know not what is implied in being advanced in my kingdom, and necessarily prerequired thereto. All who share in my kingdom must first share in my sufferings. Are you able and willing to do this? Both these expressions, The cup, the baptism, are to be understood of his sufferings and death. The like expressions are common among the Jews.

23. But to sit on my right hand - Christ applies to the glories of heaven, what his disciples were so stupid as to understand of the glories of earth. But he does not deny that this is his to give. It is his to give in the strictest propriety, both as God, and as the Son of man. He only asserts, that he gives it to none but those for whom it is originally prepared; namely, those who endure to the end in the faith that worketh by love.

25. Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles Lord it over them - And hence you imagine, the chief in my kingdom will do as they: but it will be quite otherwise.

26. Your minister - That is, your servant. Matt. xxiii, 11.

29. Mark x, 46; Luke xviii, 35.

30. Behold two blind men cried out - St. Mark and St. Luke mention only one of them, blind Bartimeus. He was far the more eminent of the two, and, as it seems, spoke for both.

31. The multitude charged them to hold their peace - And so they will all who begin to cry after the Son of David. But let those who feel their need of him cry the more; otherwise they will come short of a cure.

## XXI

1. Mark xi, 1; Luke xix, 29; John xii, 12.

5. The daughter of Sion - That is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem: the first words of the passage are cited from Isaiah lxii, 11; the rest from Zech. ix, 9. The ancient Jewish doctors were wont to apply these prophecies to the Messiah. On an ass - The Prince of Peace did not take a horse, a warlike animal. But he will ride on that by and by, Rev. xix, 11. In the patriarchal ages, illustrious persons thought it no disgrace to make use of this animal: but it by no means appears, that this opinion prevailed, or this custom continued, till the reign of Tiberias. Was it a mean attitude wherein our Lord then appeared? Mean even to contempt! I grant it: I glory in it: it is for the comfort of my soul for the honour of his humility, and for the utter confusion of all worldly pomp and grandeur.

7. They set him thereon - That is, on the clothes.

8. A great multitude spread their garments in the way - A custom which was usual at the creation of a king, 2 Kings ix, 13.

9. The multitudes cried, saying - Probably from a Divine impulse; for certainly most of them understood not the words they uttered. Hoseaanna - (Lord save us) was a solemn word in frequent use among the Jews. The meaning is, "We sing hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he, the Messiah, of the Lord. Save. Thou that art in the highest heavens." Our Lord restrained all public tokens of honour from the people till now, lest the envy of his enemies should interrupt his preaching before the time. But this reason now ceasing, he suffered their acclamations, that they might be a public testimony against their wickedness, who in four or five days after cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. The expressions recorded by the other evangelists are somewhat different from these: but all of them were undoubtedly used by some or others of the multitude.

11. This is Jesus from Nazareth - What a stumbling block was this! if he was of Nazareth, he could not be the Messiah. But they who earnestly desired to know the truth would not stumble thereat: for upon inquiry (which such would not fail to make) they would find, he was not of Nazareth, but Bethlehem.

12. He cast out all that sold and bought - Doves and oxen for sacrifice. He had cast them out three years before, John ii, 14; bidding them not make that house a house of merchandise. Upon the repetition of the offense, he used sharper words. In the temple - That is, in the outer court of it, where the Gentiles used to worship. The money changers - The exchangers of foreign money into current coin, which those who came from distant parts might want to offer for the service of the temple. Mark xi, 11, 15; Luke xix, 45.

13. A den of thieves - A proverbial expression, for a harbour of wicked men. Isaiah lvi, 7; Jer. vii, 11.

16. Psalm viii, 2.

17. Mark xi, 11, 12.

20. The disciples seeing it - As they went by, the next day.

21. Jesus answering, said, If ye have faith - Whence we may learn, that one great end of our Lord in this miracle was to confirm and increase their faith: another was, to warn them against unfruitfulness. Matt. xvii, 20.

23. When he was come into the temple, the chief priests came - Who thought he violated their right: and the elders of the people - Probably, members of the sanhedrim, to whom that title most properly belonged: which is the more probable, as they were the persons under whose cognizance the late action of Christ, in purging the temple, would naturally fall. These, with the chief priests, seem purposely to have appeared in a considerable company, to give the more weight to what they said, and if need were, to bear a united testimony against him. As he was teaching - Which also they supposed he had no authority to do, being neither priest, nor Levite, nor scribe. Some of the priests (though not as priests) and all the scribes were authorized teachers. By what authority dost thou these things - Publicly teach the people! And drive out those who had our commission to traffic in the outer court? Luke xx, 1; Mark xi, 27.

24. I will ask you one thing - Who have asked me many: The baptism, that is, the whole ministry of John, was it from heaven or from men? - By what authority did he act and teach? Did man or God give him that authority? Was it not God? But if so, the consequence was clear. For John testified that Jesus was the Christ.

25. Why did ye not believe him - Testifying this.

27. Neither tell I you - Not again, in express terms: he had often told them before, and they would not believe him.

30. He answered, I go, sir: but went not - Just so did the scribes and Pharisees: they professed the greatest readiness and zeal in the service of God: but it was bare profession, contradicted by all their actions.

32. John came in a way of righteousness - Walking in it, as well as teaching it. The publicans and harlots - The most notorious sinners were reformed, though at first they said, I will not. And ye seeing the amazing change which was wrought in them, though at first ye said, I go, sir, repented not afterward - Were no more convinced than before. O how is this scripture fulfilled at this day!

33. A certain householder planted a vineyard - God planted the Church in Canaan; and hedged it round about - First with the law, then with his peculiar providence: and digged a wine press - Perhaps it may mean Jerusalem: and built a tower - The temple: and went into a far country - That is, left the keepers of his vineyard, in some measure, to behave as they should see good. Mark xii, 1; Luke xx, 9.

34. He sent his servants - His extraordinary messengers, the prophets: to the husbandmen - The ordinary preachers or ministers of the Jews.

41. They say - Perhaps some of the by-standers, not the chief priests or Pharisees; who, as St. Luke relates, said, God forbid, Luke xx, 16.

42. The builders - The scribes and priests, whose office it was to build up the Church. Is become the head of the corner - Or the chief corner stone: he is become the foundation of the Church, on which the whole building rests, and is the principal corner stone, for uniting the Gentiles to it, as the chief corner stone of a house supports and links its two sides together. Psalm cxviii, 22.

43. Therefore - Because ye reject this corner stone. The kingdom of God - That is, the Gospel.

44. Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken - Stumblers at Christ shall even then receive much hurt. He is said to fall on this stone, who hears the Gospel and does not believe. But on whomsoever it shall fall - In vengeance, it will utterly destroy him. It will fall on every unbeliever, when Christ cometh in the clouds of heaven. Luke xx, 18.

## XXII

1. Jesus answering, spake - That is, spake with reference to what had just past.

2. A king, who made a marriage feast for his son - So did God, when he brought his first - begotten into the world.

3. Them that were invited - Namely, the Jews.

4. Fatlings - Fatted beasts and fowls.

5. One to his farm, another to his merchandise - One must mind what he has; another, gain what he wants. How many perish by misusing lawful things!

7. The king sending forth his troops - The Roman armies employed of God for that purpose. Destroyed those murderers - Primarily the Jews.

8. Go into the highways - The word properly signifies, the by- ways, or turnings of the road.

10. They gathered all - By preaching every where.

11. The guest - The members of the visible Church.

12. A wedding garment - The righteousness of Christ, first imputed, then implanted. It may easily be observed, this has no relation to the Lord's Supper, but to God's proceeding at the last day.

14. Many are called; few chosen - Many hear; few believe. Yea, many are members of the visible, but few of the invisible Church. Matt. xx, 16.

15. Mark xii, 13; Luke xx, 20.

16. The Herodians were a set of men peculiarly attached to Herod, and consequently zealous for the interest of the Roman government, which was the main support of the dignity and royalty of his family. Thou regardest not the person of men - Thou favourest no man for his riches or greatness.

17. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cesar? - If he had said, Yes, the Pharisees would have accused him to the people, as a betrayer of the liberties of his country. If he had said, No, the Herodians would have accused him to the Roman governor.

18. Ye hypocrites - Pretending a scruple of conscience.

20. The tribute money - A Roman coin, stamped with the head of Cesar, which was usually paid in tribute.

21. They say to him, Cesar's - Plainly acknowledging, by their having received his coin, that they were under his government. And indeed this is a standing rule. The current coin of every nation shows who is the supreme governor of it. Render therefore, ye Pharisees, to Cesar the things which ye yourselves acknowledge to be Cesar's: and, ye Herodians, while ye are zealous for Cesar, see that ye render to God the things that are God's.

23. Mark xii, 18.

24. Deut. xxv, 5.

25. Now there were with us seven brethren - This story seems to have been a kind of common-place objection, which no doubt they brought upon all occasions.

29. Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures - Which plainly assert a resurrection. Nor the power of God - Which is well able to effect it. How many errors flow from the same source?

30. They are as the angels - Incorruptible and immortal. So is the power of God shown in them! So little need had they of marriage!

31. Have ye not read - The Sadducees had a peculiar value for the books of Moses. Out of these therefore our Lord argues with them.

32. I am the God of Abraham - The argument runs thus: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: (for that expression, Thy God, implies both benefit from God to man, and duty from man to God) but he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: therefore, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not dead, but living. Therefore, the soul does not die with the body. So indeed the Sadducees supposed, and it was on this ground that they denied the resurrection. Exod. iii, 6.

33. At his doctrine - At the clearness and solidity of his answers.

34. Mark xii, 28; Luke x, 25.

35. A scribe asking him a question, trying him - Not, as it seems, with any ill design: but barely to make a farther trial of that wisdom, which he had shown in silencing the Sadducees.

37. Deut. vi, 5.

39. Lev. xix, 18.

42. Luke xx, 41.

43. How doth David then by the Spirit - By inspiration, call him Lord? If he be merely the son (or descendant) of David? If he be, as you suppose, a mere man, the son of a man?

44. The Lord said to my Lord - This his dominion, to which David himself was subject, shows both the heavenly majesty of the king, and the nature of his kingdom. Sit thou on my right hand - That is, remain in the highest authority and power. Psalm cx, 1.

46. Neither durst any question him any more - Not by way of ensnaring or tempting him.

## XXIII

1. Then - Leaving all converse with his adversaries, whom he now left to the hardness of their hearts.

2. The scribes sit in the chair of Moses - That is, read and expound the law of Moses, and are their appointed teachers.

3. All things therefore - Which they read out of the law, and enforce therefrom.

4. Luke xi, 46.

5. Their phylacteries - The Jews, understanding those words literally, It shall be as a token upon thy hand, and as frontlets between thine eyes, Exod. xiii, 16. And thou shalt bind these words for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes, Deut. vi, 8; used to wear little scrolls of paper or parchment, bound on their wrist and foreheads, on which several texts of Scripture were writ. These they supposed, as a kind of charm, would preserve them from danger. And hence they seem to have been called phylacteries, or preservatives. The fringes of their garments - Which God had enjoined them to wear, to remind them of doing all the commandments, Num. xv, 38. These, as well as their phylacteries, the Pharisees affected to wear broader and larger than other men. Mark xii, 38.

8, 9, 10. The Jewish rabbis were also called father and master, by their several disciples, whom they required,

1. To believe implicitly what they affirmed, without asking any farther reason;
2. To obey implicitly what they enjoined, without seeking farther authority. Our Lord, therefore, by forbidding us either to give or receive the title of rabbi, master, or father, forbids us either to receive any such reverence, or to pay any such to any but God.

11. Matt. xx, 26.

12. Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted - It is observable that no one sentence of our Lord's is so often repeated as this: it occurs, with scarce any variation, at least ten times in the evangelists. Luke xiv, 11; xviii, 14.

13. Wo to you - Our Lord pronounced eight blessings upon the mount: he pronounces eight woes here; not as imprecations, but solemn, compassionate declarations of the misery, which these stubborn sinners were bringing upon themselves. Ye go not in - For ye are not poor in spirit; and ye hinder those that would be so.

14. Mark xii, 40; Luke xx, 47.

16. Wo to you, ye blind guides - Before he had styled them hypocrites, from their personal character: now he gives them another title, respecting their influence upon others. Both these

appellations are severely put together in the 23rd and 25th verses; and this severity rises to the height in the 33rd verse. The gold of the temple - The treasure kept there. He is bound - To keep his oath.

20. He that sweareth by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon - Not only by the gift, but by the holy fire, and the sacrifice; and above all, by that God to whom they belong; inasmuch as every oath by a creature is an implicit appeal to God.

23. Judgment - That is, justice: Faith - The word here means fidelity.

24. Ye blind guides, who teach others to do as you do yourselves, to strain out a gnat - From the liquor they are going to drink! and swallow a camel - It is strange, that glaring false print, strain at a gnat, which quite alters the sense, should run through all the editions of our English Bibles.

25. Full of rapine and intemperance - The censure is double (taking intemperance in the vulgar sense.) These miserable men procured unjustly what they used intemperately. No wonder tables so furnished prove a snare, as many find by sad experience. Thus luxury punishes fraud while it feeds disease with the fruits of injustice. But intemperance in the full sense takes in not only all kinds of outward intemperance, particularly in eating and drinking, but all intemperate or immoderate desires, whether of honour, gain, or sensual pleasure.

26. Ye build the tombs of the prophets - And that is all, for ye neither observe their sayings, nor imitate their actions.

30. We would not have been partakers - So ye make fair professions, as did your fathers.

31. Wherefore ye testify against yourselves - By your smooth words as well as devilish actions: that ye are the genuine sons of them who killed the prophets of their own times, while they professed the utmost veneration for those of past ages. From the 3rd to the 30th is exposed every thing that commonly passes in the world for religion, whereby the pretenders to it keep both themselves and others from entering into the kingdom of God; from attaining, or even seeking after those tempers, in which alone true Christianity consists. As,

1. Punctuality in attending on public and private prayer, ver. 4-14. Matt. xxiii, 4-14
2. Zeal to make proselytes to our opinion or communion, though they have less of the spirit of religion than before, ver. 15.
3. A superstitious reverence for consecrated places or things, without any for Him to whom they are consecrated, ver. 16-22.
4. A scrupulous exactness in little observances, though with the neglect of justice, mercy, and faith, ver. 23, 24.
5. A nice cautiousness to cleanse the outward behaviour, but without any regard to inward purity, ver. 25, 26.
6. A specious face of virtue and piety, covering the deepest hypocrisy and villany, ver. 27, 28.
7. A professed veneration for all good men, except those among whom they live.

32. Fill ye up - A word of permission, not of command: as if he had said, I contend with you no longer: I leave you to yourselves: you have conquered: now ye may follow the devices of your own hearts. The measure of your fathers - Wickedness: ye may now be as wicked as they.

33. Ye serpents - Our Lord having now lost all hope of reclaiming these, speaks so as to affright others from the like sins.

34. Wherefore - That it may appear you are the true children of those murderers, and have a right to have their iniquities visited on you: Behold, I send - Is not this speaking as one having

authority? Prophets - Men with supernatural credentials: Wise men - Such as have both natural abilities and experience; and scribes - Men of learning: but all will not avail. Luke xi, 49.

35. That upon you may come - The consequence of which will be, that upon you will come the vengeance of all the righteous blood shed on the earth - Zechariah the son of Barachiah - Termed Jehoiada, 2 Chron. xxiv, 20, where the story is related: Ye slew - Ye make that murder also of your fathers your own, by imitating it: Between the temple - That is, the inner temple, and the altar - Which stood in the outer court. Our Lord seems to refer to this instance, rather than any other, because he was the last of the prophets on record that were slain by the Jews for reproving their wickedness: and because God's requiring this blood as well as that of Abel, is particularly taken notice of in Scripture.

37. Luke xiii, 34.

38. Behold your house - The temple, which is now your house, not God's: Is left unto you - Our Lord spake this as he was going out of it for the last time: Desolate - Forsaken of God and his Christ, and sentenced to utter destruction.

39. Ye - Jews in general; men of Jerusalem in particular: shall not see me from this time - Which includes the short space till his death, till, after a long interval of desolation and misery, ye say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord - Ye receive me with joyful and thankful hearts. This also shall be accomplished in its season.

## XXIV

1. Mark xiii, 1; Luke xxi, 5.

2. There shall not be left one stone upon another - This was most punctually fulfilled; for after the temple was burnt, Titus, the Roman general, ordered the very foundations of it to be dug up; after which the ground on which it stood was ploughed up by Turnus Rufus.

3. As he sat on the mount of Olives - Whence they had a full view of the temple. When shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? - The disciples inquire confusedly

1. Concerning the time of the destruction of the temple;
2. Concerning the signs of Christ's coming, and of the end of the world, as if they imagined these two were the same thing. Our Lord answers distinctly concerning
    1. The destruction of the temple and city, with the signs preceding, ver. 4, &c., 15, &c.
    2. His own coming, and the end of the world, with the signs thereof, ver. 29-31.
    3. The time of the destruction of the temple, ver. 32, &c.
    4. The time of the end of the world, ver. 36.

4. Take heed that no man deceive you - The caution is more particularly designed for the succeeding Christians, whom the apostles then represented. The first sign of my coming is, the rise of false prophets. But it is highly probable, many of these things refer to more important events, which are yet to come.

5. Many shall come in my name - First, false Christs, next, false prophets, Matt. xxiv, 11. At length, both together, ver. 24. And indeed never did so many impostors appear in the world as a

few years before the destruction of Jerusalem; undoubtedly because that was the time wherein the Jews in general expected the Messiah.

6. Wars - Near: Rumours of wars - At a distance. All these things must come to pass - As a foundation for lasting tranquillity. But the end - Concerning which ye inquire, is not yet - So far from it, that this is but the beginning sorrows.

9. Then shall they deliver you up to affliction - As if ye were the cause of all these evils. And ye shall be hated of all nations - Even of those who tolerate all other sects and parties; but in no nation will the children of the devil tolerate the children of God. Matt. x, 17.

10. Then shall many be offended - So as utterly to make shipwreck of faith and a pure conscience. But hold ye fast faith, ver. 11. in spite of false prophets: love, even when iniquity and offenses abound, ver. 12. And hope, unto the end, ver. 13. He that does so, shall be snatched out of the burning. The love of many will wax cold - The generality of those who love God will (like the Church at Ephesus, Rev. ii, 4, ) leave their first love.

13. Matt. x, 22; Mark xiii, 13; Luke xxi, 17.

14. This Gospel shall be preached in all the world - Not universally: this is not done yet: but in general through the several parts of the world, and not only in Judea And this was done by St. Paul and the other apostles, before Jerusalem was destroyed. And then shall the end come - Of the city and temple. Josephus's History of the Jewish War is the best commentary on this chapter. it is a wonderful instance of God's providence, that he, an eye witness, and one who lived and died a Jew, should, especially in so extraordinary a manner, be preserved, to transmit to us a collection of important facts, which so exactly illustrate this glorious prophecy, in almost every circumstance. Mark xiii, 10.

15. When ye see the abomination of desolation - Daniel's term is, The abomination that maketh desolate, Dan. xi, 31; that is, the standards of the desolating legions, on which they bear the abominable images of their idols: Standing in the holy place - Not only the temple and the mountain on which it stood, but the whole city of Jerusalem, and several furlongs of land round about it, were accounted holy; particularly the mount on which our Lord now sat, and on which the Roman afterward planted their ensigns. He that readeth let him understand - Whoever reads that prophecy of Daniel, let him deeply consider it. Mark xiii, 14; Luke xxi, 20; Dan. ix, 27.

16. Then let them who are in Judea flee to the mountains - So the Christians did, and were preserved. It is remarkable that after the Roman under Cestus Gallus made their first advances toward Jerusalem, they suddenly withdrew again, in a most unexpected and indeed impolitic manner. This the Christians took as a signal to retire, which they did, some to Pella, and others to Mount Libanus.

17. Let not him that is on the house top come down to take any thing out of his house - It may be remembered that their stairs used to be on the outside of their houses.

19. Wo to them that are with child, and to them that give suck - Because they cannot so readily make their escape.

20. Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter - They did so; and their flight was in the spring. Neither on the Sabbath - Being on many accounts inconvenient; beside that many would have scrupled to travel far on that day. For the Jews thought it unlawful to walk above two thousand paces (two miles) on the Sabbath day.

21. Then shall be great tribulation - Have not many things spoken in the chapter, as well as in Mark xiii, , Luke xxi, . a farther and much more extensive meaning than has been yet fulfilled?

22. And unless those days were shortened - By the taking of Jerusalem sooner than could be expected: No flesh would be saved - The whole nation would be destroyed. But for the elect's sake - That is, for the sake of the Christians.

23. Mark xiii, 21; Luke xvii, 23.

24. They would deceive, if possible, the very elect - But it is not possible that God should suffer the body of Christians to be thus deceived.

27. For as the lightning goeth forth - For the next coming of Christ will be as quick as lightning; so that there will not be time for any such previous warning.

28. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles he gathered together - Our Lord gives this, as a farther reason, why they should not hearken to any pretended deliverer. As if he had said, Expect not any deliverer of the Jewish nation; for it is devoted to destruction. It is already before God a dead carcass, which the Roman eagles will soon devour. Luke xvii, 37.

29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days - Here our Lord begins to speak of his last coming. But he speaks not so much in the language of man as of God, with whom a thousand years are as one day, one moment. Many of the primitive Christians not observing this, thought he would come immediately, in the common sense of the word: a mistake which St. Paul labours to remove, in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. The powers of the heavens - Probably the influences of the heavenly bodies. Mark xiii, 24; Luke xxi, 25.

30. Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven - It seems a little before he himself descends. The sun, moon, and stars being extinguished, (probably not those of our system only, ) the sign of the Son of man (perhaps the cross) will appear in the glory of the Lord.

31. They shall gather together his elect - That is, all that have endured to the end in the faith which worketh by love.

32. Learn a parable - Our Lord having spoke of the signs preceding the two grand events, concerning which the apostles had inquired, begins here to speak of the time of them. And to the question proposed, ver. 3, concerning the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, he answers ver. 34. Concerning the time of the end of the world, he answers chap. xxiv, 36. Mark xiii, 28; Luke xxi, 29.

34. This generation of men now living shall not pass till all these things be done - The expression implies, that great part of that generation would be passed away, but not the whole. Just so it was. For the city and temple were destroyed thirty-nine or forty years after.

36. But of that day - The day of judgment; Knoweth no man - Not while our Lord was on earth. Yet it might be afterward revealed to St. John consistently with this.

37. Luke xvii, 26.

40. One is taken - Into God's immediate protection: and one is left - To share the common calamities. Our Lord speaks as having the whole transaction present before his eyes.

41. Two women shall be grinding - Which was then a common employment of women.

42. Ye know not what hour your Lord cometh - Either to require your soul of you, or to avenge himself of this nation. Mark xiii, 33; Luke xii, 35; xxi, 34.

45. Who then is the faithful and wise servant - Which of you aspires after this character? Wise - Every moment retaining the clearest conviction, that all he now has is only intrusted to him as a steward: Faithful - Thinking, speaking, and acting continually, in a manner suitable to that conviction.

48. But if that evil servant - Now evil, having put away faith and a good conscience.

51. And allot him his portion with the hypocrites - The worst of sinners, as upright and sincere as he was once. If ministers are the persons here primarily intended, there is a peculiar propriety in the expression. For no hypocrisy can be baser, than to call ourselves ministers of Christ, while we are the slaves of avarice, ambition, or sensuality. Wherever such are found, may God reform them by his grace, or disarm them of that power and influence, which they continually abuse to his dishonour, and to their own aggravated damnation!

## XXV

This chapter contains the last public discourse which our Lord uttered before he was offered up. He had before frequently declared what would be the portion of all the workers of iniquity. But what will become of those who do no harm? Honest, inoffensive, good sort of people? We have here a clear and full answer to this important question.

1. Then shall the kingdom of heaven - That is, the candidates for it, be like ten virgins - The bridemaids on the wedding night were wont to go to the house where the bride was, with burning lamps or torches in their hands, to wait for the bride groom's coming. When he drew near, they went to meet him with their lamps, and to conduct him to the bride.

3. The foolish took no oil with them - No more than kept them burning just for the present. None to supply their future want, to recruit their lamp's decay. The lamp is faith. A lamp and oil with it, is faith working by love.

4. The wise took oil in their vessels - Love in their hearts. And they daily sought a fresh supply of spiritual strength, till their faith was made perfect.

5. While the bridegroom delayed - That is, before they were called to attend him, they all slumbered and slept - Were easy and quiet, the wise enjoying a true, the foolish a false peace.

6. At midnight - In an hour quite unthought of.

7. They trimmed their lamps - They examined themselves and prepared to meet their God.

8. Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out - Our faith is dead. What a time to discover this! Whether it mean the time of death, or of judgment. Unto which of the saints wilt thou then turn? Who can help thee at such a season?

9. But the wise answered, Lest there be not enough for us and you! - Beginning the sentence with a beautiful abruptness; such as showed their surprise at the state of those poor wretches, who had so long received them, as well as their own souls. Lest there be not enough - It is sure there is not; for no man has more than holiness enough for himself. Go ye rather to them that sell - Without money and without price: that is, to God, to Christ. And buy - If ye can. O no! The time is past and returns no more!

13. Watch therefore - He that watches has not only a burning lamp, but likewise oil in his vessel. And even when he sleepeth, his heart waketh. He is quiet; but not secure.

14. Our Lord proceeds by a parable still plainer (if that can be) to declare the final reward of a harmless man. May God give all such in this their day, ears to hear and hearts to understand it! The kingdom of heaven - That is, the King of heaven, Christ. Mark xiii, 34; Luke xix, 12.

15. To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one - And who knows whether (all circumstances considered) there be a greater disproportion than this, in the talents of those who

have received the most, and those who have received the fewest? According to his own ability - The words may be translated more literally, according to his own mighty power. And immediately took his journey - To heaven.

18. He that had received one - Made his having fewer talents than others a pretense for not improving any. Went and hid his master's money - Reader, art thou doing the same? Art thou hiding the talent God hath lent thee?

24. I knew thou art a hard man - No. Thou knowest him not. He never knew God, who thinks him a hard master. Reaping where thou hast not sown - That is, requiring more of us than thou hast given us power to perform. So does every obstinate sinner, in one kind or other, lay the blame of his own sins on God.

25. And I was afraid - Lest if I had improved my talent, I should have had the more to answer for. So from this fear, one will not learn to read, another will not hear sermons!

26. Thou knewest - That I require impossibilities! This is not an allowing, but a strong denial of the charge.

27. Thou oughtest therefore - On that very account, on thy own supposition, to have improved my talent, as far as was possible.

29. To every one that hath shall be given - So close does God keep to this stated rule, from the beginning to the end of the world. Matt. xiii, 12.

30. Cast ye the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness - For what? what had he done? It is true he had not done good. But neither is he charged with doing any harm. Why, for this reason, for barely doing no harm, he is consigned to outer darkness. He is pronounced a wicked, because he was a slothful, an unprofitable servant. So mere harmlessness, on which many build their hope of salvation, was the cause of his damnation! There shall be the weeping - Of the careless thoughtless sinner; and the gnashing of teeth - Of the proud and stubborn. The same great truth, that there is no such thing as negative goodness, is in this chapter shown three times:

1. In the parable of the virgins;
2. In the still plainer parable of the servants, who had received the talents; and
3. In a direct unparabolical declaration of the manner wherein our Lord will proceed at the last day. The several parts of each of these exactly answers each other, only each rises above the preceding.

31. When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him - With what majesty and grandeur does our Lord here speak of himself Giving us one of the noblest instances of the true sublime. Indeed not many descriptions in the sacred writings themselves seem to equal this. Methinks we can hardly read it without imagining ourselves before the awful tribunal it describes.

34. Inherit the kingdom - Purchased by my blood, for all who have believed in me with the faith which wrought by love. Prepared for you - On purpose for you. May it not be probably inferred from hence, that man was not created merely to fill up the places of the fallen angels?

35. I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink - All these works of outward mercy suppose faith and love, and must needs he accompanied with works of spiritual mercy. But works of this kind the Judge could not mention in the same manner. He could not say, I was in error, and ye recalled me to the truth; I was in sin, and ye brought me to repentance. In prison - Prisoners need to be visited above all others, as they are commonly solitary and forsaken by the rest of the world.

37. Then shall the righteous answer - It cannot be, that either the righteous or the wicked should answer in these very words. What we learn herefrom is, that neither of them have the same estimation of their own works as the Judge hath.

40. Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it to me - What encouragement is here to assist the household of faith? But let us likewise remember to do good to all men.

41. Depart into the everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels - Not originally for you: you are intruders into everlasting fire.

44. Then will they answer - So the endeavour to justify themselves, will remain with the wicked even to that day!

46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life everlasting - Either therefore the punishment is strictly eternal, or the reward is not: the very same expression being applied to the former as to the latter. The Judge will speak first to the righteous, in the audience of the wicked. The wicked shall then go away into everlasting fire, in the view of the righteous. Thus the damned shall see nothing of the everlasting life; but the just will see the punishment of the ungodly. It is not only particularly observable here

1. That the punishment lasts as long as the reward; but,
2. That this punishment is so far from ceasing at the end of the world, that it does not begin till then.

## XXVI

1. When Jesus had finished all these discourses - When he had spoken all he had to speak. Till then he would not enter upon his passion: then he would delay it no longer. Mark xiv, 1; Luke xxii, 1.

2. After two days is the passover - The manner wherein this was celebrated gives much light to several circumstances that follow. The master of the family began the feast with a cup of wine, which having solemnly blessed, he divided among the guests, Luke xxii, 17. Then the supper began with the unleavened bread and bitter herbs; which when they had all tasted, one of the young persons present, according to Exod. xii, 26, asked the reason of the solemnity. This introduced the showing forth, or declaration of it: in allusion to which we read of showing forth the Lord's death, 1 Cor. xi, 26. Then the master rose up and took another cup, before the lamb was tasted. After supper, he took a thin loaf or cake, which he broke and divided to all at the table, and likewise the cup, usually called the cup of thanksgiving, of which he drank first, and then all the guests. It was this bread and this cup which our Lord consecrated to be a standing memorial of his death.

3. The chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people - (Heads of families.) These together constituted the sanhedrim, or great council, which had the supreme authority, both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs.

5. But they said, Not at the feast - This was the result of human wisdom. But when Judas came they changed their purpose. So the counsel of God took place, and the true paschal Lamb was offered up on the great day of the paschal solemnity.

6. Mark xiv, 3.

8. His disciples seeing it, had indignation, saying - It seems several of them were angry, and spoke, though none so warmly as Judas Iscariot.

11. Ye have the poor always with you - Such is the wise and gracious providence of God, that we may have always opportunities of relieving their wants, and so laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven.

12. She hath done it for my burial - As it were for the embalming of my body. Indeed this was not her design: but our Lord puts this construction upon it, to confirm thereby what he had before said to his disciples, concerning his approaching death.

13. This Gospel - That is, this part of the Gospel history.

14. Mark xiv, 10; Luke xxii, 3.

15. They bargained with him for thirty pieces of silver - (About three pounds fifteen shillings sterling; or sixteen dollars sixty- seven cents, ) the price of a slave, Exod. xxi, 32.

17. On the first day of unleavened bread - Being Thursday, the fourteenth day of the first month, Exod. xii, 6, 15. Mark xiv, 12 Luke xxii, 7

18. The Master saith, My time is at hand - That is, the time of my suffering.

20. Mark xiv, 17; Luke xxii, 14.

23. He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish - Which it seems Judas was doing at that very time. This dish was a vessel full of vinegar, wherein they dipped their bitter herbs.

24. The Son of man goeth through sufferings to glory, as it is written of him - Yet this is no excuse for him that betrayeth him: miserable will that man be: it had been good for that man if he had not been born - May not the same be said of every man that finally perishes? But who can reconcile this, if it were true of Judas alone, with the doctrine of universal salvation?

25. Thou hast said - That is, it is as thou hast said.

26. Jesus took the bread - the bread or cake, which the master of the family used to divide among them, after they had eaten the passover. The custom our Lord now transferred to a nobler use. This bread is, that is, signifies or represents my body, according to the style of the sacred writers. Thus Gen. xl, 12, The three branches are three days. Thus Gal. iv, 24, St. Paul speaking of Sarah and Hagar, says, These are the two covenants. Thus in the grand type of our Lord, Exod. xii, 11, God says of the paschal lamb, This is the Lord's passover. Now Christ substituting the holy communion for the passover, follows the style of the Old Testament, and uses the same expressions the Jews were wont to use in celebrating the passover.

27. And he took the cup - Called by the Jews the cup of thanksgiving; which the master of the family used likewise to give to each after supper.

28. This is the sign of my blood, whereby the new testament or covenant is confirmed. Which is shed for many - As many as spring from Adam.

29. I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, till I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom - That is, I shall taste no more wine, till I drink wine of quite another kind in the glorious kingdom of my Father. And of this you shall also partake with me.

30. And when they had sung the hymn - Which was constantly sung at the close of the passover. It consisteth of six psalms, from the 113th to the 118th. The mount of Olives - Was over against the temple, about two miles from Jerusalem. Mark xiv, 26; Luke xxii, 39; John xviii, 1.

31. All ye will be offended at me - Something will happen to me, which will occasion your falling into sin by forsaking me. Zech. xiii, 7.

32. But notwithstanding this, after I am risen I will go before you (as a shepherd before his sheep) into Galilee. Though you forsake me, I will not for this forsake you.

34. Before cock crowing thou wilt deny me thrice - That is, before three in the morning, the usual time of cock crowing: although one cock was heard to crow once, after Peter's first denial of his Lord.

35. In like manner also said all the disciples - But such was the tenderness of our Lord, that he would not aggravate their sin by making any reply.

36. Then cometh Jesus to a place called Gethsemane - That is, the valley of fatness. The garden probably had its name from its soil and situation, laying in some little valley between two of those many hills, the range of which constitutes the mount of Olives. Mark xiv, 32; Luke xxii, 40.

37. And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee - To be witnesses of all; he began to be sorrowful and in deep anguish - Probably from feeling the arrows of the Almighty stick fast in his soul, while God laid on him the iniquities of us all. Who can tell what painful and dreadful sensations were then impressed on him by the immediate hand of God? The former word in the original properly signifies, to be penetrated with the most exquisite sorrow; the latter to be quite depressed, and almost overwhelmed with the load.

39. And going a little farther - About a stone's cast, Luke xxii, 41 - So that the apostles could both see and hear him still. If it be possible, let this cup pass from me - And it did pass from him quickly. When he cried unto God with strong cries and tears, he was heard in that which he feared. God did take away the terror and severity of that inward conflict.

41. The spirit - Your spirit: ye yourselves. The flesh - Your nature. How gentle a rebuke was this, and how kind an apology! especially at a time when our Lord's own mind was so weighed down with sorrow.

45. Sleep on now, if you can, and take your rest - For any farther service you can be of to me.

47. Mark xiv, 43; Luke xxii, 47; John xviii, 2.

50. The heroic behaviour of the blessed Jesus, in the whole period of his sufferings, will be observed by every attentive eye, and felt by every pious heart: although the sacred historians, according to their usual but wonderful simplicity, make no encomiums upon it. With what composure does he go forth to meet the traitor! With what calmness receive that malignant kiss! With what dignity does he deliver himself into the hands of his enemies! Yet plainly showing his superiority over them, and even then leading as it were captivity captive!

51. And one of them striking the servant of the high priest - Probably the person that seized Jesus first; Cut off his ear - Aiming, it seems, to cleave his head, but that by a secret providence interposing, he declined the blow. Mark xiv, 47; Luke xxii, 49; John xviii, 10.

52. All they that take the sword - Without God's giving it them: without sufficient authority.

53. He will presently give me more than twelve legions of angels - The least of whom, it is probable, could overturn the earth and destroy all the inhabitants of it.

55. Mark xiv, 48; Luke xxii, 52

57. They led him away to Caiaphas - From the house of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, to whom they had carried him first. Mark xiv, 53; Luke xxii, 54; John xviii, 12.

58. But Peter followed him afar off - Variously agitated by conflicting passions; love constrained him to follow his Master; fear made him follow afar off. And going in, sat with the servants - Unfit companions as the event showed.

60. Yet found they none - On whose evidence they could condemn him to die. At last came two false witnesses - Such they were, although part of what they said was true; because our Lord did not speak some of those words at all; nor any of them in this sense.

64. Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man - He speaks in the third person, modestly, and yet plainly; Sitting on the right hand of power - That is, the right hand of God: And coming upon the clouds of heaven - As he is represented by Daniel, Dan. vii, 13, 14. Our Lord looked very unlike that person now! But nothing could be more awful, more majestic and becoming, than such an admonition in such circumstances!

65. Then the high priest rent his clothes - Though the high priest was forbidden to rend his clothes (that is, his upper garment) in some cases where others were allowed to do it, Lev. xxi, 10; yet in case of blasphemy or any public calamity, it was thought allowable. Caiaphas hereby expressed, in the most artful manner, his horror at hearing such grievous blasphemy.

67. Then - After he had declared he was the Son of God, the sanhedrim doubtless ordered him to be carried out, while they were consulting what to do. And then it was that the soldiers who kept him began these insults upon him.

72. He denied with an oath - To which possibly he was not unaccustomed, before our Lord called him.

73. Surely thou art also one of them, for thy speech discovereth thee - Malchus might have brought a stronger proof than this. But such is the overruling providence of God, that the world, in the height of their zeal, commonly catch hold of the very weakest of all arguments against the children of God.

74. Then began he to curse and to swear - Having now quite lost the reins, the government of himself.

## XXVII

1. In the morning - As the sanhedrim used to meet in one of the courts of the temple, which was never opened in the night, they were forced to stay till the morning before they could proceed regularly, in the resolution they had taken to put him to death. Mark xv, 1; Luke xxii, 66; xxiii, 1; John xviii, 28.

2. Having bound him - They had bound him when he was first apprehended. But they did it now afresh, to secure him from any danger of an escape, as he passed through the streets of Jerusalem.

3. Then Judas seeing that he was condemned - Which probably he thought Christ would have prevented by a miracle.

4. They said, what is that to us? - How easily could they digest innocent blood! And yet they had a conscience! It is not lawful (say they) to put it into the treasury - But very lawful to slay the innocent!

5. In that part of the temple where the sanhedrim met.

7. They bought with them the potter's field - Well known, it seems, by that name. This was a small price for a field so near Jerusalem. But the earth had probably been digged for potters' vessels,

so that it was now neither fit for tillage nor pasture, and consequently of small value. Foreigners - Heathens especially, of whom there were then great numbers in Jerusalem.

9. Then was fulfilled - What was figuratively represented of old, was now really accomplished. What was spoken by the prophet - The word Jeremy, which was added to the text in latter copies, and thence received into many translations, is evidently a mistake: for he who spoke what St. Matthew here cites (or rather paraphrases) was not Jeremy, but Zechariah. Zech. xi, 12.

10. As the Lord commanded me - To write, to record.

11. Art thou the king of the Jews? - Jesus before Caiaphas avows himself to be the Christ, before Pilate to be a king; clearly showing thereby, that his answering no more, was not owing to any fear.

15. At every feast - Every year, at the feast of the passover. Mark xv, 6; Luke xxiii, 17; John xviii, 39.

18. He knew that for envy they had delivered him - As well as from malice and revenge; they envied him, because the people magnified him.

22. They all say, Let him be crucified - The punishment which Barabbas had deserved: and this probably made them think of it. But in their malice they forgot with how dangerous a precedent they furnished the Roman governor. And indeed within the compass of a few years it turned dreadfully upon themselves.

24. Then Pilate took water and washed his hands - This was a custom frequently used among the heathens as well as among the Jews, in token of innocency.

25. His blood be on us and on our children - As this imprecation was dread. fully answered in the ruin so quickly brought on the Jewish nation, and the calamities which have ever since pursued that wretched people, so it was peculiarly fulfilled by Titus the Roman general, on the Jews whom he took during the siege of Jerusalem. So many, after having been scourged in a terrible manner, were crucified all round the city, that in a while there was not room near the wall for the crosses to stand by each other. Probably this befell some of those who now joined in this cry, as it certainly did many of their children: the very finger of God thus pointing out their crime in crucifying his Son.

26. He delivered him to be crucified - The person crucified was nailed to the cross as it lay on the ground, through each hand extended to the utmost stretch, and through both the feet together. Then the cross was raised up, and the foot of it thrust with a violent shock into a hole in the ground prepared for it. This shock disjointed the body, whose whole weight hung upon the nails, till the persons expired through mere dint of pain. This kind of death was used only by the Romans, and by them inflicted only on slaves and the vilest criminals.

27. The whole troop - or cohort. This was a body of foot commanded by the governor, which was appointed to prevent disorders and tumults, especially on solemn occasions. Mark xv, 16 John xix, 2.

28. They put on him a scarlet robe - Such as kings and generals wore; probably an old tattered one.

32. Him they compelled to bear his cross - He bore it himself, till he sunk under it, John xix, 17.

33. A place called Golgotha, that is, the place of a skull - Golgotha in Syriac signifies a skull or head: it was probably called so from this time; being an eminence upon Mount Calvary, not far from the king's gardens. Mark xv, 22; Luke xxiii, 33; John xix, 17

34. They gave him vinegar mingled with gall - Out of derision: which, however nauseous, he received and tasted of. St. Mark mentions also a different mixture which was given him, Wine mingled with myrrh: such as it was customary to give to dying criminals, to make them less sensible of their sufferings: but this our Lord refused to taste, determining to bear the full force of his pains.

35. They parted his garments - This was the custom of the Romams. The soldiers performed the office of executioners, and divided among them the spoils of the criminals. My vesture - That is, my inner garment. Psalm xxii, 18.

38. Mark xv, 27; Luke xxiii, 32.

44. Mark xv, 32; Luke xxiii, 33.

45. From the sixth hour, there was darkness over all the earth unto the ninth hour - Insomuch, that even a heathen philosopher seeing it, and knowing it could not be a natural eclipse, because it was at the time of the full moon, and continued three hours together, cried out, "Either the God of nature suffers, or the frame of the world is dissolved." By this darkness God testified his abhorrence of the wickedness which was then committing. It likewise intimated Christ's sore conflicts with the Divine justice, and with all the powers of darkness.

46. About the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice - Our Lord's great agony probably continued these three whole hours, at the conclusion of which be thus cried out, while he suffered from God himself what was unutterable. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? - Our Lord hereby at once expresses his trust in God, and a most distressing sense of his letting loose the powers of darkness upon him, withdrawing the comfortable discoveries of his presence, and filling his soul with a terrible sense of the wrath due to the sins which he was bearing. Psalm xxii, 1.

48. One taking a sponge, filled it with vinegar - Vinegar and water was the usual drink of the Roman soldiers. It does not appear, that this was given him in derision, but rather with a friendly design, that he might not die before Elijah came. John xix, 28.

50. After he had cried with a loud voice - To show that his life was still whole in him. He dismissed his spirit - So the original expression may be literally translated: an expression admirably suited to our Lord's words, John x, xviii, No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself. He died by a voluntary act of his own, and in a way peculiar to himself. He alone of all men that ever were, could have continued alive even in the greatest tortures, as long as he pleased, or have retired from the body whenever he had thought fit. And how does it illustrate that love which he manifested in his death? Insomuch as he did not use his power to quit his body, as soon as it was fastened to the cross, leaving only an insensible corpse, to the cruelty of his murderers: but continued his abode in it, with a steady resolution, as long as it was proper. He then retired from it, with a majesty and dignity never known or to be known in any other death: dying, if one may so express it, like the Prince of life.

51. Immediately upon his death, while the sun was still darkened, the veil of the temple, which separated the holy of holies from the court of the priests, though made of the richest and strongest tapestry, was rent in two from the top to the bottom: so that while the priest was ministering at the golden altar (it being the time of the sacrifice) the sacred oracle, by an invisible power was laid open to full view: God thereby signifying the speedy removal of the veil of the Jewish ceremonies the casting down the partition wall, so that the Jews and Gentiles were now admitted to equal privileges, and the opening a way through the veil of his flesh for all believers into the most holy place. And the earth was shaken - There was a general earthquake through the whole globe, though

chiefly near Jerusalem: God testifying thereby his wrath against the Jewish nation, for the horrid impiety they were committing.

52. Some of the tombs were shattered and laid open by the earthquake, and while they continued unclosed (and they must have stood open all the Sabbath, seeing the law would not allow any attempt to close them) many bodies of holy men were raised, (perhaps Simeon, Zacharias, John the Baptist, and others who had believed in Christ, and were known to many in Jerusalem, ) And coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, went into the holy city (Jerusalem) and appeared to many - Who had probably known them before: God hereby signifying, that Christ had conquered death, and would raise all his saints in due season.

54. The centurion - The officer who commanded the guard; and they that were with him feared, saying, Truly this was the Son of God - Referring to the words of the chief priests and scribes, chap. xxvii, xliii, He said, I am the Son of God.

56. James - The less: he was so called, to distinguish him from the other James, the brother of John; probably because he was less in stature.

57. When the evening was come - That is, after three o'clock; the time from three to six they termed the evening. Mark xv, 42; Luke xxiii, 50; John xix, 38.

62. On the morrow, the day that followed the day of the preparation - The day of preparation was the day before the Sabbath, whereon they were to prepare for the celebration of it. The next day then was the Sabbath according to the Jews. But the evangelist seems to express it by this circumlocution, to show the Jewish Sabbath was then abolished.

63. That impostor said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again - We do not find that he had ever said this to them, unless when he spoke of the temple of his body, John ii, 19, 21. And if they here refer to what he then said, how perverse and iniquitous was their construction on these words, when he was on his trial before the council? Chap. xxvi, 61. Then they seemed not to understand them!

65. Ye have a guard - Of your own, in the tower of Antonia, which was stationed there for the service of the temple.

66. They went and secured the sepulchre, sealing the stone, and setting a guard - They set Pilate's signet, or the public seal of the sanhedrim upon a fastening which they had put on the stone. And all this uncommon caution was overruled by the providence of God, to give the strongest proofs of Christ's ensuing resurrection; since there could be no room for the least suspicion of deceit, when it should be found, that his body was raised out of a new tomb, where there was no other corpse, and this tomb hewn out of a rock, the mouth of which was secured by a great stone, under a seal, and a guard of soldiers.

## XXVIII

1. Mark xvi, 1; Luke xxiv, 1; John xx, 1

2. An angel of the Lord had rolled away the stone and sat upon it - St. Luke and St. John speak of two angels that appeared: but it seems as if only one of them had appeared sitting on the stone without the sepulchre, and then going into it, was seen with another angel, sitting, one where the head, the other where the feet of the body had lain.

6. Come, see the place where the Lord lay - Probably in speaking he rose up, and going before the women into the sepulchre, said, Come, see the place. This clearly reconciles what St. John relates, John xx, 12, this being one of the two angels there mentioned.

7. There shall ye see him - In his solemn appearance to them all together. But their gracious Lord would not be absent so long: he appeared to them several times before then. Lo, I have told you - A solemn confirmation of what he had said.

9. Hail - The word in its primary sense means, "Rejoice:" in its secondary and more usual meaning, "Happiness attend you."

10. Go tell my brethren - I still own them as such, though they so lately disowned and forsook me.

13. Say, his disciples came by night, and stole him while we slept - Is it possible, that any man of sense should digest this poor, shallow inconsistency? If ye were awake, why did you let the disciples steal him? If asleep, how do you know they did?

16. To the mountain where Jesus had appointed them - This was probably Mount Tabor, where, (it is commonly supposed, ) he had been before transfigured. It seems to have been here also, that he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once.

18. All power is given to me - Even as man. As God, he had all power from eternity.

19. Disciple all nations - Make them my disciples. This includes the whole design of Christ's commission. Baptizing and teaching are the two great branches of that general design. And these were to be determined by the circumstances of things; which made it necessary in baptizing adult Jews or heathens, to teach them before they were baptized; in discipling their children, to baptize them before they were taught; as the Jewish children in all ages were first circumcised, and after taught to do all God had commanded them. Mark xvi, 15.

## NOTES ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK

THIS CONTAINS,

I. The beginning of the Gospel,
- a. John prepares the way Chap. i, 1-8
- b. Baptizes Jesus, who is proclaimed the Son of God 9-11
- c. Tempted of Satan, served by angels 12, 13

II. The Gospel itself,
- A. In Galilee: where we may observe three periods,
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    - 1. The place and matter of his preaching, 14, 15
    - 2. The calling of several of the apostles 16-20 In particular,
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        - 3. Heals many sick 29-34
        - 4. Prays 35

5. Teaches every where 36-39
6. Cleanses the leper 40-45

2. Actions censured by them, Here occur,
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2. The call of Levi, and eating with publicans and sinners. 13-17
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4. The ears of corn plucked 23-28
5. The withered hand restored: Snares laid iii, 1-6

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2. In the mountain, where the apostles are called 13-19
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4. In the ship; various parables iv, 1-34
5. On the sea, and beyond it 35-41 v, 1-20
6. On this side the sea: Again: Jairus, and the woman with the flux of blood 21-43
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3. The earnestness of the people; Christ's compassion; five thousand fed 33-44
4. His walking on the sea 45-52
5. He heals many in the land of Gennesaret 53-56
6. And teaches what defiles a man vii, 1-23
7. A devil cast out in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon 24-30
8. At the sea of Galilee, the deaf and dumb healed; four thousand fed 31-37 viii, 1-9
9. He comes into the parts of Dalmanutha, and answers concerning the sign from heaven Chap. viii, 10-13
10. In the ship, he warns them of evil leaven 14-21
11. At Bethsaida, heals the sick 22-26

c. After he was acknowledged to be the Son of God,
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1. He treats of divorce 2-12
2. Of little children 13-16
3. Of entering into life, and of the danger of riches 17-31

b. In his way to the city,

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2. Answers James and John, and instructs them all 35-45
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III. The Gospel,

1. Committed by Christ to apostles after his resurrection. 15-18
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# MARK

## I

1. The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ - The evangelist speaks with strict propriety: for the beginning of the Gospel is in the account of John the Baptist, contained in the first paragraph; the Gospel itself in the rest of the book. Matt. iii, 1; Luke iii, 1

2. Mal. iii, 1

3. Isaiah xl, 3.

4. Preaching the baptism of repentance - That is, preaching repentance, and baptizing as a sign and means of it.

7. The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose - That is, to do him the very meanest service.

9. Matt. iii, 13; Luke iii, 21.

12. And immediately the Spirit thrusteth him out into the wilderness - So in all the children of God, extraordinary manifestations of his favour are wont to be followed by extraordinary temptations. Matt. iv, 1; Luke iv, 1.

13. And he was there forty days, tempted by Satan - Invisibly. After this followed the temptation by him in a visible shape, related by St. Matthew. And he was with the wild beasts - Though they had no power to hurt him. St. Mark not only gives us a compendium of St. Matthew's Gospel, but likewise several valuable particulars, which the other evangelists have omitted.

14. Matt. iv, 12.

15. The time is fulfilled - The time of my kingdom, foretold by Daniel, expected by you, is fully come.

16. Matt. iv, 18; Luke v, 1.

18. Straightway leaving their nets, they followed him - From this time they forsook their employ, and constantly attended him. Happy they who follow Christ at the first call!

21. Luke iv, 31.

26. A loud noise - For he was forbidden to speak. Christ would neither suffer those evil spirits to speak in opposition, nor yet in favour of him. He needed not their testimony, nor would encourage it, lest any should infer that he acted in concert with them.

29. Matt. viii, 14; Luke iv, 38.

32. When the sun was set - And, consequently, the Sabbath was ended, which they reckoned from sunset to sunset.

33. And the whole city was gathered together at the door - O what a fair prospect was here! Who could then have imagined that all these blossoms would die away without fruit?

34. He suffered not the devils to say that they knew him - That is, according to Dr. Mead's hypothesis, (that the Scriptural demoniacs were only diseased persons, ) He suffered not the diseases to say that they knew him!

35. Rising a great while before day - So did he labour for us, both day and night. Luke iv, 42.

40. Matt. viii, 2; Luke v, 12.

44. See thou say nothing to any man - But our blessed Lord gives no such charge to us. If he has made us clean from our leprosy of sin, we are not commanded to conceal it. On the contrary, it is our duty to publish it abroad, both for the honour of our Benefactor, and that others who are sick of sin may be encouraged to ask and hope for the same benefit. But go, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing what Moses commanded for a testimony to them - The priests seeing him, pronouncing him clean, Lev. xiii, 17, 23, 28, 37, and accordingly allowing him to offer as Moses commanded, Lev. xiv, 2, 7, was such a proof against them, that they durst never say the leper was not cleansed; which out of envy or malice against our saviour they might have been ready to say, upon his presenting himself to be viewed, according to the law, if by the cleansed person's talking much about his cure, the account of it had reached their ears before he came in person. This is one great reason why our Lord commanded this man to say nothing.

45. So that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city - It was also to prevent this inconvenience that our Lord had enjoined him silence.

## II

1. And again - After having been in desert places for some time, he returned privately to the city. In the house - In Peter's house.

2. And immediately many were gathered together - Hitherto continued the general impression on their hearts. Hitherto, even at Capernaum, all who heard received the word with joy.

3. Matt. ix, 2; Luke v, 18.

4. They uncovered the roof - Or, took up the covering, the lattice or trap door, which was on all their houses, (being flat roofed.) And finding it not wide enough, broke the passage wider, to let down the couch.

6. But certain of the scribes - See whence the first offense cometh! As yet not one of the plain unlettered people were offended. They all rejoiced in the light, till these men of learning came, to put darkness for light, and light for darkness. Wo to all such blind guides! Good had it been for these if they had never been born. O God, let me never offend one of thy simple ones! Sooner let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!

12. They were all amazed - Even the scribes themselves for a time.

13. All the multitude came to him - Namely, by the sea side. And he as readily taught them there as if they had been in a synagogue.

14. Matt. ix, 9; Luke v, 27.

15. Many publicans and notorious sinners sat with Jesus - Some of them doubtless invited by Matthew, moved with compassion for his old companions in sin. But the next words, For there

were many, and they followed him, seem to imply, that the greater part, encouraged by his gracious words and the tenderness of his behaviour, and impatient to hear more, stayed for no invitation, but pressed in after him, and kept as close to him as they could.

16. And the scribes and Pharisees said - So now the wise men being joined by the saints of the world, went a little farther in raising prejudices against our Lord. In his answer he uses as yet no harshness, but only calm, dispassionate reasoning.

17. I came not to call the righteous - Therefore if these were righteous I should not call them. But now, they are the very persons I came to save.

18. Matt. ix, 14; Luke v, 33.

23. Matt. xii, 1; Luke vi, 1.

26. In the days of Abiathar the high priest - Abimelech, the father of Abiathar, was high priest then; Abiathar himself not till some time after. This phrase therefore only means, In the time of Abiathar, who was afterward the high priest. 1 Sam. xxi, 6.

27. The Sabbath was made for man - And therefore must give way to man's necessity.

28. Moreover the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath - Being the supreme Lawgiver, he hath power to dispense with his own laws; and with this in particular.

## III

He entered again into the synagogue - At Capernaum on the same day. Matt. xii, 9; Luke vi, 6.

2. And they - The scribes and Pharisees, watched him, that they might accuse him - Pride, anger, and shame, after being so often put to silence, began now to ripen into malice.

4. Is it lawful to save life or to kill? - Which he knew they were seeking occasion to do. But they held their peace - Being confounded, though not convinced.

5. Looking round upon them with anger, being grieved - Angry at the sin, grieved at the sinner; the true standard of Christian anger. But who can separate anger at sin from anger at the sinner? None but a true believer in Christ.

6. The Pharisees going out - Probably leaving the scribes to watch him still: took counsel with the Herodians - as bitter as they usually were against each other.

8. From Idumea - The natives of which had now professed the Jewish religion above a hundred and fifty years. They about Tyre and Sidon - The Israelites who lived in those coasts.

10. Plagues or scourges (so the Greek word properly means) seem to be those very painful or afflictive disorders which were frequently sent, or at least permitted of God, as a scourge or punishment of sin.

12. He charged them not to make him known - It was not the time: nor were they fit preachers.

13. He calleth whom he would - With regard to the eternal states of men, God always acts as just and merciful. But with regard to numberless other things, he seems to us to act as a mere sovereign. Luke vi, 12

14. Matt. x, 2; Luke vi, 13; Acts i, 13.

16. He surnamed them sons of thunder - Both with respect to the warmth and impetuosity of their spirit, their fervent manner of preaching, and the power of their word.

20. To eat bread - That is, to take any subsistence.

21. His relations - His mother and his brethren, ver. 31. But it was some time before they could come near him.

22. The scribes and Pharisees, Matt. xii, 22; who had come down from Jerusalem - Purposely on the devil's errand. And not without success. For the common people now began to drink in the poison, from these learned, good, honourable men! He hath Beelzebub - at command, is in league with him: And by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils - How easily may a man of learning elude the strongest proof of a work of God! How readily can he account for every incident without ever taking God into the question. Matt. xii, 24; Luke xi, 15.

28. Matt. xii, 31; Luke xii, 10.

30. Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit - Is it not astonishing, that men who have ever read these words, should doubt, what is the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost? Can any words declare more plainly, that it is "the ascribing those miracles to the power of the devil which Christ wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost?"

31. Then come his brethren and his mother - Having at length made their way through the crowd, so as to come to the door. His brethren are here named first, as being first and most earnest in the design of taking him: for neither did these of his brethren believe on him. They sent to him, calling him - They sent one into the house, who called him aloud, by name. Matt. xii, 46; Luke viii, 19.

34. Looking round on them who sat about him - With the utmost sweetness; He said, Behold my mother and my brethren - In this preference of his true disciples even to the Virgin Mary, considered merely as his mother after the flesh, he not only shows his high and tender affection for them, but seems designedly to guard against those excessive and idolatrous honours, which he foresaw would in after ages be paid to her.

## IV

1. Matt. xiii, 1; Luke viii, 4.

2. He taught them many things by parables - After the usual manner of the eastern nations, to make his instructions more agreeable to them, and to impress them the more upon attentive hearers. A parable signifies not only a simile or comparison, and sometimes a proverb, but any kind of instructive speech, wherein spiritual things are explained and illustrated by natural, Prov. i, 6. To understand a proverb and the interpretation - The proverb is the literal sense, the interpretation is the spiritual resting in the literal sense killeth, but the spiritual giveth life.

3. Hearken - This word he probably spoke with a loud voice, to stop the noise and hurry of the people.

10. When he was alone - That is, retired apart from the multitude.

11. To them that are without - So the Jews termed the heathens: so our Lord terms all obstinate unbelievers: for they shall not enter into his kingdom: they shall abide in outer darkness.

12. So that seeing they see and do not perceive - They would not see before now they could not, God having given them up to the blindness which they had chosen.

13. Know ye not this parable? - Which is as it were the foundation of all those that I shall speak hereafter; and is so easy to be understood?

19. The desire of other things choke the word - A deep and important truth! The desire of any thing, otherwise than as it leads to happiness in God, directly tends to barrenness of soul. Entering in - Where they were not before. Let him therefore who has received and retained the word, see that no other desire then enter in, such as perhaps till then he never knew. It becometh unfruitful - After the fruit had grown almost to perfection.

21. And he said, Is a candle - As if he had said, I explain these things to you, I give you this light, not to conceal, but to impart it to others. And if I conceal any thing from you now, it is only that it may be more effectually manifested hereafter. Matt. v, 15; Luke viii, 16; xi, 33.

22. Matt. x, 26; Luke viii, 17.

24. Take heed what ye hear - That is, attend to what you hear, that it may have its due influence upon you. With what measure you mete - That is, according to the improvement you make of what you have heard, still farther assistance shall be given. And to you that hear - That is, with improvement.

25. He that hath - That improves whatever he has received, to the good of others, as well as of his own soul. Matt. xiii, 12; Luke viii, 18.

26. So is the kingdom of God - The inward kingdom is like seed which a man casts into the ground - This a preacher of the Gospel casts into the heart. And he sleeps and rises night and day - That is, he has it continually in his thoughts. Meantime it springs and grows up he knows not how - Even he that sowed it cannot explain how it grows. For as the earth by a curious kind of mechanism, which the greatest philosophers cannot comprehend, does as it were spontaneously bring forth first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear: so the soul, in an inexplicable manner, brings forth, first weak graces, then stronger, then full holiness: and all this of itself, as a machine, whose spring of motion is within itself. Yet observe the amazing exactness of the comparison. The earth brings forth no corn (as the soul no holiness) without both the care and toil of man, and the benign influence of heaven.

29. He putteth in the sickle - God cutteth down and gathereth the corn into his garner.

30. Matt. xiii, 31; Luke xiii, 18.

33. He spake the word as they were able to hear it - Adapting it to the capacity of his hearers; and speaking as plain as he could without offending them. A rule never to be forgotten by those who instruct others.

35. Matt. viii, 23; Luke viii, 22.

36. They take him as he was in the vessel - They carried him immediately in the same vessel from which he had been preaching to the people.

38. On the pillow - So we translate it, for want of a proper English expression, for that particular part of the vessel near the rudder, on which he lay.

39. Peace - Cease thy tossing: Be still - Cease thy roaring; literally, Be thou gagged.

## V

1. Matt. viii, 28; Luke viii, 26.

2. There met him a man with an unclean spirit - St. Matthew mentions two. Probably this, so particularly spoken of here, was the most remarkably fierce and ungovernable.

9. My name is Legion! for we are many - But all these seem to have been under one commander, who accordingly speaks all along, both for them and himself.

15. And they were afraid - It is not improbable they might otherwise have offered some rudeness, if not violence.

18. Matt. ix, 1; Luke viii, 37;

19. Tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee - This was peculiarly needful there, where Christ did not go in person.

20. He published in Decapolis - Not only at home, but in all that country where Jesus himself did not come.

21. Luke viii, 40.

22. One of the rulers of the synagogue - To regulate the affairs of every synagogue, there was a council of grave men. Over these was a president, who was termed the ruler of the synagogue. Sometimes there was no more than one ruler in a synagogue. Matt. ix, 18; Luke viii, 41.

25. Matt. ix, 20; Luke viii, 43.

37. John, the brother of James - When St. Mark wrote, not long after our Lord's ascension, the memory of St. James, lately beheaded, was so fresh, that his name was more known than that of John himself.

40. Them that were with him - Peter, James, and John.

43. He charged them that no man should know it - That he might avoid every appearance of vain glory, might prevent too great a concourse of people, and might not farther enrage the scribes and Pharisees against him; the time for his death, and for the full manifestation of his glory, being not yet come. He commanded something should be given her to eat - So that when either natural or spiritual life is restored, even by immediate miracle, all proper means are to be used in order to preserve it.

## VI

1. Matt. xiii, 54; Luke iv, 16.

3. Is not this the carpenter? - There can be no doubt, but in his youth he wrought with his supposed father Joseph.

5. He could do no miracle there - Not consistently with his wisdom and goodness. It being inconsistent with his wisdom to work them there, where it could not promote his great end; and with his goodness, seeing he well knew his countrymen would reject whatever evidence could be given them. And therefore to have given them more evidence, would only have increased their damnation.

6. He marvelled - As man. As he was God, nothing was strange to him.

7. Matt. x, 1; Luke ix, 1.

8. He commanded them to take nothing for their journey - That they might be always unincumbered, free, ready for motion. Save a staff only - He that had one might take it; but he that had not was not to provide one, Matt. x, 9. Luke ix, 3.

9. Be shod with sandals - As you usually are. Sandals were pieces of strong leather or wood, tied under the sole of the foot by thongs, something resembling modern clogs. The shoes which

they are in St. Matthew forbidden to take, were a kind of short boots, reaching a little above the mid-leg, which were then commonly used in journeys. Our Lord intended by this mission to initiate them into their apostolic work. And it was doubtless an encouragement to them all their life after, to recollect the care which God took of them, when they had left all they had, and went out quite unfurnished for such an expedition. In this view our Lord himself leads them to consider it, Luke xxii, xxxv, When I sent you forth without purse or scrip, lacked ye any thing?

10. Matt. x, 11; Luke ix, 4.

12. Luke ix, 6.

13. They anointed with oil many that were sick - Which St. James gives as a general direction, James v, 14, 15, adding those peremptory words, And the Lord shall heal him - He shall be restored to health: not by the natural efficacy of the oil, but by the supernatural blessing of God. And it seems this was the great standing means of healing, desperate diseases in the Christian Church, long before extreme unction was used or heard of, which bears scarce any resemblance to it; the former being used only as a means of health; the latter only when life is despaired of.

14. Matt. xiv, 1; Luke ix, 7.

15. A prophet, as one of the prophets - Not inferior to one of the ancient prophets.

16. But Herod hearing thereof - Of their various judgments concerning him, still said, It is John.

20. And preserved him - Against all the malice and contrivances of Herodias. And when he heard him - Probably sending for him, at times, during his imprisonment, which continued a year and a half. He heard him gladly - Delusive joy! While Herodias lay in his bosom.

21. A convenient day - Convenient for her purpose. His lords, captains, and principal men of Galilee - The great men of the court, the army, and the province.

23. To the half of my kingdom - A proverbial expression.

26. Yet for his oath's sake, and for the sake of his guests - Herod's honour was like the conscience of the chief priests, Matt. xxvii, 6. To shed innocent blood wounded neither one nor the other.

30. Luke ix, 10.

31. Matt. xiv, 13; John vi, 1.

32. They departed - Across a creek or corner of the lake.

34. Coming out - of the vessel.

40. They sat down in ranks - The word properly signifies a parterre or bed in a garden; by a metaphor, a company of men ranged in order, by hundreds and by fifties - That is, fifty in rank, and a hundred in file. So a hundred multiplied by fifty, make just five thousand.

43. Full of the fragments - of the bread.

45. He constrained his disciples - Who did not care to go without him. Matt. xiv, 22.

46. Matt. xiv, 23; John vi, 15.

48. And he saw them - For the darkness could veil nothing from him. And would have passed by them - That is, walked, as if he was passing by.

52. Their heart was hardened - And yet they were not reprobates. It means only, they were slow and dull of apprehension.

53. Matt. xiv, 34; John vi, 21.

## VII

1. Coming from Jerusalem - Probably on purpose to find occasion against him. Matt. xv, 1.

4. Washing of cups and pots and brazen vessels and couches - The Greek word (baptisms) means indifferently either washing or sprinkling. The cups, pots, and vessels were washed; the couches sprinkled.

5. The tradition of the elders - The rule delivered down from your forefathers.

6. Isaiah xxix, 13.

10. Exod. xx, 12; Exod. xxi, 17.

15. There is nothing entering into a man from without which can defile him - Though it is very true, a man may bring guilt, which is moral defilement, upon himself by eating what hurts his health, or by excess either in meat or drink yet even here the pollution arises from the wickedness of the heart, and is just proportionable to it. And this is all that our Lord asserts.

19. Purging all meats - Probably the seat was usually placed over running water.

22. Wickedness - The word means ill natured, cruelty, inhumanity, and all malevolent affections. Foolishness - Directly contrary to sobriety of thought and discourse: all kind of wild imaginations and extravagant passions.

24. Matt. xv, 21.

26. The woman was a Greek (that is, a Gentile, not a Jew) a Syrophenician or Canaanite. Canaan was also called Syrophenicia, as lying between Syria, properly so called, and Phenicia.

31. Matt. xv, 29.

33. He put his fingers into his ears - Perhaps intending to teach us, that we are not to prescribe to him (as they who brought this man attempted to do) but to expect his blessing by whatsoever means he pleases: even though there should be no proportion or resemblance between the means used, and the benefit to be conveyed thereby.

34. Ephphatha - This was a word of SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY, not an address to God for power to heal: such an address was needless; for Christ had a perpetual fund of power residing in himself, to work all miracles whenever he pleased, even to the raising the dead, John v, 21, 26.

36. Them - The blind man and those that brought him.

## VIII

1. Matt. xv, 32.

8. So they did eat - This miracle was intended to demonstrate, that Christ was the true bread which cometh down from heaven; for he who was almighty to create bread without means to support natural life, could not want power to create bread without means to support spiritual life. And this heavenly bread we stand so much in need of every moment, that we ought to be always praying, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

11. Tempting him - That is, trying to ensnare him. Matt. xvi, 1.

12. Matt. xvi, 4.

15. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod, or of the Sadducees; two opposite extremes.

17, 18. Our Lord here affirms of all the apostles, (for the question is equivalent to an affirmation, ) That their hearts were hardened; that having eyes they saw not, having ears they heard not; that they did not consider, neither understand: the very same expressions that occur in the thirteenth of Matthew. And yet it is certain they were not judicially hardened. Therefore all these strong expressions do not necessarily import any thing more than the present want of spiritual understanding.

23. He led him out of the town - It was in just displeasure against the inhabitants of Bethsaida for their obstinate infidelity, that our Lord would work no more miracles among them, nor even suffer the person he had cured, either to go into the town, or to tell it to any therein.

24. I see men as trees walking - He distinguished men from trees only by their motion.

27. Matt. xvi, 13; Luke ix, 18.

30. He enjoined them silence for the present,

1. That he might not encourage the people to set him up for a temporal king;
2. That he might not provoke the scribes and Pharisees to destroy him before the time and,
3. That he might not forestall the bright evidence which was to be given of his Divine character after his resurrection.

31. Matt. xvi, 21; Luke ix, 22.

32. He spake that saying openly - Or in express terms. Till now he had only intimated it to them. And Peter taking hold of him - Perhaps by the arms or clothes.

33. Looking on his disciples - That they might the more observe what he said to Peter.

34. And when he called the people - To hear a truth of the last importance, and one that equally concerned them all. Let him deny himself - His own will, in all things small and great, however pleasing, and that continually: And take up his cross - Embrace the will of God, however painful, daily, hourly, continually. Thus only can he follow me in holiness to glory.

35. Matt. xvi, 25; Luke ix, 24; Luke xvii, 33; John xii, 25.

38. Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words - That is, avowing whatever I have said (particularly of self denial and the daily cross) both by word and action. Matt. x, 32; Luke ix, 26; Luke xii, 8.

## IX

1. Till they see the kingdom of God coming with power - So it began to do at the day of pentecost, when three thousand were converted to God at once.

2. By themselves - That is, separate from the multitude: Apart - From the other apostles: and was transfigured - The Greek word seems to refer to the form of God, and the form of a servant, {mentioned by St. Paul, Phil. ii, 6, 7, } and may intimate, that the Divine rays, which the indwelling God let out on this occasion, made the glorious change from one of these forms into the other. Matt. xvii, 1; Luke ix, 28.

3. White as snow, such as no fuller can whiten - Such as could not be equalled either by nature or art.

4. Elijah - Whom they expected: Moses, whom they did not.

7. There came a (bright, luminous) cloud, overshadowing them - This seems to have been such a cloud of glory as accompanied Israel in the wilderness, which, as the Jewish writers observe, departed at the death of Moses. But it now appeared again, in honour of our Lord, as the great Prophet of the Church, who was prefigured by Moses. Hear ye him - Even preferably to Moses and Elijah.

12. Elijah verily coming first restoreth all things: and how it is written - That is, And he told them how it is written - As if he had said, Elijah's coming is not inconsistent with my suffering. He is come: yet I shall suffer. The first part of the verse answers their question concerning Elijah; the second refutes their error concerning the Messiah's continuing for ever.

14. Matt. xvii, 14; Luke ix, 37.

15. All the multitude seeing him were greatly amazed - At his coming so suddenly, so seasonably, so unexpectedly: perhaps also at some unusual rays of majesty and glory, which yet remained on his countenance.

17. And one of the multitude answering - The scribes gave no answer to our Lord's question. They did not care to repeat what they had said to his disciples. A dumb spirit - A spirit that takes his speech from him.

20. When he saw him - When the child saw Christ; when his deliverance was at hand. Immediately the spirit tore him - Made his last grand effort to destroy him. Is it not generally so, before Satan is cast out of a soul, of which he has long had possession?

22. If thou canst do any thing - In so desperate a case: Have compassion on us - Me as well as him.

23. If thou canst believe - As if he had said, The thing does not turn on my power, but on thy faith. I can do all things: canst thou believe?

24. Help thou mine unbelief - Although my faith be so small, that it might rather be termed unbelief, yet help me.

25. Thou deaf and dumb spirit - So termed, because he made the child so. When Jesus spake, the devil heard, though the child could not. I command thee - I myself now; not my disciples.

26. Having rent him sore - So does even the body sometimes suffer, when God comes to deliver the soul from Satan.

30. They passed through Galilee - Though not through the cities, but by them, in the most private ways. He was not willing that any should know it: for he taught his disciples - He wanted to be alone with them some time, in order to instruct them fully concerning his sufferings. The Son of man is delivered - It is as sure as if it were done already. Matt. xvii, 22; Luke ix, 44.

32. They understood not the word - They did not understand how to reconcile the death of our saviour (nor consequently his resurrection, which supposed his death) with their notions of his temporal kingdom.

33. Luke ix, 46.

34. Who should be greatest - Prime minister in his kingdom.

35. Let him be the least of all - Let him abase himself the most.

36. Matt. xviii, 2; Luke ix, 47.

37. One such little child - Either in years or in heart.

38. And John answered him - As if he had said, But ought we to receive those who follow not us? Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name - Probably this was one of John the Baptist's disciples, who believed in Jesus, though he did not yet associate with our Lord's disciples. And we

forbad him, because he followeth not us - How often is the same temper found in us? How readily do we also lust to envy? But how does that spirit become a disciple, much more a minister of the benevolent Jesus! St. Paul had learnt a better temper, when he rejoiced that Christ was preached, even by those who were his personal enemies. But to confine religion to them that follow us, is a narrowness of spirit which we should avoid and abhor. Luke ix, 49.

39. Jesus said - Christ here gives us a lovely example of candour and moderation. He was willing to put the best construction on doubtful cases, and to treat as friends those who were not avowed enemies. Perhaps in this instance it was a means of conquering the remainder of prejudice, and perfecting what was wanting in the faith and obedience of these persons. Forbid him not - Neither directly nor indirectly discourage or hinder any man who brings sinners from the power of Satan to God, because he followeth not us, in opinions, modes of worship, or any thing else which does not affect the essence of religion.

40. For he that is not against you, is for you - Our Lord had formerly said, he that is not with me, is against me: thereby admonishing his hearers, that the war between him and Satan admitted of no neutrality, and that those who were indifferent to him now, would finally be treated as enemies. But here in another view, he uses a very different proverb; directing his followers to judge of men's characters in the most candid manner; and charitably to hope that those who did not oppose his cause wished well to it. Upon the whole, we are to be rigorous in judging ourselves, and candid in judging each other.

41. For whosoever shall give you a cup - Having answered St. John, our Lord here resumes the discourse which was broken off at the 37th verse. Mark ix, 37. Matt. x, 42.

42. On the contrary, whosoever shall offend the very least Christian. Matt. xviii, 6; Luke xvii, 1.

43. And if a person cause thee to offend - (The discourse passes from the case of offending, to that of being offended) if one who is as useful or dear to thee as a hand or eye, hinder or slacken thee in the ways of God, renounce all intercourse with him. This primarily relates to persons, secondarily to things. Matt. v, 29; Matt. xviii, 8.

44. Where their worm - That gnaweth the soul, (pride, self will, desire, malice, envy, shame, sorrow, despair, ) dieth not - No more than the soul itself: and the fire (either material, or infinitely worse!) that tormenteth the body, is not quenched for ever. Isaiah lxvi, 24.

49. Every one - Who does not cut off the offending member, and consequently is cast into hell, shall be, as it were, salted with fire, preserved, not consumed thereby whereas every acceptable sacrifice shall be salted with another kind of salt, even that of Divine grace, which purifies the soul, (though frequently with pain) and preserves it from corruption.

50. Such salt is good indeed; highly beneficial to the world, in respect of which I have termed you the salt of the earth. But if the salt which should season others, have lost its own saltness, wherewith will ye season it? - Beware of this; see that ye retain your savour; and as a proof of it, have peace one with another. More largely this obscure text might be paraphrased thus:- As every burnt offering was salted with salt, in order to its being cast into the fire of the altar, so every one who will not part with his hand or eye, shall fall a sacrifice to Divine justice, and be cast into hell fire, which will not consume, but preserve him from a cessation of being. And on the other hand, every one, who, denying himself and taking up his cross, offers up himself as a living sacrifice to God, shall be seasoned with grace, which like salt will make him savoury, and preserve him from destruction for ever. As salt is good for preserving meats, and making them savoury, so it is good

that ye be seasoned with grace, for the purifying your hearts and lives, and for spreading the savour of my knowledge, both in your own souls, and wherever ye go. But as salt if it loses its saltness is fit for nothing, so ye, if ye lose your faith and love, are fit for nothing but to be utterly destroyed. See therefore that grace abide in you, and that ye no more contend, Who shall be greatest. Matt. v, 13; Luke xiv, 34.

## X

1. He cometh thence - From Galilee. Matt. xix, 1.

2. Matt. v, 31; Matt. xix, 7; Luke xvi, 18.

4. Deut. xxiv, 1.

6. From the beginning of the creation - Therefore Moses in the first of Genesis gives us an account of things from the beginning of the creation. Does it not clearly follow, that there was no creation previous to that which Moses describes? God made them male and female - Therefore Adam did not at first contain both sexes in himself: but God made Adam, when first created, male only; and Eve female only. And this man and woman he joined together, in a state of innocence, as husband and wife.

7. Gen. ii, 24.

11, 12. All polygamy is here totally condemned.

13. Matt. xix, 13.

14. Jesus seeing it was much displeased - At their blaming those who were not blame worthy: and endeavouring to hinder the children from receiving a blessing. Of such is the kingdom of God - The members of the kingdom which I am come to set up in the world are such as these, as well as grown persons, of a child-like temper.

15. Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child - As totally disclaiming all worthiness and fitness, as if he were but a week old.

17. Matt. xix, 16; Luke xviii, 18.

20. He answering, said to him, Master - He stands reproved now, and drops the epithet good.

21. Jesus looking upon him - And looking into his heart, loved him - Doubtless for the dawnings of good which he saw in him: and said to him - Out of tender love, One thing thou lackest - The love of God, without which all religion is a dead carcass. In order to this, throw away what is to thee the grand hindrance of it. Give up thy great idol, riches. Go, sell whatsoever thou hast.

24. Jesus saith to them, Children - See how he softens the harsh truth, by the manner of delivering it! And yet without retracting or abating one tittle: How hard is it for them that trust in riches - Either for defense, or happiness, or deliverance from the thousand dangers that life is continually exposed to. That these cannot enter into God's glorious kingdom, is clear and undeniable: but it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a man to have riches, and not trust in them. Therefore, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom.

28. Lo, we have left all - Though the young man would not.

30. He shall receive a hundred fold, houses, &c. - Not in the same kind: for it will generally be with persecutions: but in value: a hundred fold more happiness than any or all of these did or could

afford. But let it be observed, none is entitled to this happiness, but he that will accept it with persecutions.

32. They were in the way to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed - At his courage and intrepidity, considering the treatment which he had himself told them he should meet with there: and as they followed, they were afraid - Both for him and themselves: nevertheless he judged it best to prepare them, by telling them more particularly what was to ensue. Matt. xx, 17; Luke xviii, 31.

35. Saying - By their mother. It was she, not they that uttered the words. Matt. xx, 20.

38. Ye know not what ye ask - Ye know not that ye ask for sufferings, which must needs pave the way to glory. The cup - Of inward; the baptism - Of outward sufferings. Our Lord was filled with sufferings within, and covered with them without.

40. Save to them for whom it is prepared - Them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality. For these only eternal life is prepared. To these, only he will give it in that day; and to every man his own reward, according to his own labour.

45. A ransom for many - Even for as many souls as needed such a ransom, 2 Cor. v, 15.

46. Matt. xx, 29; Luke xviii, 35.

50. Casting away his garment - Through joy and eagerness.

## XI

1. To Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives - The limits of Bethany reached to the mount of Olives, and joined to those of Bethphage. Bethphage was part of the suburbs of Jerusalem, and reached from the mount of Olives to the walls of the city. Our Lord was now come to the place where the boundaries of Bethany and Bethphage met. Matt. xxi, 1; Luke xix, 29; John xii, 12.

11. Matt. xxi, 10, 17.

12. Matt. xxi, 18.

13. For it was not a season of figs - It was net (as we say) a good year for figs; at least not for that early sort, which alone was ripe so soon in the spring. If we render the words, It was not the season of figs, that is, the time of gathering them in, it may mean, The season was not yet: and so (inclosing the words in a parenthesis, And coming to it, he found nothing but leaves) it may refer to the former part of the sentence, and may be considered as the reason of Christ's going to see whether there were any figs on this tree. Some who also read that clause in a parenthesis, translate the hollowing words, for where he was, it was the season of figs. And it is certain, this meaning of the words suits best with the great design of the parable, which was to reprove the Jewish Church for its unfruitfulness at that very season, when fruit might best be expected from them.

15. Matt. xxi, 12; Luke xix, 45.

16. He suffered not that any should carry a vessel through the temple - So strong notions had our Lord, of even relative holiness! And of the regard due to those places (as well as times) that are peculiarly dedicated to God.

17. Isaiah lvi, 7; Jer. vii, 11.

18. They feared him - That is, they were afraid to take him by violence, lest it should raise a tumult; because all the people was astonished at his teaching - Both at the excellence of his discourse, and at the majesty and authority with which he taught.

20. Matt. xxi, 20.

22. Have faith in God - And who could find fault, if the Creator and Proprietor of all things were to destroy, by a single word of his mouth, a thousand of his inanimate creatures, were it only to imprint this important lesson more deeply on one immortal spirit?

25. When ye stand praying - Standing was their usual posture when they prayed. Forgive - And on this condition, ye shall have whatever you ask, with. out wrath or doubting. Matt. vi, 14.

27. Matt. xxi, 23; Luke xx, 1.

## XII

1. Matt. xxi, 43; Luke xx, 9.

10. Psalm cxviii, 22.

12. They feared the multitude - How wonderful is the providence of God, using all things for the good of his children! Generally the multitude is restrained from tearing them in pieces only by the fear of their rulers. And here the rulers themselves are restrained, through fear of the multitude!

13. Matt. xxii, 15; Luke xx, 20.

17. They marvelled at him - At the wisdom of his answer.

18. Matt. xxi, 23; Luke xx, 27.

19. Deut. xxv, 5.

25. When they rise from the dead, neither men marry nor women are given in marriage.

26. Exod. iii, 6.

27. He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living - That is, (if the argument be proposed at length, ) since the character of his being the God of any persons, plainly intimates a relation to them, not as dead, but as living; and since he cannot be said to be at present their God at all, if they are utterly dead; nor to be the God of human persons, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, consisting of souls and bodies, if their bodies were to abide in everlasting death; there must needs be a future state of blessedness, and a resurrection of the body to share with the soul in it.

28. Which is the first commandment? - The principal, and most necessary to be observed. Matt. xxii, 34; Luke x, 25.

29. The Lord our God is one Lord - This is the foundation of the first commandment, yea, of all the commandments. The Lord our God, the Lord, the God of all men, is one God, essentially, though three persons. From this unity of God it follows, that we owe all our love to him alone. Deut. vi, 4.

30. With all thy strength - That is, the whole strength and capacity of thy understanding, will, and affections.

31. The second is like unto it - Of a like comprehensive nature: comprising our whole duty to man. There is no other moral, much less ceremonial commandment, greater than these. Lev. xix, 18.

33. To love him with all the heart - To love and serve him, with all the united powers of the soul in their utmost vigour; and to love his neighbour as himself - To maintain the same equitable and charitable temper and behaviour toward all men, as we, in like circumstances, would wish for from them toward ourselves, is a more necessary and important duty, than the offering the most noble and costly sacrifices.

34. Jesus said to him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God - Reader, art not thou? then go on: be a real Christian: else it had been better for thee to have been afar off.

35. Matt. xxii, 41; Luke xx, 41.

36. Psalm cx, 1.

38. Beware of the scribes - There was an absolute necessity for these repeated cautions. For, considering their inveterate prejudices against Christ, it could never be supposed the common people would receive the Gospel till these incorrigible blasphemers of it were brought to just disgrace. Yet he delayed speaking in this manner till a little before his passion, as knowing what effect it would quickly produce. Nor is this any precedent for us: we are not invested with the same authority. Matt. xxiii, 5; Luke xx, 46.

41. He beheld how people cast money into the treasury - This treasury received the voluntary contributions of the worshippers who came up to the feast; which were given to buy wood for the altar, and other necessaries not provided for in any other way. Luke xxi, 1.

43. I say to you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all - See what judgement is cast on the most specious, outward actions by the Judge of all! And how acceptable to him is the smallest, which springs from self-denying love!

## XIII

1. Matt. xxiv, 1; Luke xxi, 5.

4. Two questions are here asked; the one concerning the destruction of Jerusalem: the other concerning the end of the world.

9. Luke xxi, 12.

10. Matt. xxiv, 14.

11. The Holy Ghost will help you. But do not depend upon any other help For all the nearest ties will be broken.

14. Where it ought not - That place being set apart for sacred use. Matt. xxiv, 15; Luke xxi, 20; Dan. ix, 27.

19. In those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation - May it not be doubted, whether this be yet fully accomplished? Is not much of this affliction still to come?

20. The elect - The Christians: whom he hath chosen - That is, hath taken out of, or separated from, the world, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. He hath shortened - That is, will surely shorten.

21. Matt. xxiv, 23.

24. But in those days - Which immediately precede the end of the world: after that tribulation - Above described.

28. Matt. xxiv, 32; Luke xxi, 28.

29. He is nigh - The Son of man.

30. All these things - Relating to the temple and the city.

32. Of that day - The day of judgment is often in the Scriptures emphatically called that day. Neither the Son - Not as man: as man he was no more omniscient than omnipresent. But as God he knows all the circumstances of it.

33. Matt. xxiv, 42; Luke xxi, 34.

34. The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey - Being about to leave this world and go to the Father, he appoints the services that are to be performed by all his servants, in their several stations. This seems chiefly to respect ministers at the day of judgment: but it may be applied to all men, and to the time of death. Matt. xxv, 14; Luke xix, 12.

## XIV

1. Matt. xxvi, 1; Luke xxii, 1.

3. Matt. xxvi, 6.

4. Some had indignation - Being incited thereto by Judas: and said - Probably to the women.

10. Judas went to the chief priests - Immediately after this reproof, having anger now added to his covetousness. Matt. xxvi, 14; Luke xxii, 3.

12. Matt. xxvi, 17; Luke xxii, 7.

13. Go into the city, and there shall meet you a man - It was highly seasonable for our Lord to give them this additional proof both of his knowing all things, and of his influence over the minds of men.

15. Furnished - The word properly means, spread with carpets.

17. Matt. xxvi, 20; Luke xxii, 14.

24. This is my blood of the New Testament - That is, this I appoint to be a perpetual sign and memorial of my blood, as shed for establishing the new covenant, that all who shall believe in me may receive all its gracious promises.

25. I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, till I drink it new in the kingdom of God - That is, I shall drink no more before I die: the next wine I drink will not be earthly, but heavenly.

26. Matt. xxvi, 30; Luke xxii, 39; John xviii, 1.

27. This night - The Jews in reckoning their days began with the evening, according to the Mosaic computation, which called the evening and the morning the first day, Gen. i, 5. And so that which after sunset is here called this night is, ver. 30, called today. The expression there is peculiarly significant. Verily I say to thee, that thou thyself, confident as thou art, today, even within four and twenty hours; yea, this night, or ever the sun be risen, nay, before the cock crow twice, before three in the morning, wilt deny me thrice. Our Lord doubtless spoke so determinately, as knowing a cock would crow once before the usual time of cock crowing. By chap. xiii, 35, it appears, that the third watch of the night, ending at three in the morning, was commonly styled the cock crowing. Zech. xiii, 7.

32. Matt. xxvi, 36.

33. Sore amazed - The original word imports the most shocking amazement, mingled with grief: and that word in the next verse which we render sorrowful intimates, that he was surrounded with sorrow on every side, breaking in upon him with such violence, as was ready to separate his soul from his body.

36. Abba, Father - St. Mark seems to add the word Father, by way of explication.

37. Saith to Peter - The zealous, the confident Peter.

43. Matt. xxvi, 47; Luke xxii, 47; John xviii, 2.

44. Whomsoever I shall kiss - Probably our Lord, in great condescension, had used (according to the Jewish custom) to permit his disciples to do this, after they had been some time absent.

47. Matt. xxvi, 51; Luke xxii, 49; John xviii, 10.

51. A young man - It does not appear, that he was one of Christ's disciples. Probably hearing an unusual noise, he started up out of his bed, not far from the garden, and ran out with only the sheet about him, to see what was the matter. And the young men laid hold on him - Who was only suspected to be Christ's disciple: but could not touch them who really were so.

53. Matt. xxvi, 57; Luke xxii, 54; John xviii, 12.

55. All the council sought for witness and found none - What an amazing proof of the overruling providence of God, considering both their authority, and the rewards they could offer, that no two consistent witnesses could be procured, to charge him with any gross crime. Matt. xxvi, 59.

56. Their evidences were not sufficient - The Greek words literally rendered are, Were not equal: not equal to the charge of a capital crime: it is the same word in the 59th verse.

58. We heard him say - It is observable, that the words which they thus misrepresented, were spoken by Christ at least three years before, John ii, 19. Their going back so far to find matter for the charge, was a glorious, though silent attestation of the unexceptionable manner wherein he had behaved, through the whole course of his public ministry.

61. Matt. xxvi, 63; Luke xxii, 67.

66. Matt. xxvi, 69; Luke xxii, 56; John xviii, 25.

72. And he covered his head - Which was a usual custom with mourners, and was fitly expressive both of grief and shame.

## XV

1. Matt. xxvii, 1, 2; Luke xxii, 66; Luke xxiii, 1; John xviii, 28.

3. Matt. xxvii, 12.

7. Insurrection - A crime which the Roman governors, and Pilate in particular, were more especially concerned and careful to punish.

9. Will ye that I release to you the king of the Jews - Which does this wretched man discover most? Want of justice, or courage, or common sense? The poor coward sacrifices justice to popular clamour, and enrages those whom he seeks to appease, by so unseasonably repeating that title, The king of the Jews, which he could not but know was so highly offensive to them.

16. Praetorium - The inner hall, where the praetor, a Roman magistrate, used to give judgment. But St. John calls the whole palace by this name. Matt. xxvii, 27; John xix, 2.

17. Purple - As royal robes were usually purple and scarlet, St. Mark and John term this a purple robe, St. Matthew a scarlet one. The Tyrian purple is said not to have been very different from scarlet.

20. Matt. xxvii, 31; John xix, 16.

21. The father of Alexander and Rufus - These were afterward two eminent Christians, and must have been well known when St. Mark wrote.

22. Matt. xxvii, 33; Luke xxiii, 33; John xix, 17.

24, 25. St. Mark seems to intimate, that they first nailed him to the cross, then parted his garments, and afterward reared up the cross.

28. Isaiah liii, 12.

29. Matt. xxvii, 39.

33. Matt. xxvii, 45; Luke xxiii, 44.

34. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me - Thereby claiming God as his God; and yet lamenting his Father's withdrawing the tokens of his love, and treating him as an enemy, while he bare our sins.

37. Matt. xxvii, 50; Luke xxiii, 46; John xix, 30.

41. Who served him - Provided him with necessaries.

42. Because it was the day before the Sabbath - And the bodies might not hang on the Sabbath day: therefore they were in haste to have them taken down.

43. honourable - A man of character and reputation: A counsellor - A member of the sanhedrim. Who waited for the kingdom of God - Who expected to see it set up on earth. Matt. xxvii, 57; Luke xxiii, 50; John xix, 38.

46. He rolled a stone - By his servants. It was too large for him to roll himself.

## XVI

1. Matt. xxviii, 1; Luke xxiv, 1; John xx, 1.

2. At the rising of the sun - They set out while it was yet dark, and came within sight of the sepulchre, for the first time, just as it grew light enough to discern that the stone was rolled away, Matt. xxviii, 1; Luke xxiv, 1; John xx, 1. But by the time Mary had called Peter and John, and they had viewed the sepulchre, the sun was rising.

3. Who shall roll us away the stone - This seems to have been the only difficulty they apprehended. So they knew nothing of Pilate's having sealed the stone, and placed a guard of soldiers there.

7. And Peter - Though he so oft denied his Lord. What amazing goodness was this!

9. John xx, 11.

10. Luke xxiv, 9; John xx, 18.

12. Luke xxiv, 13.

13. Neither believed they them - They were moved a little by the testimony of these, added to that of St. Peter, Luke xxiv, 34; but they did not yet fully believe it.

14. Luke xxiv, 36; John xx, 19.

15. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature - Our Lord speaks without any limitation or restriction. If therefore every creature in every age hath not heard it, either those who should have preached, or those who should have heard it, or both, made void the counsel of God herein. Matt. xxviii, 19.

16. And is baptized - In token thereof. Every one that believed was baptized. But he that believeth not - Whether baptized or unbaptized, shall perish everlastingly.

17. And these signs shall follow them that believe - An eminent author sub-joins, "That believe with that very faith mentioned in the preceding verse." (Though it is certain that a man may work miracles, and not have saving faith, Matt. vii, 22, 23.) "It was not one faith by which St. Paul was saved, another by which he wrought miracles. Even at this day in every believer faith has a latent miraculous power; (every effect of prayer being really miraculous;) although in many, both because of their own littleness of faith, and because the world is unworthy, that power is not exerted. Miracles, in the beginning, were helps to faith; now also they are the object of it. At Leonberg, in the memory of our fathers, a cripple that could hardly move with crutches, while the dean was preaching on this very text, was in a moment made whole." Shall follow - The word and faith must go before. In my name - By my authority committed to them. Raising the dead is not mentioned. So our Lord performed even more than he promised.

18. If they drink any deadly thing - But not by their own choice. God never calls us to try any such experiments.

19. The Lord - How seasonable is he called by this title! After he had spoken to them - For forty days. Luke xxiv, 50.

20. They preached every where - At the time St. Mark wrote, the apostles had already gone into all the known world, Rom. x, 18; and each of them was there known where he preached: the name of Christ only was known throughout the world.

## NOTES ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

HEREIN WE MAY OBSERVE,

I. The beginning: and therein.

1. The conception of John Chap. i, 5-25
2. The conception of Christ 26-56
3. The birth and circumcision of John; the hymn of Zacharias; the youth of John 57-80
4. Christ's birth ii, 1-20 Christ's circumcision and name 21 Presentation in the temple 22-38 Country and growth 39, 40

II. The middle, when he was twelve years old and upward 41-52

III. The course of the history.

A. The introduction, wherein are described John the Baptist; Christ's baptism, and temptation iii, iv, 1-13

B. The acceptable year in Galilee,

a. Proposed at Nazareth 14-30

b. Actually exhibited,

I. At Capernaum and near it; here we may observe,
1. Actions not censured, while Jesus
1. Teaches with authority 31, 32
2. Casts out a devil 33-37
3. Heals many sick 38-41
4. Teaches every where 42-44
5. Calls Peter; then James and John Chap. v, 1-11
6. Cleanses the leper 12-16
2. Actions censured, more and more severally, here occur,
1. The healing the paralytic 17-26
2. The calling of Levi; eating with publicans and sinners. 27-32
3. The question concerning fasting 33-39
4. The plucking the ears of corn vi, 1-5
5. The withered hand restored; snares laid 6-11
3. Actions having various effects on various persons,
1. Upon the apostles 12-16
2. Upon other hearers 17-40
3. Upon the centurion vii, 1-10
4. Upon the disciples of John,
The occasion: the young man raised 11-17
The message and answer 18-23
The reproof of them that believed not John 24-35
5. Upon Simon and the penitent sinner 36-50
6. Upon the woman who ministered to him viii, 1-3
7. Upon the people 4-18 Upon his mother and brethren 19-21
II. On the sea, and 22-26 Beyond it 27-39
III. On this side again.
1. Jairus and the flux of blood 40-55
2. The apostles sent ix, 1-6
3. Herod's doubting 7-9
4. The relation of the apostles 10
5. The earnestness of the people; our Lord's benignity; five thousand fed 11-17

C. The preparation for his passion,
a. A recapitulation of the doctrine concerning his person: his passion foretold 18-27
b. His transfiguration; the lunatic healed; his passion again foretold; humility enjoined 28-50
c. His last journey to Jerusalem, which we may divide into eighteen intervals,
1. The inhospitable Samaritans born with 51-57
2. In the way, improper followers repelled, Proper ones pressed forward 58-62
3. Afterward the seventy sent; and received again x, 1-24
And the scribe taught to love his neighbour, by the example of the good Samaritan 25-37
4. In Bethany, Mary preferred before Martha 38-42

5. In a certain place the disciples taught to pray xi, 1-13
A devil cast out, and the action defended 14-26
The acclamation of the woman corrected 27, 28
Those who desire a sign reproved 29-36
6. In a certain house, the scribes and Pharisees censured. 37-54
7. Our Lord's discourse to his disciples xii, 1-12
To one that interrupts him 13-21
To his disciples again 22-40
To Peter 41-53
To the people 54-59
8. The necessity of repentance shown xiii, 1-9
A woman healed on the Sabbath 10-21
9. The fewness of them that are saved 22-30
10. Herod termed a fox: Jerusalem reproved 31-35
11. In the Pharisee's house, he cures the dropsy on the
Sabbath; and xiv, 1-6
Teaches humility 7-11
Hoseapitality 12-14
The nature of the great supper 15-24
The necessity of self denial 25-35
12. Joy over repenting sinners defended, and xv, 1-10
Illustrated by the story of the prodigal son 11-32
The unjust steward, wise in his generation xvi, 1-13
The Pharisees reproved; and warned by the story of 14-18 the rich
man and Lazarus 19-31
Cautions against scandals xvii, 1-4
The faith of the apostles increased 5-10
13. In the confines of Samaria and Galilee he heals ten lepers. 11- 19
14. Answers the question concerning the time when the kingdom of God should come 20-37
Commends constant prayer xviii, 1-8
Recommends humility by the story of the Pharisee and publican 9-14
15. Blesses little children 15-17
Answers the rich young man 18-27
And Peter, asking what he should have 28-30
16. Foretells his passion a third time 31-34
17. Near Jericho, cures a blind man 35-42
18. In Jericho, brings salvation to Zaccheus xix, 1-10 Answers touching the sudden appearance of his kingdom. 11-28

D. Transactions at Jerusalem,
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1. His royal entry 29-44
2. The abuse of the temple corrected 45, 46
Its use restored, and 47, 48

Vindicated xx, 1-8
3. His discourses in the temple,
1. The parable of the husbandmen 9-19
2. The answer concerning paying tribute 20-26
And the resurrection 27-40
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5. The poor widow's offering commended xxi, 1-4
4. His prediction of the end of the temple, the city, and the world 5-38
5. Judas's agreement with the chief priests xxii, 1-6
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1. Peter and John prepare the passover 7-13
2. The Lord's Supper: discourse after it 14-23
3. The dispute, which of them was greatest 24-30
4. Peter, and the other apostles warned 31-38
5. On the mount of Olives,
1. Jesus prays; is in an agony; strengthened by an angel; wakes his disciples 39-46
2. Is betrayed; unseasonably defended 47-53
3. Carried to the high priest's house 54
Denied by Peter 55-62
Mocked 63-65
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1. His passion and death: transactions,
1. In the council 66-71
2. With Pilate xxiii, 1-5
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The crucifixion itself, and Jesus's prayer 33, 34
His garments parted 34
Scoffs: the inscription on the cross 35-39
The penitent thief 40-43
The prodigies, and the death of Jesus 44-46
The beholders of it 47-49
2. His burial 50-53
d. Friday evening and Saturday 54-56
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1. To the women Chap. xxiv, 1-12
2. To the two going into the country, and to Peter 13-35
3. To the other apostles 36-45
f. The instructions given his apostles: his ascension 46-53

# THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

## I

1, 2. This short, weighty, artless, candid dedication, belongs to the Acts, as well as the Gospel of St. Luke. Many have undertaken - He does not mean St. Matthew or Mark; and St. John did not write so early. For these were eye witnesses themselves and ministers of the word.

3. To write in order - St. Luke describes in order of time; first, The Acts of Christ; his conception, birth, childhood, baptism, miracles, preaching, passion, resurrection, ascension: then, The Acts of the Apostles. But in many smaller circumstances he does not observe the order of time. Most excellent Theophilus - This was the appellation usually given to Roman governors. Theophilus (as the ancients inform us) was a person of eminent quality at Alexandria. In Acts i, 1, St. Luke does not give him that title. He was then probably a private man. After the preface St. Luke gives us the history of Christ, from his coming into the world to his ascension into heaven.

5. The course of Abia - The priests were divided into twenty-four courses, of which that of Abia was the eighth, 1 Ch xxiv, 10. Each course ministered in its turn, for seven days, from Sabbath to Sabbath. And each priest of the course or set in waiting, had his part in the temple service assigned him by lot.

6. Walking in all the moral commandments, and ceremonial ordinances, blameless - How admirable a character! May our behaviour be thus unblamable, and our obedience thus sincere and universal!

10. The people were praying without, at the time of the incense - So the pious Jews constantly did. And this was the foundation of that elegant figure, by which prayer is in Scripture so often compared to incense. Perhaps one reason of ordaining incense might be, to intimate the acceptableness of the prayer that accompanied it; as well as to remind the worshippers of that sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour, which was once to be offered to God for them, and of that incense, which is continually offered with the prayers of the saints, upon the golden altar that is before the throne, Rev. viii, 3, 4.

12. Zacharias was troubled - Although he was accustomed to converse with God, yet we see he was thrown into a great consternation, at the appearance of his angelical messenger, nature not being able to sustain the sight. Is it not then an instance of the goodness is well as of the wisdom of God, that the services, which these heavenly spirits render us, are generally invisible?

13. Thy prayer is heard - Let us observe with pleasure, that the prayers of pious worshippers come up with acceptance before God; to whom no costly perfume is so sweet, as the fragrancy of an upright heart. An answer of peace was here returned, when the case seemed to be most helpless. Let us wait patiently for the Lord, and leave to his own wisdom the time and manner wherein he will appear for us. Thou shalt call his name John - John signifies the grace or favour of Jehovah. A name well suiting the person, who was afterward so highly in favour with God, and endued with abundance of grace; and who opened a way to the most glorious dispensation of grace in the Messiah's kingdom. And so Zacharias's former prayers for a child, and the prayer which he, as the

representative of the people, was probably offering at this very time, for the appearing of the Messiah, were remarkably answered in the birth of his forerunner.

15. He shall be great before the Lord - God the Father: of the Holy Ghost and the Son of God mention is made immediately after. And shall drink neither wine nor strong drink - Shall be exemplary for abstemiousness and self-denial; and so much the more filled with the Holy Ghost.

16. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn - None therefore need be ashamed of "preaching like John the Baptist." To the Lord their God - To Christ.

17. He shall go before him, Christ, in the power and spirit of Elijah - With the same integrity, courage, austerity, and fervour, and the same power attending his word: to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children - To reconcile those that are at variance, to put an end to the most bitter quarrels, such as are very frequently those between the nearest relations: and the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just - And the most obstinate sinners to true wisdom, which is only found among them that are righteous before God.

18. Zacharias said, Whereby shall I know this? - In how different a spirit did the blessed virgin say, How shall this be? Zacharias disbelieved the fact: Mary had no doubt of the thing; but only inquired concerning the manner of it.

19. I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God - Seven angels thus stand before God, Rev. vii, 2; who seem the highest of all. There seems to be a remarkable gradation in the words, enhancing the guilt of Zacharias's unbelief. As if he had said, I am Gabriel, a holy angel of God: yea, one of the highest order. Not only so, but am now peculiarly sent from God; and that with a message to thee in particular. Nay, and to show thee glad tidings, such as ought to be received with the greatest joy and readiness.

20. Thou shalt be dumb - The Greek word signifies deaf, as well as dumb: and it seems plain, that he was as unable to hear, as he was to speak; for his friends were obliged to make signs to him, that he might understand them, ver. 62.

21. The people were waiting - For him to come and dismiss them (as usual) with the blessing.

24. Hid herself - She retired from company, that she might have the more leisure to rejoice and bless God for his wonderful mercy.

25. He looked upon me to take away my reproach - Barrenness was a great reproach among the Jews. Because fruitfulness was promised to the righteous.

26. In the sixth month - After Elisabeth had conceived.

27. Espoused - It was customary among the Jews, for persons that married to contract before witnesses some time before. And as Christ was to be born of a pure virgin, so the wisdom of God ordered it to be of one espoused, that to prevent reproach he might have a reputed father, according to the flesh.

28. Hail, thou highly favoured; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women - Hail is the salutation used by our Lord to the women after his resurrection: thou art highly favoured, or hast found favour with God, ver. 30, is no more than was said of Noah, Moses, and David. The Lord is with thee, was said to Gideon, Judg. vi, 12; and blessed shall she be above women, of Jael, Judg. v, 24. This salutation gives no room for any pretense of paying adoration to the virgin; as having no appearance of a prayer, or of worship offered to her.

32. He shall be called the Son of the Highest - In this respect also: and that in a more eminent sense than any, either man or angel, can be called so. The Lord shall give him the throne of his father David - That is, the spiritual kingdom, of which David's was a type.

33. He shall reign over the house of Jacob - In which all true believers are included.

35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee - The power of God was put forth by the Holy Ghost, as the immediate Divine agent in this work: and so he exerted the power of the Highest as his own power, who together with the Father and the Son is the most high God. Therefore also - Not only as he is God from eternity, but on this account likewise he shall be called the Son of God.

36. And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth - Though Elisabeth was of the house of Aaron, and Mary of the house of David, by the fathers side, they might be related by their mothers. For the law only forbad heiresses marrying into another tribe. And so other persons continually intermarried; particularly the families of David and of Levi.

38. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord - It is not improbable, that this time of the virgin's humble faith, consent, and expectation, might be the very time of her conceiving.

39. A city of Judah - Probably Hebron, which was situated in the hill country of Judea, and belonged to the house of Aaron.

41. When Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary - The discourse with which she saluted her, giving an account of what the angel had said, the joy of her soul so affected her body, that the very child in her womb was moved in an uncommon manner, as if it leaped for joy.

45. Happy is she that believed - Probably she had in her mind the unbelief of Zacharias.

46. And Mary said - Under a prophetic impulse, several things, which perhaps she herself did not then fully understand.

47. My spirit hath rejoiced in God my saviour - She seems to turn her thoughts here to Christ himself, who was to be born of her, as the angel had told her, he should be the Son of the Highest, whose name should be Jesus, the saviour. And she rejoiced in hope of salvation through faith in him, which is a blessing common to all true believers, more than in being his mother after the flesh, which was an honour peculiar to her. And certainly she had the same reason to rejoice in God her saviour hat we have: because he had regarded the low estate of his handmaid, in like manner as he regarded our low estate; and vouchsafed to come and save her and us, when we were reduced to the lowest estate of sin and misery.

51. He hath wrought strength with his arm - That is, he hath shown the exceeding greatness of his power. She speaks prophetically of those things as already done, which God was about to do by the Messiah. He hath scattered the proud - Visible and invisible.

52. He hath put down the mighty - Both angels and men.

54. He hath helped his servant Israel - By sending the Messiah.

55. To his seed - His spiritual seed: all true believers.

56. Mary returned to her own house - And thence soon after to Bethlehem.

60. His mother said - Doubtless by Revelation, or a particular impulse from God.

66. The hand of the Lord - The peculiar power and blessing of God.

67. And Zacharias prophesied - Of things immediately to follow. But it is observable, he speaks of Christ chiefly; of John only, as it were, incidentally.

69. A horn - Signifies honour, plenty, and strength. A horn of salvation - That is, a glorious and mighty saviour.

70. His prophets, who have been since the world began - For there were prophets from the very beginning.

74. To serve him without fear - Without any slavish fear. Here is the substance of the great promise. That we shall be always holy, always happy: that being delivered from Satan and sin, from every uneasy and unholy temper, we shall joyfully love and serve God, in every thought, word, and work.

76. And thou, child - He now speaks to John; yet not as a parent, but as a prophet.

77. To give knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins - The knowledge of the remission of our sins being the grand instrument of present and eternal salvation, Heb. viii, 11, 12. But the immediate sense of the words seems to be, to preach to them the Gospel doctrine of salvation by the remission of their sins.

78. The day spring - Or the rising sun; that is, Christ.

## II

1. That all the world should be enrolled - That all the inhabitants, male and female, of every town in the Roman empire, with their families and estates, should be registered.

2. When Cyrenius was governor of Syria - When Publius Sulpicius Quirinus governed the province of Syria, in which Judea was then included.

6. And while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered - Mary seems not to have known that the child must have been born in Bethlehem, agreeably to the prophecy. But the providence of God took care for it.

7. She laid him in the manger - Perhaps it might rather be translated in the stall. They were lodged in the ox stall, fitted up on occasion of the great concourse, for poor guests. There was no room for them in the inn - Now also, there is seldom room for Christ in an inn. Matt. i, 25

11. To you - Shepherds; Israel; mankind.

14. Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace; good will toward men - The shouts of the multitude are generally broken into short sentences. This rejoicing acclamation strongly represents the piety and benevolence of these heavenly spirits: as if they had said, Glory be to God in the highest heavens: let all the angelic legions resound his praises. For with the Redeemer's birth, peace, and all kind of happiness, come down to dwell on earth: yea, the overflowings of Divine good will and favour are now exercised toward men.

20. For all the things that they had heard - From Mary; as it was told them - By the angels.

21. To circumcise the child - That he might visibly be made under the law by a sacred rite, which obliged him to keep the whole law; as also that he might be owned to be the seed of Abraham, and might put an honour on the solemn dedication of children to God.

22. The days - The forty days prescribed, Lev. xii, 2, 4.

23. Exod. xiii, 2.

24. A pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons - This offering sufficed for the poor. Lev. xii, 8.

25. The consolation of Israel - A common phrase for the Messiah, who was to be the everlasting consolation of the Israel of God. The Holy Ghost was upon him - That is, he was a prophet.

27. By the Spirit - By a particular Revelation or impulse from him.

30. Thy salvation - Thy Christ, thy saviour.

32. And the glory of thy people Israel - For after the Gentiles are enlightened, all Israel shall be saved.

33. Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken - For they did not thoroughly understand them.

34. Simeon blessed them - Joseph and Mary. This child is set for the fall and rising again of many - That is, he will be a savour of death to some, to unbelievers: a savour of life to others, to believers: and for a sign which shall be spoken against - A sign from God, yet rejected of men: but the time for declaring this at large was not yet come: that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed - The event will be, that by means of that contradiction, the inmost thoughts of many, whether good or bad, will be made manifest.

35. A sword shall pierce through thy own soul - So it did, when he suffered: particularly at his crucifixion.

37. Fourscore and four years - These were the years of her life, not her widowhood only. Who departed not from the temple - Who attended there at all the stated hours of prayer. But served God with fastings and prayers - Even at that age. Night and day - That is, spending therein a considerable part of the night, as well as of the day.

38. To all that were waiting for redemption - The scepter now appeared to be departing from Judah, though it was not actually gone: Daniel's weeks were plainly near their period. And the revival of the spirit of prophecy, together with the memorable occurrences relating to the birth of John the Baptist, and of Jesus, could not but encourage and quicken the expectation of pious persons at this time. Let the example of these aged saints animate those, whose hoary heads, like theirs, are a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness. Let those venerable lips, so soon to be silent in the grave, be now employed in the praises of their Redeemer. Let them labour to leave those behind, to whom Christ will be as precious as he has been to them; and who will be waiting for God's salvation, when they are gone to enjoy it.

40. And the child grew - In bodily strength and stature; and waxed strong in spirit - The powers of his human mind daily improved; filled with wisdom - By the light of the indwelling Spirit, which gradually opened itself in his soul; and the grace of God was upon him - That is, the peculiar favour of God rested upon him, even as man.

43. The child Jesus - St. Luke describes in order Jesus the fruit of the womb, chap. i, 42; an infant, chap. ii, 12; a little child, ver. 40; a child here, and afterward a man. So our Lord passed through and sanctified every stage of human life. Old age only did not become him.

44. Supposing him to have been in the company - As the men and women usually travelled in distinct companies.

46. After three days - The first day was spent in their journey, the second, in their return to Jerusalem: and the third, in searching for him there: they found him in the temple - In an apartment of it: sitting in the midst of the doctors - Not one word is said of his disputing with them, but only of his asking and answering questions, which was a very usual thing in these assemblies, and indeed the very end of them. And if he was, with others, at the feet of these teachers (where learners generally sat) he might be said to be in the midst of them, as they sat on benches of a semicircular form, raised above their hearers and disciples.

49. Why sought ye me? - He does not blame them for losing, but for thinking it needful to seek him: and intimates, that he could not be lost, nor found any where, but doing the will of a higher parent.

50. It is observable that Joseph is not mentioned after this time; whence it is probable, he did not live long after.

52. Jesus increased in wisdom - As to his human nature, and in favour with God - In proportion to that increase. It plainly follows, that though a man were pure, even as Christ was pure, still he would have room to increase in holiness, and in consequence thereof to increase in the favour, as well as in the love of God.

## III

1. The fifteenth year of Tiberius - Reckoning from the time when Angustus made him his colleague in the empire. Herod being tetrarch of Galilee - The dominions of Herod the Great were, after his death, divided into four parts or tetrarchies. This Herod his son was tetrarch of Galilee, reigning over that fourth part of his dominions. His brother reigned over two other fourth parts, the region of Iturea, and that of Trachonitis (that tract of land on the other side Jordan, which had formerly belonged to the tribe of Manasseh.) And Lysanias (probably descended from a prince of that name, who was some years before governor of that country) was tetrarch of the remaining part of Abilene, which was a large city of Syria, whose territories reached to Lebanon and Damascus, and contained great numbers of Jews. Matt. iii, 1; Mark i, 1.

2. Annas being high priest, and Caiaphas - There could be but one high priest, strictly speaking, at once. Annas was the high priest at that time, and Caiaphas his sagan or deputy.

4. Isaiah xl, 3.

5. Every valley shall be filled, &c. - That is, every hindrance shall be removed.

6. The salvation of God - The saviour, the Messiah.

8. Say not within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father - That is, trust not in your being members of the visible Church, or in any external privileges whatsoever: for God now requires a change of heart; and that without delay.

10. He answereth - It is not properly John, but the Holy Ghost, who teaches us in the following answers, how to come ourselves, and how to instruct other penitent sinners to come to Christ, that he may give them rest. The sum of all this is, Cease to do evil, learn to do well. These are the fruits worthy of repentance.

20. He shut up John - This circumstance, though it happened after, is here mentioned before our Lord's baptism, that his history (that of John being concluded) may then follow without any interruption.

21. Jesus praying, the heaven was opened - It is observable, that the three voices from heaven, see chap. ix, 29, 35; John xii, 28; by which the Father bore witness to Christ, were pronounced either while he was praying, or quickly after it. Matt. iii, 13; Mark i, 9.

23. And Jesus was - John's beginning was computed by the years of princes: our saviour's by the years of his own life, as a more august era. About thirty years of age - He did not now enter upon his thirtieth year (as the common translation would induce one to think) but he now entered on his public ministry: being of such an age as the Mosaic law required. Our great Master attained not, as it seems, to the conclusion of his thirty-fourth year. Yet what glorious achievements did he accomplish within those narrow limits of time! Happy that servant, who, with any proportionable

zeal, despatches the great business of life; and so much the more happy, if his sun go down at noon. For the space that is taken from the labours of time, shall be added to the rewards of eternity. The son of Heli - That is, the son-in-law: for Heli was the father of Mary. So St. Matthew writes the genealogy of Joseph, descended from David by Solomon; St. Luke that of Mary, descended from David by Nathan. In the genealogy of Joseph (recited by St. Matthew) that of Mary is implied, the Jews being accustomed to marry into their own families.

38. Adam the son of God - That is, whatever the sons of Adam receive from their human parents, Adam received immediately from God, except sin and misery.

## IV

1. The wilderness - Supposed by some to have been in Judea; by others to have been that great desert of Horeb or Sinai, where the children of Israel were tried for forty years, and Moses and Elijah fasted forty days. Matt. iv, 1; Mark i, 12.

4. Deut. viii, 3.

6. I give it to whomsoever I will - Not so, Satan. It is God, not thou, that putteth down one, and setteth up another: although sometimes Satan, by God's permission, may occasion great revolutions in the world.

8. Deut. vi, 13.

10. Psalm xci, 11.

12. Deut. vi, 16.

13. A convenient season - In the garden of Gethsemane, chap. xxii, 53.

14. Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit - Being more abundantly strengthened after his conflict.

15. Being glorified of all - So God usually gives strong cordials after strong temptations. But neither their approbation continued long, nor the outward calm which he now enjoyed.

16. He stood up - Showing thereby that he had a desire to read the Scripture to the congregation: on which the book was given to him. It was the Jewish custom to read standing, but to preach sitting. Matt. xiii, 54; Mark vi, 1.

17. He found - It seems, opening upon it, by the particular providence of God.

18. He hath anointed me - With the Spirit. He hath by the power of his Spirit which dwelleth in me, set me apart for these offices. To preach the Gospel to the poor - Literally and spiritually. How is the doctrine of the ever-blessed trinity interwoven, even in those scriptures where one would least expect it? How clear a declaration of the great Three-One is there in those very words, The Spirit - of the Lord is upon me! To proclaim deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised - Here is a beautiful gradation, in comparing the spiritual state of men to the miserable state of those captives, who are not only cast into prison, but, like Zedekiah, had their eyes put out, and were laden and bruised with chains of iron. Isaiah lxi, 1.

19. The acceptable year - Plainly alluding to the year of jubilee, when all, both debtors and servants, were set free.

21. Today is this scripture fulfilled in your ears - By what you hear me speak.

22. The gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth - A person of spiritual discernment may find in all the discourses of our Lord a peculiar sweetness, gravity, and becomingness, such as is not to be found in the same degree, not even in those of the apostles.

23. Ye will surely say - That is, your approbation now outweighs your prejudices. But it will not be so long. You will soon ask, why my love does not begin at home? Why I do not work miracles here, rather than at Capernaum? It is because of your unbelief. Nor is it any new thing for me to be despised in my own country. So were both Elijah and Elisha, and thereby driven to work miracles among heathens, rather than in Israel.

24. No prophet is acceptable in his own country - That is, in his own neighbourhood. It generally holds, that a teacher sent from God is not so acceptable to his neighbours as he is to strangers. The meanness of his family, or lowness of his circumstances, bring his office into contempt: nor can they suffer that he, who was before equal with, or below themselves, should now bear a superior character.

25. When the heaven was shut up three years and six months - Such a proof had they that God had sent him. In 1 Kings xviii, 1, it is said, The word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year: namely, reckoning not from the beginning of the drought, but from the time when he began to sojourn with the widow of Sarepta. A year of drought had preceded this, while he dwelt at the brook Cherith. So that the whole time of the drought was (as St. James likewise observes) three years and six months. 1 Kings xvii, 19; xviii, 44.

27. 2 Kings v, 14.

28. And all in the synagogue were filled with fury - Perceiving the purport of his discourse, namely, that the blessing which they despised, would be offered to, and accepted by, the Gentiles. So changeable are the hearts of wicked men! So little are their starts of love to be depended on! So unable are they to bear the close application, even of a discourse which they most admire!

30. Passing through the midst of them - Perhaps invisibly; or perhaps they were overawed; so that though they saw, they could not touch him.

31. He came down to Capernaum - And dwelt there, entirely quitting his abode at Nazareth. Mark i, 21.

34. What have we to do with thee - Thy present business is with men, not with devils. I know thee who thou art - But surely he did not know a little before, that he was God over all, blessed for ever; or he would not have dared to tell him, All this power is delivered to me, and I give it to whomsoever I will. The Holy One of God - Either this confession was extorted from him by terror, (for the devils believe and tremble, ) or he made it with a design to render the character of Christ suspected. Possibly it was from hence the Pharisees took occasion to say, He casteth out devils by the prince of the devils.

38. Matt. viii, 14; Mark i, 29.

40. When the sun was set - And consequently the Sabbath ended, which they reckoned from sunset to sunset. Matt. viii, 16; Mark i, 32.

42. Mark i, 35.

## V

1. Matt. iv, 18; Mark i, 16.

6. Their net brake - Began to tear.

8. Depart from me, for I am a sinful man - And therefore not worthy to be in thy presence.

11. They forsook all and followed him - They had followed him before, John i, 43, but not so as to forsake all. Till now, they wrought at their ordinary calling.

12. Matt. viii, 2; Mark i, 40.

14. Lev. xiv, 2.

16. He withdrew - The expression in the original implies, that he did so frequently.

17. Sitting by - As being more honourable than the bulk of the congregation, who stood. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them - To heal the sickness of their souls, as well as all bodily diseases.

18. Matt. ix, 2; Mark ii, 3.

19. Not being able to bring him in through the multitude, they went round about by a back passage, and going up the stairs on the outside, they came upon the flat-roofed house, and let him down through the trap door, such as was on the top of most of the Jewish houses: doubtless, with such circumspection as the circumstances plainly required.

26. We have seen strange things to. day - Sins forgiven, miracles wrought.

27. Matt. ix, 9; Mark ii, 14.

28. Leaving all - His business and gain.

29. And Levi made him a great entertainment - It was necessarily great, because of the great number of guests.

33. Make prayers - Long and solemn. Matt. ix, 14; Mark ii, 18.

34. Can ye make - That is, is it proper to make men fast and mourn, during a festival solemnity?

36. He spake also a parable - Taken from clothes and wine; therefore peculiarly proper at a feast.

39. And no man having drunk old wine - And beside, men are not wont to be immediately freed from old prejudices.

## VI

1. The first Sabbath - So the Jews reckoned their Sabbaths, from the passover to pentecost; the first, second, third, and so on, till the seventh Sabbath (after the second day.) This immediately preceded pentecost, which was the fiftieth day after the second day of unleavened bread. Matt. xii, 1; Mark ii, 23.

2. Why do ye - St. Matthew and Mark represent the Pharisees as proposing the question to our Lord himself. It was afterward, probably, they proposed it to his disciples.

4. 1 Sam. xxi, 6.

6. Matt. xii, 9; Mark iii, 1.

9. To save life or to kill - He just then probably saw the design to kill him rising in their hearts.

12. In the prayer of God - The phrase is singular and emphatical, to imply an extraordinary and sublime devotion. Mark iii, 13.

13. Matt. x, 2; Mark iii, 14; Acts i, 13.

15. Simon called Zelotes - Full of zeal; otherwise called Simon the Canaanite.

17. On a plain - At the foot of the mountain.

20. In the following verses our Lord, in the audience of his newly- chosen disciples, and of the multitude, repeats, standing on the plain, many remarkable passages of the sermon he had before delivered, sitting on the mount. He here again pronounces the poor and the hungry, the mourners, and the persecuted, happy; and represents as miserable those who are rich, and full, and joyous, and applauded: because generally prosperity is a sweet poison, and affliction a healing, though bitter medicine. Let the thought reconcile us to adversity, and awaken our caution when the world smiles upon us; when a plentiful table is spread before us, and our cup is running over; when our spirits are gay; and we hear (what nature loves) our own praise from men. Happy are ye poor - The word seems here to be taken literally: ye who have left al] for me. Matt. v, 3.

24. Miserable are ye rich - If ye have received or sought your consolation or happiness therein.

25. Full - Of meat and drink, and worldly goods. That laugh - That are of a light trifling spirit.

26. Wo to you when all men shall speak well of you - But who will believe this?

27. But I say to you that hear - Hitherto our Lord had spoken only to particular sorts of persons: now he begins speaking to all in general. Matt. v, 44.

29. To him that smiteth thee on the cheek - Taketh away thy cloak - These seem to be proverbial expressions, to signify an invasion of the tenderest points of honour and property. Offer the other - Forbid not thy coat - That is, rather yield to his repeating the affront or injury, than gratify resentment in righting your self; in any method not becoming Christian love. Matt. v, 39.

30. Give to every one - Friend or enemy, what thou canst spare, and he really wants: and of him that taketh away thy goods - By borrowing, if he be insolvent, ask them not again. Matt. v, 42.

31. Matt. vii, 12.

32. It is greatly observable, our Lord has so little regard for one of the highest instances of natural virtue, namely, the returning love for love, that he does not account it even to deserve thanks. For even sinners, saith he, do the same: men who do not regard God at all. Therefore he may do this, who has not taken one step in Christianity.

37. Matt. vii, 1.

38. Into your bosom - Alluding to the mantles the Jews wore, into which a large quantity of corn might be received. With the same measure that ye mete with, it shall be measured to you again - Amazing goodness! So we are permitted even to carve for ourselves! We ourselves are, as it were, to tell God how much mercy he shall show us! And can we be content with less than the very largest measure? Give then to man, what thou designest to receive of God.

39. He spake a parable - Our Lord sometimes used parables when he knew plain and open declarations would too much inflame the passions of his hearers. It is for this reason he uses this parable, Can the blind lead the blind? - Can the scribes teach this way, which they know not themselves? Will not they and their scholars perish together? Can they make their disciples any better than themselves? But as for those who will be my disciples, they shall be all taught of God; who will enable them to come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of their Master. Be not ye like their disciples, censuring others, and not amending yourselves. Matt. xv, 14.

40. Matt. x, 24; John xv, 20.

41. Matt. vii, 3.

46. And why call ye me Lord, Lord - What will fair professions avail, without a life answerable thereto? Matt. vii, 21.

47. Matt. vii, 24.

## VII

1. Matt. viii, 5.

3. Hearing of Jesus - Of his miracles, and of his arrival at Capernaum.

18. Matt. xi, 2.

22. To the poor the Gospel is preached - Which is the greatest mercy, and the greatest miracle of all.

24. When the messengers were departed - He did not speak the following things in the hearing of John's disciples, lest he should seem to flatter John, or to compliment him into an adherence to his former testimony. To avoid all suspicion of this kind, he deferred his commendation of him, till the messengers were gone; and then delivered it to the people, to prevent all imaginations, as if John were wavering in his judgment, and had sent the two disciples for his own, rather than their satisfaction.

27. Mal. iii, 1.

28. There is not a greater prophet than John - A greater teacher. But he that is least in the kingdom of God - The least teacher whom I send forth.

29. And all the people - Our Lord continues his discourse: justified God - Owned his wisdom and mercy in thus calling them to repentance, and preparing them for Him that was to come.

30. But the Pharisees and scribes - The good, learned, honourable men: made void the counsel, the gracious design, of God toward them - They disappointed all these methods of his love, and would receive no benefit from them.

32. They are like children sitting in the market place - So froward and perverse, that no contrivance can be found to please them. It is plain our Lord means, that they were like the children complained of, not like those that made the complaint.

34. But wisdom is justified by all her children - The children of wisdom are those who are truly wise unto salvation. The wisdom of God in all these dispensations, these various methods of calling sinners to repentance, is owned and heartily approved by all these.

36. And one of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him - Let the candour with which our Lord accepted this invitation, and his gentleness and prudence at this ensnaring entertainment, teach us to mingle the wisdom of the serpent, with the innocence and sweetness of the dove. Let us neither absolutely refuse all favours, nor resent all neglects, from those whose friendship is at best very doubtful, and their intimacy by no means safe.

37. A woman - Not the same with Mary of Bethany, who anointed him six days before his last passover.

40. And Jesus said, Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee - So tender and courteous am address does our Lord use even to a proud, censorious Pharisee!

43. Which of them will love him most? - Neither of them will love him at all, before he has forgiven them. An insolvent debtor, till he is forgiven, does not love, but fly his creditor.

44. Thou gavest me no water - It was customary with the Jews to show respect and kindness to their welcome guests, by saluting them with a kiss, by washing their feet, and anointing their heads with oil, or some fine ointment.

47. Those many sins of hers are forgiven; therefore she loveth much - The fruit of her having had much forgiven. It should carefully be observed here, that her love is mentioned as the effect and evidence, not the cause of her pardon. She knew that much had been forgiven her, and therefore she loved much.

50. Thy faith hath saved thee - Not thy love. Love is salvation.

## VIII

2. Mary Magdalene - Or Mary of Magdala, a town in Galilee: probably the person mentioned in the last chapter.

4. Matt. xiii, 1; Mark iv, 1.

15. Who - keep it - Not like the highway side: And bring forth fruit - Not like the thorny ground: With perseverance - Not like the stony.

16. No man having lighted a candle - As if ho had said, And let your good fruit appear openly. Matt. v, 15; Mark iv, 21; Chap. xi, 33.

17. For nothing is hid - Strive not to conceal it at all; for you can conceal nothing long. Matt. x, 26; Mark iv, 22; Chap. xii, 2.

18. The word commonly translated seemeth, wherever it occurs, does not weaken, but greatly strengthens the sense. Matt. xiii, 12; Mark iv, 25; Luke xix, 26.

19. Matt. xii, 46; Mark iii, 31.

22. Matt. viii, 23; Mark iv, 35.

26. Matt. viii, 28; Mark v, 1.

29. For many times it had caught him - Therefore our compassionate Lord made the more haste to cast him out.

31. The abyss - That is, the bottomless pit.

32. To enter into the swine - Not that they were any easier in the swine than out of them. Had it been so, they would not so soon have dislodged themselves, by destroying the herd.

37. Matt. ix, 1; Mark v, 18.

40. Mark v, 21.

52. She is not dead but sleepeth - Her soul is not separated finally from the body; and this short separation is rather to be called sleep than death.

## IX

1. Matt. x, 1; Mark vi, 7.

4. There abide and thence depart - That is, stay in that house till ye leave the city.

7. It was said by some - And soon after by Herod himself. Matt. xiv, 1; Mark vi, 14.

8. That Elijah had appeared - He could not rise again, because he did not die.

10. Mark vi, 30.

12. Matt. xiv, 15; Mark vi, 35; John vi, 3.

18. Apart - From the multitude. And he asked them - When he had done praying, during which they probably stayed at a distance. Matt. xiv, 13; Mark viii, 27.

22. Saying - Ye must prepare for a scene far different from this.

23. Let him deny himself, and take up his cross - The necessity of this duty has been shown in many places: the extent of it is specified here, daily - Therefore that day is lost wherein no cross is taken up.

24. Matt. xvi, 25; Mark viii, 35; John xii, 25.

28. Matt. xvii, 1; Mark ix, 2.

31. In glory - Like Christ with whom they talked.

32. They saw his glory - The very same expression in which it is described by St. John, John i, 14; and by St. Peter, 2 Pet. i, 16.

34. A cloud came and overshadowed them all. And they, the apostles, feared, while they (Moses and Elijah) entered into the cloud, which took them away.

37. Matt. xvii, 14; Mark ix, 14.

44. Let these sayings sink down into your ears - That is, consider them deeply. In joy remember the cross. So wisely does our Lord balance praise with sufferings. Matt. xvii, 22; Mark ix, 31.

46. And there arose a reasoning among them - This kind of reasoning always arose at the most improper times that could be imagined.

47. Matt. xviii, 2; Mark ix, 37.

48. And said to them - If ye would be truly great, humble yourselves to the meanest offices. He that is least in his own eyes shall be great indeed.

49. Mark ix, 38.

51. The days are fulfilled that he should be received up - That is, the time of his passion was now at hand. St. Luke looks through this, to the glory which was to follow. He steadfastly set his face - Without fear of his enemies, or shame of the cross, Heb. xii, 2.

52. He sent messengers to make ready - A lodging and needful entertainment for him and those with him.

53. His face was as though he would go to Jerusalem - It plainly appeared, he was going to worship at the temple, and thereby, in effect, to condemn the Samaritan worship at Mount Gerizim.

54. As Elisha did - At or near this very place, which might put it into the minds of the apostles to make the motion now, rather than at any other time or place, where Christ had received the like affront.

55. Ye know not what manner of spirit - The spirit of Christianity is. It is not a spirit of wrath and vengeance, but of peace, and gentleness, and love.

57. Matt. viii, 19.

58. But Jesus said to him - First understand the terms: consider on what conditions thou art to follow me.

61. Suffer me first to bid them farewell that are in my house - As Elisha did after Elijah had called him from the plough, 1 Kings xix, 19; to which our Lord's answer seems to allude.

62. Is fit for the kingdom of God - Either to propagate or to receive it.

## X

2. Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he would thrust forth labourers - For God alone can do this: he alone can qualify and commission men for this work. Matt. ix, 37.

3. Matt. x, 16.

4. Salute no man by the way - The salutations usual among the Jews took up much time. But these had so much work to do in so short a space, that they had not a moment to spare.

6. A son of peace - That is, one worthy of it.

7. Matt. x, 11.

11. The kingdom of God is at hand - Though ye will not receive it.

13. Wo to thee, Chorazin - The same declaration Christ had made some time before. By repeating it now, he warns the seventy not to lose time by going to those cities. Matt. xi, 21.

16. Matt. x, 40; John xiii, 20.

18. I beheld Satan - That is, when ye went forth, I saw the kingdom of Satan, which was highly exalted, swiftly and suddenly cast down.

19. I give you power - That is, I continue it to you: and nothing shall hurt you - Neither the power, nor the subtilty of Satan.

20. Rejoice not so much that the devils are subject to you, as that your names are written in heaven - Reader, so is thine, if thou art a true, believer. God grant it may never be blotted out!

21. Lord of heaven and earth - In both of which thy kingdom stands, and that of Satan is destroyed. That thou hast hid these things - He rejoiced not in the destruction of the wise and prudent, but in the display of the riches of God's grace to others, in such a manner as reserves to Him the entire glory of our salvation, and hides pride from man. Matt. xi, 25.

22. Who the Son is - Essentially one with the Father: who the Father is - How great, how wise, how good!

23. Matt. xiii, 16.

25. Matt. xxii, 35; Mark xii, 28.

27. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God - That is, thou shalt unite all the faculties of thy soul to render him the most intelligent and sincere, the most affectionate and resolute service. We may safely rest in this general sense of these important words, if we are not able to fix the particular meaning of every single word. If we desire to do this, perhaps the heart, which is a general expression, may be explained by the three following, With all thy soul, with the warmest affection, with all thy strength, the most vigourous efforts of thy will, and with all thy mind or understanding, in the most wise and reasonable manner thou canst; thy understanding guiding thy will and affections. Deut. vi, 5; Lev. xix, 18.

28. Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live - Here is no irony, but a deep and weighty truth. He, and he alone, shall live for ever, who thus loves God and his neighbour in the present life.

29. To justify himself - That is, to show he had done this. Lev. xviii, 5.

30. From Jerusalem to Jericho - The road from Jerusalem to Jericho (about eighteen miles from it) lay through desert and rocky places: so many robberies and murders were committed therein, that it was called the bloody way. Jericho was situated in the valley: hence the phrase of going down to it. About twelve thousand priests and Levites dwelt there, who all attended the service of the temple.

31. The common translation is, by chance - Which is full of gross improprieties. For if we speak strictly, there is no such thing in the universe as either chance or fortune. A certain priest came down that way, and passed by on the other side - And both he and the Levite no doubt could find an excuse for passing over on the other side, and might perhaps gravely thank God for their own deliverance, while they left their brother bleeding to death. Is it not an emblem of many living characters, perhaps of some who bear the sacred office? O house of Levi and of Aaron, is not the day coming, when the virtues of heathens and Samaritans will rise up in judgment against you?

33. But a certain Samaritan came where he was - It was admirably well judged to represent the distress on the side of the Jew, and the mercy on that of the Samaritan. For the case being thus proposed, self interest would make the very scribe sensible, how amiable such a conduct was, and would lay him open to our Lord's inference. Had it been put the other way, prejudice might more easily have interposed, before the heart could have been affected.

34. Pouring in oil and wine - Which when well beaten together are one of the best balsams that can be applied to a fresh wound.

36. Which of these was the neighbour to him that fell among the robbers - Which acted the part of a neighbour?

37. And he said, He that showed mercy on him - He could not for shame say otherwise, though he thereby condemned himself and overthrew his own false notion of the neighbour to whom our love is due. Go and do thou in like manner - Let us go and do likewise, regarding every man as our neighbour who needs our assistance. Let us renounce that bigotry and party zeal which would contract our hearts into an insensibility for all the human race, but a small number whose sentiments and practices are so much our own, that our love to them is but self love reflected. With an honest openness of mind let us always remember that kindred between man and man, and cultivate that happy instinct whereby, in the original constitution of our nature, God has strongly bound us to each other.

40. Martha was encumbered - The Greek word properly signifies to be drawn different ways at the same time, and admirably expresses the situation of a mind, surrounded (as Martha's then was) with so many objects of care, that it hardly knows which to attend to first.

41. Martha, Martha - There is a peculiar spirit and tenderness in the repetition of the word: thou art careful, inwardly, and hurried, outwardly.

42. Mary hath chosen the good part - To save her soul. Reader, hast thou?

## XI

1. Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples - The Jewish masters used to give their followers some short form of prayer, as a peculiar badge of their relation to them. This it is probable John the Baptist had done. And in this sense it seems to be that the disciples now asked Jesus, to teach them to pray. Accordingly he here repeats that form, which he had before given them in his sermon on the mount, and likewise enlarges on the same head, though still speaking the same things in substance. And this prayer uttered from the heart, and in its true and full meaning, is indeed the badge of a real Christian: for is not he such whose first and most ardent desire is the glory of God, and the happiness of man by the coming of his kingdom? Who asks for no more of

this world than his daily bread, longing meantime for the bread that came down from heaven? And whose only desires for himself are forgiveness of sins, (as he heartily forgives others, ) and sanctification.

2. When ye pray, say - And what he said to them is undoubtedly said to us also. We are therefore here directed, not only to imitate this in all our prayers, but to use this very form of prayer. Matt. vi, 9.

4. Forgive us; for we forgive them - Not once, but continually. This does not denote the meritorious cause of our pardon; but the removal of that hindrance which otherwise would render it impossible.

5. At midnight - The most unseasonable time: but no time is unseasonable with God, either for hearing or answering prayer.

9. Matt. vii, 7.

13. How much more shall your heavenly Father - How beautiful is the gradation! A friend: a father: God! Give the Holy Spirit - The best of gifts, and that which includes every good gift.

14. It was dumb - That is, it made the man so. Matt. xii, 22.

15. But some said, He casteth out devils by Beelzebub - These he answers, ver. 17. Others, to try whether it were so or no, sought a sign from heaven. These he reproves in ver. 29 and following verses. Beelzebub signifies the Lord of flies, a title which the heathens gave to Jupiter, whom they accounted the chief of their gods, and yet supposed him to be employed in driving away flies from their temple and sacrifices. The Philistines worshipped a deity under this name, as the God of Ekron: from hence the Jews took the name, and applied it to the chief of the devils. Mark iii, 22.

16. Matt. xii, 38.

17. A house - That is, a family.

20. If I cast out devils by the finger of God - That is, by a power manifestly Divine. Perhaps the expression intimates farther, that it was done without any labour: then the kingdom of God is come upon you - Unawares, unexpected: so the Greek word implies.

21. The strong one armed - The devil, strong in himself, and armed with the pride, obstinacy, and security of him in whom he dwells.

26. The last state of that man becometh worse than the first - Whoever reads the sad account Josephus gives of the temple and conduct of the Jews, after the ascension of Christ and before their final destruction by the Romans, must acknowledge that no emblem could have been more proper to describe them. Their characters were the vilest that can be conceived, and they pressed on to their own ruin, as if they had been possessed by legions of devils, and wrought up to the last degree of madness. But this also is fulfilled in all who totally and finally apostatize from true faith.

27. Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked! - How natural was the thought for a woman! And how gently does our Lord reprove her!

28. Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it - For if even she that bare him had not done this, she would have forfeited all her blessedness.

29. It seeketh - The original word implies seeking more, or over and above what one has already.

32. They repented at the preaching of Jonah - But it was only for a season. Afterward they relapsed into wickedness, till (after about forty years) they were destroyed. It is remarkable, that in this also the comparison held. God reprieved the Jews for about forty years; but they still advanced in wickedness, till having filled up their measure, they were destroyed with an utter destruction.

33. The meaning is, God gives you this Gospel light, that you may repent. Let your eye be singly fixed on him, aim only at pleasing God; and while you do this, your whole soul will be full of wisdom, holiness, and happiness. Matt. v, 15; Mark iv, 21; Luke viii, 16.

34. But when thine eye is evil - When thou aimest at any thing else, thou wilt be full of folly, sin, and misery. On the contrary, Matt. vi, 22.

36. If thy whole body be full of light - If thou art filled with holy wisdom, having no part dark, giving way to no sin or folly, then that heavenly principle will, like the clear flame of a lamp in a room that was dark before, shed its light into all thy powers and faculties.

39. Now ye Pharisees - Probably many of them were present at the Pharisee's house. Matt. xxiii, 25.

41. Give what is in them - The vessels which ye clean, in alms, and all things are clean to you. As if he had said, By acts directly contrary to rapine and wickedness, show that your hearts are cleansed, and these outward washings are needless.

42. Wo to you - That is, miserable are you. In the same manner is the phrase to be understood throughout the chapter.

44. For ye are as graves which appear not - Probably in speaking this our Lord fixed his eyes on the scribes. As graves which appear not, being overgrown with grass, so that men are not aware, till they stumble upon them, and either hurt themselves, or at least are defiled by touching them. On another occasion Christ compared them to whited sepulchres, fair without, but foul within; Matt. xxiii, 27.

45. One of the lawyers - That is scribes; expounders of the law.

48. Whom they killed, ye build their sepulchres - Just like them pretending great reverence for the ancient prophets, while ye destroy those whom God sends to yourselves. Ye therefore bear witness by this deep hypocrisy that ye are of the very same spirit with them.

49. The wisdom of God, agreeably to this, hath said - In many places of Scripture, though not in these very words, I will send them prophets - Chiefly under the Old Testament: and apostles - Under the New. Matt. xxiii, 34.

50. The blood of all shall be required of this generation - That is, shall be visibly and terribly punished upon it.

51. And so it was within forty years, in a most astonishing manner, by the dreadful destruction of the temple, the city, and the whole nation. Between the temple and the altar - In the court of the temple.

52. Ye have taken away the key of knowledge - Ye have obscured and destroyed the knowledge of the Messiah, which is the key of both the present and the future kingdom of heaven; the kingdom of grace and glory. Ye have not entered in - Into the present kingdom of heaven.

## XII

1. He said to his disciples first - But afterward ver. 54 to all the people. Matt. xvi, 6.

3. Matt. x, 27.

4. But I say to you, Fear not - Let not the fear of man make you act the hypocrite, or conceal any thing which I have commissioned you to publish.

5. Fear him who hath power to cast into hell - Even to his peculiar friends, Christ gives this direction. Therefore the fearing of God as having power to cast into hell, is to be pressed even on true believers.

6. Are not five sparrows - But trust as well as fear him.

7. Matt. x, 30.

8. And I say to you - If you avoid all hypocrisy, and openly avow my Gospel: The Son of man shall confess you - before the angels - At the last day. Mark viii, 38; Chap. ix, 26.

10. And whosoever - As if he had said, Yet the denying me in some degree, may, upon true repentance, be forgiven; but if it rise so high as that of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall never be forgiven, neither is there place for repentance. Matt. xii, 31; Mark iii, 28.

11. Take no thought - Be not solicitous about the matter or manner of your defense; nor how to express yourselves. Matt. x, 19; Luke xxi, 12.

14. Who made me a judge? - In worldly things. His kingdom is not of this world.

15. He said to them - Perhaps to the two brothers, and through them to the people. A man's life - That is, the comfort or happiness of it.

17. What shall I do? - The very language of want! Do? Why, lay up treasure in heaven.

20. Thou fool - To think of satisfying thy soul with earthly goods! To depend on living many years! Yea, one day! They - The messengers of death, commissioned by God, require thy soul of thee!

21. Rich toward God - Namely, in faith, and love, and good works.

22. Matt. vi, 25.

25. Which of you can add the least measure - It seems, to add one cubit to a thing (which is the phrase in the original) was a kind of proverbial expression for making the least addition to it.

28. The grass - The Greek word means all sorts of herbs and flowers.

29. Neither be ye of a doubtful mind - The word in the original signifies, any speculations or musings in which the mind fluctuates, or is suspended (like meteors in the air) in an uneasy hesitation.

32. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom - How much more food and raiment? And since ye have such an inheritance, regard not your earthly possessions.

33. Sell what ye have - This is a direction, not given to all the multitude: (much less is it a standing rule for all Christians:) neither to the apostles; for they had nothing to sell, having left all before: but to his other disciples, (mentioned chap. xii, 22, and Acts i, 15, ) especially to the seventy, that they might be free from all worldly entanglements. Matt. vi, 19.

35. Let your loins be girt - An allusion to the long garments, worn by the eastern nations, which they girded or tucked up about their loins, when they journeyed or were employed in any labour: as also to the lights that servants used to carry at weddings, which were generally in the night.

37. He will come and serve them - The meaning is, he will show them his love, in the most condescending and tender manner.

38. The Jews frequently divided the night into three watches, to which our Lord seems here to allude.

41. Speakest thou this parable to us - Apostles and disciples: Or to all - The people? Does it concern us alone? Or all men?

42. Who is that faithful and wise steward - Our Lord's answer manifestly implies, that he had spoken this parable primarily (though not wholly) to the ministers of his word: Whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household - For his wisdom and faithfulness.

43. Happy is that servant - God himself pronounces him wise, faithful, happy! Yet we see, he might fall from all, and perish for ever.

46. The Lord will appoint him his portion - His everlasting portion, with the unfaithful - As faithful as he was once, God himself being the Judge!

47. And that servant who knew his Lord's will shall be beaten with many stripes - And his having much knowledge will increase, not lessen, his punishment.

49. I am come to send fire - To spread the fire of heavenly love over all the earth.

50. But I have a baptism to be baptized with - I must suffer first, before I can set up my kingdom. And how I long to fight my way through all!

51. Suppose ye that I am come to send peace upon earth - That universal peace will be the immediate effect of my coming? Not so, but quite the contrary. Matt. x, 34.

52. There shall be five in one house, three against two, and two against three - There being an irreconcilable enmity between the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world.

53. The father against the son - For those who reject me will be implacable toward their very nearest relations who receive me. At this day also is this scripture fulfilled. Now likewise there is no concord between Christ and Belial.

54. And he said to the people also - In the preceding verses he speaks only to his disciples. From the west - In Judea, the west wind, blowing from the sea, usually brought rain: the south wind, blowing from the deserts of Arabia, occasioned sultry heat. Matt. xvi, 2.

56. How do ye not discern this season - Of the Messiah's coming, distinguishable by so many surer signs.

57. Why even of yourselves, without any external sign, judge ye not what is right? - Why do ye not discern and acknowledge the intrinsic excellence of my doctrine?

58. When thou art going - As if he had said, And ye have not a moment to lose. For the executioners of God's vengeance are at hand. And when he hath once delivered you over to them, ye are undone for ever. Matt. v, 25.

59. A mite - was about the third part of a farthing sterling.

## XIII

1. The Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices - Some of the followers of Judas Gaulonites. They absolutely refused to own the Roman authority. Pilate surrounded and slew them, while they were worshipping in the temple, at a public feast.

3. Ye shall all likewise perish - All ye of Galilee and of Jerusalem shall perish in the very same manner. So the Greek word implies. And so they did. There was a remarkable resemblance between the fate of these Galileans and of the main body of the Jewish nation; the flower of which was slain at Jerusalem by the Roman sword, while they were assembled at one of their great festivals. And many thousands of them perished in the temple itself, and were literally buried under its ruins.

6. A man had a fig tree - Either we may understand God the Father by him that had the vineyard, and Christ by him that kept it: or Christ himself is he that hath it, and his ministers they that keep it. Psalm lxxx, 8. &c.

7. Three years - Christ was then in the third year of his ministry. But it may mean only several years; a certain number being put for an uncertain. Why doth it also cumber the ground? - That is, not only bear no fruit itself, but take up the ground of another tree that would.

11. She was bowed together, and utterly unable to lift up herself - The evil spirit which possessed her afflicted her in this manner. To many doubtless it appeared a natural distemper. Would not a modern physician have termed it a nervous case?

15. Thou hypocrite - For the real motive of his speaking was envy, not (as he pretended) pure zeal for the glory of God.

16. And ought not this woman? - Ought not any human creature, which is so far better than an ox or an ass? Much more, this daughter of Abraham - probably in a spiritual as well as natural sense, to be loosed?

18. Matt. xiii, 31; Mark iv, 30.

20. Matt. xiii, 33.

21. Covered up - So that, for a time, nothing of it appeared.

24. Strive to enter in - Agonize. Strive as in an agony. So the word signifies Otherwise none shall enter in. Barely seeking will not avail. Matt. vii, 13.

25. And even agonizing will not avail, after the door is shut. Agonize, therefore, now by faith, prayer, holiness, patience. And ye begin to stand without - Till then they had not thought of it! O how new will that sense of their misery be? How late? How lasting? I know not whence ye are - I know not, that is, I approve not of your ways.

27. Matt. vii, 23.

28. Matt. viii, 11.

29. They shall sit down in the kingdom of God - Both the kingdom of grace and of glory.

30. But there are last - Many of the Gentiles who were latest called, shall be most highly rewarded; and many of the Jews who were first called, shall have no reward at all. Matt. xix, 30.

31. Herod is minded to kill thee - Possibly they gave him the caution out of good will.

32. And he said, Go and tell that fox - With great propriety so called, for his subtilty and cowardice. The meaning of our Lord's answer is, Notwithstanding all that he can do, I shall for the short time I have left, do the works of him that sent me. When that time is fulfilled, I shall be offered up. Yet not here, but in the bloody city. Behold, I cast out devils - With what majesty does he speak to his enemies! With what tenderness to his friends! The third day I am perfected - On the third day he left Galilee, and set out for Jerusalem, to die there. But let us carefully distinguish between those things wherein Christ is our pattern, and those which were peculiar to his office. His extraordinary office justified him in using that severity of language, when speaking of wicked princes, and corrupt teachers, to which we have no call; and by which we should only bring scandal on religion, and ruin on ourselves, while we irritated rather than convinced or reformed those whom we so indecently rebuked.

33. It cannot be, that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem - Which claims prescription for murdering the messengers of God. Such cruelty and malice cannot be found elsewhere.

34. How often would I have gathered thy children together - Three solemn visits he had made to Jerusalem since his baptism for this very purpose. Matt. xxiii, 37.

35. Your house is left to you desolate - Is now irrecoverably consigned to desolation and destruction: And verily I say to you, after a very short space, ye shall not see me till the time come, when taught by your calamities, ye shall be ready and disposed to say, Blessed is he that cometh

in the name of the Lord. It does not imply, that they should then see Jesus at all; but only that they would earnestly wish for the Messiah, and in their extremity be ready to entertain any who should assume that character.

## XIV

2. There was a certain man before him - It does not appear that he was come thither with any insidious design. Probably he came, hoping for a cure, or perhaps was one of the family.

3. And Jesus answering, spake - Answering the thoughts which he saw rising in their hearts.

7. He spake a parable - The ensuing discourse is so termed, because several parts are not to be understood literally. The general scope of it is, Not only at a marriage feast, but on every occasion, he that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that abaseth himself shall be exalted.

11. Matt. xxiii, 12.

12. Call not thy friends - That is, I do not bid thee call thy friends or thy neighbours. Our Lord leaves these offices of humanity and courtesy as they were, and teaches a higher duty. But is it not implied herein, that we should be sparing in entertaining those that need it not, in order to assist those that do need, with all that is saved from those needless entertainments? Lest a recompense be made - This fear is as much unknown to the world, as even the fear of riches.

14. One of them that sat at table hearing these things - And being touched therewith, said, Happy is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God - Alluding to what had just been spoken. It means, he that shall have a part in the resurrection of the just.

16. Then said he - Continuing the allusion. A certain man made a great supper - As if he had said, All men are not sensible of this happiness. Many might have a part in it, and will not.

18. They all began to make excuse - One of them pleads only his own will, I go: another, a pretended necessity, I must needs go: the third, impossibility, I cannot come: all of them want the holy hatred mentioned ver. 26. All of them perish by things in themselves lawful. I must needs go - The most urgent worldly affairs frequently fall out just at the time when God makes the freest offers of salvation.

21. The servant came and showed his Lord these things - So ministers ought to lay before the Lord in prayer the obedience or disobedience of their hearers.

23. Compel them to come in - With all the violence of love, and the force of God's word. Such compulsion, and such only, in matters of religion, was used by Christ and his apostles.

24. For refers to Go out, ver. 23.

26. If any man come to me, and hate not his father - Comparatively to Christ: yea, so as actually to renounce his field, oxen, wife, all things, and act as if he hated them, when they stand in competition with him. Matt. x, 37.

28. And which of you intending to build a tower - That is, and whoever of you intends to follow me, let him first seriously weigh these things.

31. Another king - Does this mean, the prince of this world? Certainly he has greater numbers on his side. How numerous are his children and servants!

33. So - Like this man, who, being afraid to face his enemy, sends to make peace with him, every one who forsaketh not all that he hath -

1. By withdrawing his affections from all the creatures;
2. By enjoying them only in and for God, only in such a measure and manner as leads to him;
3. By hating them all, in the sense above mentioned, cannot be my disciple - But will surely desist from building that tower, neither can he persevere in fighting the good fight of faith.

34. Salt - Every Christian, but more eminently every minister. Matt. v, 13; Mark ix, 50.

## XV

1. All the publicans - That is, all who were in that place. It seems our Lord was in some town of Galilee of the Gentiles, from whence he afterward went to Jerusalem, chap. xvii, 11.

3. He spake - Three parables of the same import: for the sheep, the piece of silver, and the lost son, all declare (in direct contrariety to the Pharisees and scribes) in what manner God receiveth sinners.

4. Leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness - Where they used to feed: all uncultivated ground, like our commons, was by the Jews termed wilderness or desert. And go after - In recovering a lost soul, God as it were labours. May we not learn hence, that to let them alone who are in sin, is both unchristian and inhuman! Matt. xviii, 12.

7. Joy shall be - Solemn and festal joy, in heaven - First, in our blessed Lord himself, and then among the angels and spirits of just men, perhaps informed thereof by God himself, or by the angels who ministered to them. Over one sinner - One gross, open, notorious sinner, that repenteth - That is, thoroughly changed in heart and life; more than over ninety and nine just persons - Comparatively just, outwardly blameless: that need not such a repentance - For they need not, cannot repent of the sins which they never committed. The sum is, as a father peculiarly rejoices when an extravagant child, supposed to be utterly lost, comes to a thorough sense of his duty; or as any other person who has recovered what he had given up for gone, has a more sensible satisfaction in it, than in several other things equally valuable, but not in such danger: so do the angels in heaven peculiarly rejoice in the conversion of the most abandoned sinners. Yea, and God himself so readily forgives and receives them, that he may be represented as having part in the joy.

12. Give me the part of goods that falleth to me - See the root of all sin! A desire of disposing of ourselves; of independency on God!

13. He took a journey into a far country - Far from God: God was not in all his thoughts: And squandered away his substance - All the grace he had received.

14. He began to be in want - All his worldly pleasures failing, he grew conscious of his want of real good.

15. And he joined himself to a citizen of that country - Either the devil or one of his children, the genuine citizens of that country which is far from God. He sent him to feed swine - He employed him in the base drudgery of sin.

16. He would fain have filled his belly with the husks - He would fain have satisfied himself with worldly comforts. Vain, fruitless endeavour!

17. And coming to himself - For till then he was beside himself, as all men are, so long as they are without God in the world.

18. I will arise and go to my father - How accurately are the first steps of true repentance here pointed out! Against Heaven - Against God.

20. And he arose and came to his father - The moment he had resolved, he began to execute his resolution. While he was yet a great way off, his father saw him - Returning, starved, naked.

22. But the father said - Interrupting him before he had finished what he intended to say. So does God frequently cut an earnest confession short by a display of his pardoning love.

23. Let us be merry - Both here, and wherever else this word occurs, whether in the Old or New Testament, it implies nothing of levity, but a solid, serious, religious, heartfelt joy: indeed this was the ordinary meaning of the word two hundred years ago, when our translation was made.

25. The elder son seems to represent the Pharisees and scribes, mentioned chap. xv, 2.

27. Thy father hath killed the fatted calf - Perhaps he mentions this rather than the robe or ring, as having a nearer connection with the music and dancing.

28. He was angry, and would not go in - How natural to us is this kind of resentment!

29. Lo, so many years do I serve thee - So he was one of the instances mentioned ver. 7. How admirably therefore does this parable confirm that assertion! Yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends - Perhaps God does not usually give much joy to those who never felt the sorrows of repentance.

31. Thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine - This suggests a strong reason against murmuring at the indulgence shown to the greatest of sinners. As the father's receiving the younger son did not cause him to disinherit the elder; so God's receiving notorious sinners will be no loss to those who have always served him; neither will he raise these to a state of glory equal to that of those who have always served him, if they have, upon the whole, made a greater progress in inward as well as outward holiness.

32. This thy brother was dead, and is alive - A thousand of these delicate touches in the inspired writings escape an inattentive reader. In ver. 30, the elder son had unkindly and indecently said, This thy son. The father in his reply mildly reproves him, and tenderly says, This thy brother - Amazing intimation, that the best of men ought to account the worst sinners their brethren still; and should especially remember this relation, when they show any inclination to return. Our Lord in this whole parable shows, not only that the Jews had no cause to murmur at the reception of the Gentiles, (a point which did not at that time so directly fall under consideration, ) but that if the Pharisees were indeed as good as they fancied themselves to be, still they had no reason to murmur at the kind treatment of any sincere penitent. Thus does he condemn them, even on their own principles, and so leaves them without excuse. We have in this parable a lively emblem of the condition and behaviour of sinners in their natural state. Thus, when enriched by the bounty of the great common Father, do they ungratefully run from him, ver. 12. Sensual pleasures are eagerly pursued, till they have squandered away all the grace of God, ver. 13. And while these continue, not a serious thought of God can find a place in their minds. And even when afflictions come upon them, ver. 14, still they will make hard shifts before they will let the grace of God, concurring with his providence, persuade them to think of a return, ver. 15, 16. When they see themselves naked, indigent, and undone, then they recover the exercise of their reason, ver. 17. Then they remember the blessings they have thrown away, and attend to the misery they have incurred. And hereupon they resolve to return to their father, and put the resolution immediately in practice, ver. 18, 19.

Behold with wonder and pleasure the gracious reception they find from Divine, injured goodness! When such a prodigal comes to his father, he sees him afar off, ver. 20. He pities, meets, embraces him, and interrupts his acknowledgments with the tokens of his returning favour, ver. 21. He arrays him with the robe of a Redeemer's righteousness, with inward and outward holiness; adorns him with all his sanctifying graces, and honours him with the tokens of adopting love, ver. 22. And all this he does with unutterable delight, in that he who was lost is now found, ver. 23, 24. Let no elder brother murmur at this indulgence, but rather welcome the prodigal back into the family. And let those who have been thus received, wander no more, but emulate the strictest piety of those who for many years have served their heavenly Father, and not transgressed his commandments.

## XVI

And he said also to his disciples - Not only to the scribes and Pharisees to whom he had hitherto been speaking, but to all the younger as well as the elder brethren: to the returning prodigals who were now his disciples. A certain rich man had a steward - Christ here teaches all that are now in favour with God, particularly pardoned penitents, to behave wisely in what is committed to them.

3. To beg I am ashamed - But not ashamed to cheat! This was likewise a sense of honour! "By men called honour, but by angels pride."

4. I know - That is, I am resolved, what to do.

8. And the Lord commended the unjust steward - Namely, in this respect, because he had used timely precaution: so that though the dishonesty of such a servant be detestable, yet his foresight, care, and contrivance, about the interests of this life, deserve our imitation, with regard to the more important affairs of another. The children of this world - Those who seek no other portion than this world: Are wiser - Not absolutely, for they are, one and all, egregious fools; but they are more consistent with themselves; they are truer to their principles; they more steadily pursue their end; they are wiser in their generation - That is, in their own way, than the children of light - The children of God, whose light shines on their hearts.

9. And I say to you - Be good stewards even of the lowest talents wherewith God hath intrusted you. Mammon means riches or money. It is termed the mammon of unrighteousness, because of the manner wherein it is commonly either procured or employed. Make yourselves friends of this, by doing all possible good, particularly to the children of God: that when ye fail, when your flesh and your heart faileth, when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, those of them who have gone before may receive, may welcome you into the everlasting habitations.

10. And whether ye have more or less, see that ye be faithful as well as wise stewards. He that is faithful in what is meanest of all, worldly substance, is also faithful in things of a higher nature; and he that uses these lowest gifts unfaithfully, is likewise unfaithful in spiritual things.

11. Who will intrust you with the true riches? - How should God intrust you with spiritual and eternal, which alone are true riches?

12. If ye have not been faithful in that which was another's - None of these temporal things are yours: you are only stewards of them, not proprietors: God is the proprietor of all; he lodges them in your hands for a season: but still they are his property. Rich men, understand and consider this. If your steward uses any part of your estate (so called in the language of men) any farther or any

otherwise than you direct, he is a knave: he has neither conscience nor honour. Neither have you either one or the other, if you use any part of that estate, which is in truth God's, not yours, any otherwise than he directs. That which is your own - Heaven, which when you have it, will be your own for ever.

13. And you cannot be faithful to God, if you trim between God and the world, if you do not serve him alone. Matt. vi, 24.

15. And he said to them, Ye are they who justify yourselves before men - The sense of the whole passage is, that pride, wherewith you justify yourselves, feeds covetousness, derides the Gospel, ver. 14, and destroys the law, ver. 18. All which is illustrated by a terrible example. Ye justify yourselves before men - Ye think yourselves righteous, and persuade others to think you so.

16. The law and the prophets were in force until John: from that time the Gospel takes place; and humble upright men receive it with inexpressible earnestness. Matt. xi, 13.

17. Not that the Gospel at all destroys the law. Matt. v, 18.

18. But ye do; particularly in this notorious instance. Matt. v, 31; xix, 7.

19. There was a certain rich man - Very probably a Pharisee, and one that justified himself before men; a very honest, as well as honourable gentleman: though it was not proper to mention his name on this occasion: who was clothed in purple and fine linen - and doubtless esteemed on this account, (perhaps not only by those who sold it, but by most that knew him, ) as encouraging trade, and acting according to his quality: And feasted splendidly every day - And consequently was esteemed yet more, for his generosity and hospitality in keeping so good a table.

20. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, (according to the Greek pronunciation) or Eleazer. By his name it may be conjectured, he was of no mean family, though it was thus reduced. There was no reason for our Lord to conceal his name, which probably was then well known. Theophylact observes, from the tradition of the Hebrews, that he lived at Jerusalem. Yea, the dogs also came and licked his sores - It seems this circumstance is recorded to show that all his ulcers lay bare, and were not closed or bound up.

22. And the beggar - Worn out with hunger, and pain, and want of all things, died: and was carried by angels (amazing change of the scene!) into Abraham's bosom - So the Jews styled paradise; the place where the souls of good men remain from death to the resurrection. The rich man also died, and was buried - Doubtless with pomp enough, though we do not read of his lying in state; that stupid, senseless pageantry, that shocking insult on a poor, putrefying carcass, was reserved for our enlightened age!

23. He seeth Abraham afar off - And yet knew him at that distance: and shall not Abraham's children, when they are together in paradise, know each other!

24. Father Abraham, have mercy on me - It cannot be denied, but here is one precedent in Scripture of praying to departed saints: but who is it that prays, and with what success? Will any, who considers this, be fond of copying after him?

25. But Abraham said, Son - According to the flesh. Is it not worthy of observation, that Abraham will not revile even a damned soul? and shall living men revile one another? Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things - Thou didst choose and accept of worldly things as thy good, thy happiness. And can any be at a loss to know why he was in torments? This damnable idolatry, had there been nothing more, was enough to sink him to the nethermost hell.

26. Beside this there is a great gulf fixed - Reader, to which side of it wilt thou go?

28. Lest they also come into this place - He might justly fear lest their reproaches should add to his own torment.

31. Neither will they be persuaded - Truly to repent: for this implies an entire change of heart: but a thousand apparitions cannot, effect this. God only can, applying his word.

## XVII

1. It is impossible but offenses will come - And they ever did and do come chiefly by Pharisees, that is, men who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others. Matt. xviii, 6; Mark ix, 42.

2. Little ones - Weak believers.

3. Take heed to yourselves - That ye neither offend others, nor be offended by others. Matt. xviii, 15.

4. If he sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day return, saying, I repent - That is, if he give sufficient proof that he does really repent, after having sinned ever so often, receive him just as if he had never sinned against thee. But this forgiveness is due only to real penitents. In a lower sense we are to forgive all, penitent or impenitent; (so as to bear them the sincerest good will, and to do them all the good we can;) and that not seven times only, but seventy times seven.

5. Lord, increase our faith - That we may thus forgive, and may neither offend nor be offended. Matt. xvii, 20.

6. And he said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed - If ye had the least measure of true faith, no instance of duty would be too hard for you. Ye would say to this sycamine tree - This seems to have been a kind of proverbial expression.

7. But which of you - But is it not meet that you should first obey, and then triumph? Though still with a deep sense of your utter unprofitableness.

9. Doth he thank that servant - Does he account himself obliged to him?

10. When ye have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants - For a man cannot profit God. Happy is he who Judges himself an unprofitable servant: miserable is he whom God pronounces such. But though we are unprofitable to him, our serving him is not unprofitable to us. For he is pleased to give by his grace a value to our good works, which in consequence of his promise entitles us to an eternal reward.

20. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation - With such outward pomp as draws the observation of every one.

21. Neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there - This shall not be the language of those who are, or shall be sent by me, to declare the coming of my kingdom. For behold the kingdom of God is within or among you - Look not for it in distant times or remote places: it is now in the midst of you: it is come: it is present in the soul of every true believer: it is a spiritual kingdom, an internal principle. Wherever it exists, it exists in the heart.

22. Ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man - One day of mercy. or one day wherein you might converse with me, as you do now.

23. They shall say, See, Christ is here, or there - Limiting his presence to this or that place. Matt. xxiv, 23.

24. So shall also the Son of man be - So swift, so wide, shall his appearing be: In his day - The last day.

26. The days of the Son of man - Those which immediately follow that which is eminently styled his day. Matt. xxiv, 37.

31. In that day - (Which will be the grand type of the last day) when ye shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies.

32. Remember Lot's wife - And escape with all speed, without ever looking behind you. Luke ix, 24; John xii, 25.

33. The sense of this and the following verses is, Yet as great as the danger will be, do not seek to save your life by violating your conscience: if you do, you will surely lose it: whereas if you should lose it for my sake, you shall be paid with life everlasting. But the most probable way of preserving it now, is to be always ready to give it up: a peculiar Providence shall then watch over you, and put a difference between you and other men.

37. Matt. xxiv, 28.

## XVIII

1. He spake a parable to them - This and the following parable warn us against two fatal extremes, with regard to prayer: the former against faintness and weariness, the latter against self confidence.

7. And shall not God - The most just Judge, vindicate his own elect - Preserve the Christians from all their adversaries, and in particular save them out of the general destruction, and avenge them of the Jews? Though he bear long with them - Though he does not immediately put an end, either to the wrongs of the wicked, or the sufferings of good men.

8. Yet when the Son of man cometh, will he find faith upon earth - Yet notwithstanding all the instances both of his long suffering and of his justice, whenever he shall remarkably appear, against their enemies in this age or in after ages, how few true believers will be found upon earth!

9. He spake this parable - Not to hypocrites; the Pharisee here mentioned was no hypocrite, no more than an outward adulterer: but he sincerely trusted in himself that he was righteous, and accordingly told God so, in the prayer which none but God heard.

12. I fast twice in the week - So did all the strict Pharisees: every Monday and Thursday. I give tithes of all that I possess - Many of them gave one full tenth of their income in tithes, and another tenth in alms. the sum of this plea is, I do no harm: I use all the means of grace: I do all the good I can.

13. The publican standing afar off - From the holy of holies, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven - Touched with shame, which is more ingenuous than fear.

14. This man went down - From the hill on which the temple stood, justified rather than the other - That is, and not the other.

15. Matt. xix, 13; Mark x, 13.

16. Calling them - Those that brought the children: of such is the kingdom of God - Such are subjects of the Messiah's kingdom. And such as these it properly belongs to.

18. Matt. xix, 16; Mark x, 17.

20. Exod. xx, 12, &c.

22. Yet lackest thou one thing - Namely, to love God more than mammon. Our saviour knew his heart, and presently put him upon a trial which laid it open to the ruler himself. And to cure his love of the world, which could not in him be cured otherwise, Christ commanded him to sell all that he had. But he does not command us to do this; but to use all to the glory of God.

31. Matt. xx, 17; Mark x, 32.

34. They understood none of these things - The literal meaning they could not but understand. But as they could not reconcile this to their preconceived opinion of the Messiah, they were utterly at a loss in what parabolical or figurative sense to take what he said concerning his sufferings; having their thoughts still taken up with the temporal kingdom.

35. Matt. xx, 29; Mark x, 46.

## XIX

1. He passed through Jericho - So that Zaccheus must have lived near the end of the town: the tree was in the town itself. And he was rich - These words seem to refer to the discourse in the last chapter, ver. 24, particularly to ver. 27. Zaccheus is a proof, that it is possible by the power of God for even a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

2. The chief of the publicans - What we would term, commissioner of the customs. A very honourable as well as profitable place.

4. And running before - With great earnestness. He climbed up - Notwithstanding his quality: desire conquering honour and shame.

5. Jesus said, Zaccheus, make haste and come down - What a strange mixture of passions must Zaccheus have now felt, hearing one speak, as knowing both his name and his heart!

7. They all murmured - All who were near: though most of them rather out of surprise than indignation.

8. And Zaccheus stood - Showing by his posture, his deliberate, purpose and ready mind, and said, Behold, Lord, I give - I determine to do it immediately.

9. He also is a son of Abraham - A Jew born, and as such has a right to the first offer of salvation.

10. Matt. xviii, 11.

11. They thought the kingdom of God - A glorious temporal kingdom, would immediately appear.

12. He went into a far country to receive a kingdom - Christ went to heaven, to receive his sovereign power as wan, even all authority in heaven and earth. Matt. xxv, 14; Mark xiii, 34.

13. Trade till I come - To visit the nation, to destroy Jerusalem, to judge the world: or, in a more particular sense, to require thy soul of thee.

14. But his citizens - Such were those of Jerusalem, hated him, and sent an embassy after him - The word seems to imply, their sending ambassadors to a superior court, to enter their protest against his being admitted to the regal power. In such a solemn manner did the Jews protest, as it were, before God, that Christ should not reign over them: this man - So they call him in contempt.

15. When he was returned - In his glory.

23. With interest - Which does not appear to be contrary to any law of God or man. But this is no plea for usury, that is, the taking such interest as implies any degree of oppression or extortion.

25. They said - With admiration, not envy.

26. Matt. xxv, 29; Luke viii, 18.

27. He went before - The foremost of the company, showing his readiness to suffer.

29. He drew nigh to the place where the borders of Bethphage and Bethany met, which was at the foot of the mount of Olives. Matt. xxi, 1; Mark xi, 1.

37. The whole multitude began to praise God - Speaking at once, as it seems, from a Divine impulse, words which most of them did not understand.

38. Peace in heaven - God being reconciled to man.

39. Rebuke thy disciples - Paying thee this immoderate honour.

40. If these should hold their peace, the stones, which lie before you, would cry out - That is, God would raise up some still more unlikely instruments to declare his praise. For the power of God will not return empty.

42. O that thou hadst known, at least in this thy day - After thou hast neglected so many. Thy day - The day wherein God still offers thee his blessings.

43. Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee around - All this was exactly performed by Titus, the Roman general.

44. And thy children within thee - All the Jews were at that time gathered together, it being the time of the passover. They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another - Only three towers were left standing for a time, to show the former strength and magnificence of the place. But these likewise were afterward levelled with the ground.

45. Matt. xxi, 12; Mark xi, 11.

46. Isaiah lvi, 7.

## XX

1. Matt. xxi, 23; Mark xi, 27.

9. A long time - It was a long time from the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan to the birth of Christ. Matt. xxi, 33; Mark xii, 1.

16. He will destroy these husbandmen - Probably he pointed to the scribes, chief priests, and elders: who allowed, he will miserably destroy those wicked men, Matt. xxi, 41; but could not bear that this should be applied to themselves. They might also mean, God forbid that we should be guilty of such a crime as your parable seems to charge us with, namely, rejecting and killing the heir. Our saviour answers, But yet will ye do it, as is prophesied of you.

17. He looked on them - To sharpen their attention. Psalm cxviii, 22.

18. Matt. xxi, 45.

20. Just men - Men of a tender conscience. To take hold of his discourse - If he answered as they hoped he would. Matt. xxii, 16; Mark xii, 12.

21. Thou speakest - In private, and teachest - In public.

24. Show me a penny - A Roman penny, which was the money that was usually paid on that occasion.

26. They could not take hold of his words before the people - As they did afterward before the sanhedrim, in the absence of the people, chap. xxii, 67.

27. Matt. xxii, 23; Mark xii, 18.

28. Deut. xxv, 5.

34. The children of this world - The inhabitants of earth, marry and are given in marriage - As being all subject to the law of mortality; so that the species is in need of being continually repaired.

35. But they who obtain that world - Which they enter into, before the resurrection of the dead.

36. They are the children of God - In a more eminent sense when they rise again.

37. That the dead are raised, even Moses, as well as the other prophets showed, when he calleth - That is, when he recites the words which God spoke of himself, I am the God of Abraham, &c. It cannot properly be said, that God is the God of any who are totally perished. Exod. iii, 6.

38. He is not a God of the dead, or, there is no God of the dead - That is, tho term God implies such a relation, as cannot possibly subsist between him and the dead; who in the Sadducees' sense are extinguished spirits; who could neither worship him, nor receive good from him. So that all live to him - All who have him for their God, live to and enjoy him. This sentence is not an argument for what went before; but the proposition which was to be proved. And the consequence is apparently just. For as all the faithful are the children of Abraham, and the Divine promise of being a God to him and his seed is entailed upon them, it implies their continued existence and happiness in a future state as much as Abraham's. And as the body is an essential part of man, it implies both his resurrection and theirs; and so overthrows the entire scheme of the Sadducean doctrine.

40. They durst not ask him any question - The Sadducees durst not. One of the scribes did, presently after.

41. Matt. xxii, 41; Mark xii, 35.

42. Psalm cx, 1.

46. Matt. xxiii, 5.

47. Matt. xxiii, 14.

## XXI

1. He looked up - From those on whom his eyes were fixed before. Mark xii, 41.

5. Goodly stones - Such as no engines now in use could have brought, or even set upon each other. Some of them (as an eye witness who lately measured them writes) were forty - five cubits long, five high, and six broad; yet brought thither from another country. And gifts - Which persons delivered from imminent dangers had, in accomplishment of their vows, hung on the walls and pillars. The marble of the temple was so white, that it appeared like a mountain of snow at a distance. And the gilding of many parts made it, especially when the sun shone, a most splendid and beautiful spectacle. Matt. xxiv, 1; Mark xiii, 1.

8. I am the Christ; and the time is near - When I will deliver you from all your enemies. They are the words of the seducers.

9. Commotions - Intestine broils; civil wars.

11. Fearful sights and signs from heaven - Of which Josephus gives a circumstantial account.

12. Mark xiii, 9.

13. It shall turn to you for a testimony - Of your having delivered your own souls, and of their being without excuse.

16. Matt. x, 21.

17. Matt. xxiv, 13; Mark xiii, 13.

18. Not a hair of your head - A proverbial expression, shall perish - Without the special providence of God. And then, not before the time, nor without A full reward.

19. In your patience possess ye your souls - Be calm and serene, masters of yourselves, and superior to all irrational and disquieting passions. By keeping the government of your spirits, you will both avoid much misery, and guard the better against all dangers.

21. Let them that are in the midst of it - Where Jerusalem stands (that is, they that are in Jerusalem) depart out of it, before their retreat is cut off by the uniting of the forces near the city, and let not them that are in the adjacent countries by any means enter into it.

22. And things which are written - Particularly in Daniel.

24. They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive - Eleven hundred thousand perished in the siege of Jerusalem, and above ninety thousand were sold for slaves. So terribly was this prophecy fulfilled! And Jerusalem shall be trodden by the Gentiles - That is, inhabited. So it was indeed. The land was sold, and no Jew suffered even to come within sight of Jerusalem. The very foundations of the city were ploughed up, and a heathen temple built where the temple of God had stood. The times of the Gentiles - That is, the times limited for their treading the city; which shall terminate in the full conversion of the Gentiles.

25. And there shall be - Before the great day, which was typified by the destruction of Jerusalem: signs - Different from those mentioned in ver. 11. Matt. xxiv, 29; Mark xiii, 24.

28. Now when these things - Mentioned ver. 8, 10, &c., begin to come to pass, look up with firm faith, and lift up your heads with joy: for your redemption out of many troubles draweth nigh, by God's destroying your implacable enemies.

29. Behold the fig tree and all the trees - Christ spake this in the spring, just before the passover; when all the trees were budding on the mount of Olives, where they then were.

30. Ye know of yourselves - Though none teach you.

31. The kingdom of God is nigh - The destruction of the Jewish city, temple, and religion, to make way for the advancement of my kingdom.

32. Till all things be effected - All that has been spoken of the destruction of Jerusalem, to which the question, ver. 7, relates: and which is treated of from ver. 8-24.

34. Take heed, lest at any time your hearts be overloaded with gluttony and drunkenness - And was there need to warn the apostles themselves against such sins as these? Then surely there is reason to warn even strong Christians against the very grossest sins. Neither are we wise, if we think ourselves out of the reach of any sin: and so that day - Of judgment or of death, come upon you, even you that are not of this world-Unawares. Matt. xxiv, 42; Mark xiii, 33; Luke xii, 35.

35. That sit - Careless and at ease.

36. Watch ye therefore - This is the general conclusion of all that precedes. That ye may be counted worthy - This word sometimes signifies an honour conferred on a person, as when the apostles are said to be counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ, Acts v, 41. Sometimes meet or becoming: as when John the Baptist exhorts, to bring fruits worthy of repentance, chap. iii, 8. And so to be counted worthy to escape, is to have the honour of it, and to be fitted or prepared for it. To stand - With joy and triumph: not to fall before him as his enemies.

37. Now by day - In the day time, he was teaching in the temple - This shows how our Lord employed his time after coming to Jerusalem: but it is not said, he was this day in the temple, and next morning the people came. It does not therefore by any means imply, that he came any more after this into the temple.

38. And all the people came early in the morning to hear him - How much happier were his disciples in these early lectures, than the slumbers of the morning could have made them on their beds! Let us not scruple to deny ourselves the indulgence of unnecessary sleep, that we may morning after morning place ourselves at his feet, receiving the instructions of his word, and seeking those of his Spirit.

## XXII

1. Matt. xxvi, 1; Mark xiv, 1.

3. Then entered Satan - Who is never wanting to assist those whose heart is bent upon mischief.

4. Captains - Called captains of the temple, ver. 52. They were Jewish officers, who presided over the guards which kept watch every night in the temple.

7. Matt. xxvi, 17; Mark xiv, 12.

14. Matt. xxvi, 20; Mark xiv, 17.

15. With desire have I desired - That is, I have earnestly desired it. He desired it, both for the sake of his disciples, to whom he desired to manifest himself farther, at this solemn parting: and for the sake of his whole Church, that he might institute the grand memorial of his death.

16. For I will not eat thereof any more - That is, it will be the last I shall eat with you before I die. The kingdom of God did not properly commence till his resurrection. Then was fulfilled what was typified by the passover.

17. And he took the cup - That cup which used to be brought at the beginning of the paschal solemnity, and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I will not drink - As if he had said, Do not expect me to drink of it: I will drink no more before I die.

19. And he took bread - Namely, some time after, when supper was ended, wherein they had eaten the paschal lamb. This is my body - As he had just now celebrated the paschal supper, which was called the passover, so in like figurative language, he calls this bread his body. And this circumstance of itself was sufficient to prevent any mistake, as if this bread was his real body, any more than the paschal lamb was really the passover.

20. This cup is the New Testament - Here is an undeniable figure, whereby the cup is put for the wine in the cup. And this is called, The New Testament in Christ's blood, which could not possibly mean, that it was the New Testament itself, but only the seal of it, and the sign of that blood which was shed to confirm it.

21. The hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table - It is evident Christ spake these words before he instituted the Lord's Supper: for all the other evangelists mention the sop, immediately after receiving which he went out: John xiii, 30. Nor did he return any more, till he came into the garden to betray his Master. Now this could not be dipped or given, but while the meat was on the table. But this was all removed before that bread and cup were brought.

24. There was also a contention among them - It is highly probable, this was the same dispute which is mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark: and consequently, though it is related here, it happened some time before.

25. They that exercise the most arbitrary authority over them, have from their flatterers the vain title of benefactors.

26. But ye are to be benefactors to mankind, not by governing, but by serving.

27. For - This he proves by his own example. I am in the midst of you - Just now: see with your eyes. I take no state upon me, but sit in the midst, on a level with the lowest of you.

28. Ye have continued with me in my temptations - And all his life was nothing else, particularly from his entering on his public ministry.

29. And I - Will preserve you in all your temptations, till ye enter into the kingdom of glory: appoint to you - By these very words. Not a primacy to one, but a kingdom to every one: on the same terms: as my Father hath appointed to me - Who have fought and conquered.

30. That ye may eat and drink at my table - That is, that ye may enjoy the highest happiness, as guests, not as servants. These expressions seem to be primarily applicable to the twelve apostles, and secondarily, to all Christ's servants and disciples, whose spiritual powers, honours, and delights, are here represented in figurative terms, with respect to their advancement both in the kingdom of grace and of glory.

31. Satan hath desired to have you - My apostles, that he might sift you as wheat - Try you to the uttermost.

32. But I have prayed for thee - Who wilt be in the greatest danger of all: that thy faith fail not - Altogether: and when thou art returned - From thy flight, strengthen thy brethren - All that are weak in faith; perhaps scandalized at thy fall.

34. It shall not be the time of cock crowing this day - The common time of cock crowing (which is usually about three in the morning) probably did not come till after the cock which Peter heard had crowed twice, if not oftener.

35. When I sent you - lacked ye any thing - Were ye not born above all want and danger?

36. But now - You will be quite in another situation. You will want every thing. He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one - It is plain, this is not to be taken literally. It only means, This will be a time of extreme danger.

37. The things which are written concerning me have an end - Are now drawing to a period; are upon the point of being accomplished. Isaiah liii, 12.

38. Here are two swords - Many of Galilee carried them when they travelled, to defend themselves against robbers and assassins, who much infested their roads. But did the apostles need to seek such defense? And he said; It is enough - I did not mean literally, that every one of you must have a sword.

39. Matt. xxvi, 30.

40. The place - The garden of Gethsemane.

43. Strengthening him - Lest his body should sink and die before the time.

44. And being in an agony - Probably just now grappling with the powers of darkness: feeling the weight of the wrath of God, and at the same time surrounded with a mighty host of devils, who exercised all their force and malice to persecute and distract his wounded spirit. He prayed more earnestly - Even with stronger cries and tars: and his sweat - As cold as the weather was, was as it were great drops of blood - Which, by the vehement distress of his soul, were forced out of the

pores, in so great a quantity as afterward united in large, thick, grumous drops, and even fell to the ground.

48. Betrayest thou the Son of man - He whom thou knowest to be the Son of man, the Christ?

49. Seeing what would follow - That they were just going to seize him. Matt. xxvi, 51; Mark xiv, 47.

51. Suffer me at least to have my hands at liberty thus far, while I do one more act of mercy.

52. Jesus said to the chief priests, and captains, and the elders who were come - And all these came of their own accord: the soldiers and servants were sent.

53. This is your hour - Before which ye could not take me: and the power of darkness - The time when Satan has power.

54. Matt. xxvi, 57; Mark xiv, 53; John xviii, 12.

58. Another man saw him and said - Observe here, in order to reconcile the four evangelists, that divers persons concurred in charging Peter with belonging to Christ.

1. The maid that led him in, afterward seeing him at the fire, first put the question to him, and then positively affirmed, that he was with Christ.
2. Another maid accused him to the standers by, and gave occasion to the man here mentioned, to renew the charge against him, which caused the second denial.
3. Others of the company took notice of his being a Galilean, and were seconded by the kinsman of Malchus, who affirmed he had seen him in the garden. And this drew on the third denial.

59. And about one hour after - So he did not recollect himself in all that time.

63. Matt. xxvi, 67; Mark xiv, 65.

64. And having blindfolded him, they struck him on the face - This is placed by St. Matthew and Mark, after the council's condemning him. Probably he was abused in the same manner, both before and after his condemnation.

65. Many other things blasphemously spake they against him - The expression is remarkable. They charged him with blasphemy, because he said he was the Son of God: but the evangelist fixes that charge on them, because he really was so.

66. Matt. xxvi, 63; Mark xiv, 61.

70. They all said, Art thou then the Son of God? - Both these, the Son of God, and the Son of man, were known titles of the Messiah; the one taken from his Divine, and the other from his human nature.

## XXIII

1. Matt. xxvii, 1; Mark xv, 1; John xviii, 28.

4. Then said Pilate - After having heard his defense-I find no fault in this man - I do not find that he either asserts or attempts any thing seditious or injurious to Cesar.

5. He stirreth up the people, beginning from Galilee - Probably they mentioned Galilee to alarm Pilate, because the Galileans were notorious for sedition and rebellion.

7. He sent him to Herod - As his proper judge.

8. He had been long desirous to see him - Out of mere curiosity.

9. He questioned him - Probably concerning the miracles which were reported to have been wrought by him.

11. Herod set him at nought - Probably judging him to be a fool, because he answered nothing. In a splendid robe - In royal apparel; intimating that he feared nothing from this king.

15. He hath done nothing worthy of death - According to the judgment of Herod also.

16. I will therefore chastise him - Here Pilate began to give ground, which only encouraged them to press on. Matt. xxvii, 15; Mark xv, 6; John xviii, 39.

22. He said to them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? - As Peter, a disciple of Christ, dishonoured him by denying him thrice, so Pilate, a heathen, honoured Christ, by thrice owning him to be innocent.

26. Matt. xxvii, 31; Mark xv, 21; John xix, 16.

30. Hosea x, 8.

31. If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? - Our Lord makes use of a proverbial expression, frequent among the Jews, who compare a good man to a green tree, and a bad man to a dead one: as if he had said, If an innocent person suffer thus, what will become of the wicked? Of those who are as ready for destruction as dry wood for the fire?

34. Then said Jesus - Our Lord passed most of the time on the cross in silence: yet seven sentences which he spoke thereon are recorded by the four evangelists, though no one evangelist has recorded them all. Hence it appears that the four Gospels are, as it were, four parts, which, joined together, make one symphony. Sometimes one of these only, sometimes two or three, sometimes all sound together. Father - So he speaks both in the beginning and at the end of his sufferings on the cross: Forgive them - How striking is this passage! While they are actually nailing him to the cross, he seems to feel the injury they did to their own souls more than the wounds they gave him; and as it were to forget his own anguish out of a concern for their own salvation. And how eminently was his prayer heard! It procured forgiveness for all that were penitent, and a suspension of vengeance even for the impenitent.

35. If thou be the Christ; ver. 37. If thou be the king - The priests deride the name of Messiah: the soldiers the name of king.

38. Matt. xxvii, 37; Mark xv, 26; John xix, 19.

39. And one of the malefactors reviled him - St. Matthew says, the robbers: St. Mark, they that were crucified with him, reviled him. Either therefore St. Matthew and Mark put the plural for the singular (as the best authors sometimes do) or both reviled him at the first, till one of them felt "the overwhelming power of saving grace."

40. The other rebuked him - What a surprising degree was here of repentance, faith, and other graces! And what abundance of good works, in his public confession of his sin, reproof of his fellow criminal, his honourable testimony to Christ, and profession of faith in him, while he was in so disgraceful circumstances as were stumbling even to his disciples! This shows the power of Divine grace. But it encourages none to put off their repentance to the last hour; since, as far as appears, this was the first time this criminal had an opportunity of knowing any thing of Christ, and his conversion was designed to put a peculiar glory on our saviour in his lowest state, while his enemies derided him, and his own disciples either denied or forsook him.

42. Remember me when thou comest - From heaven, in thy kingdom - He acknowledges him a king, and such a king, as after he is dead, can profit the dead. The apostles themselves had not then so clear conceptions of the kingdom of Christ.

43. In paradise - The place where the souls of the righteous remain from death till the resurrection. As if he had said, I will not only remember thee then, but this very day.

44. There was darkness over all the earth - The noon-tide darkness, covering the sun, obscured all the upper hemisphere. And the lower was equally darkened, the moon being in opposition to the sun, and so receiving no light from it. Matt. xxvii, 45.

45. Mark xv, 38.

46. Father, into thy hands - The Father receives the Spirit of Jesus: Jesus himself the spirits of the faithful.

47. Certainly this was a righteous man - Which implies an approbation of all he had done and taught.

48. All the people - Who had not been actors therein, returned smiting their breasts - In testimony of sorrow.

50. Matt. xxvii, 57; Mark xv, 43; John xix, 38.

## XXIV

1. Certain others with them - Who had not come from Galilee. Matt. xxviii, 1; Mark xvi, 1; John xx, 1.

4. Behold two - Angels in the form of men. Mary had seen them a little before. They had disappeared on these women's coming to the sepulchre, but now appeared again. St. Matthew and Mark mention only one of them, appearing like a young man.

6. Remember how he spake to you, saying, The Son of man must be delivered - This is only a repetition of the words which our Lord had spoken to them before his passion But it is observable, he never styles himself the Son of man after his resurrection.

13. Mark xvi, 12.

21. Today is the third day - The day he should have risen again, if at all.

25. O foolish - Not understanding the designs and works of God: And slow of heart - Unready to believe what the prophets have so largely spoken.

26. Ought not Christ - If he would redeem man, and fulfil the prophecies concerning him, to have suffered these things? - These very sufferings which occasion your doubts, are the proofs of his being the Messiah. And to enter into his glory - Which could be done no other way.

28. He made as though he would go farther - Walking forward, as if he was going on; and he would have done it, had they not pressed him to stay.

29. They constrained him - By their importunate entreaties.

30. He took the bread, and blessed, and brake - Just in the same manner as when ho instituted his last supper.

31. Their eyes were opened - That is, the supernatural cloud was removed: And he vanished - Went away insensibly.

32. Did not our heart burn within us - Did not we feel an unusual warmth of love! Was not our heart burning, &c.

33. The same hour - Late as it was.

34. The Lord hath appeared to Simon - Before he was seen of the twelve apostles, 1 Cor. xv, 5. He had, in his wonderful condescension and grace, taken an opportunity on the former part of that day (though where, or in what manner, is not recorded) to show himself to Peter, that he might early relieve his distresses and fears, on account of having so shamefully denied his Master.

35. In the breaking of bread - The Lord's Supper.

36. Jesus stood in the midst of them - It was just as easy to his Divine power to open a door undiscernibly, as it was to come in at a door opened by some other hand. Mark xvi, 14, 19; John xx, 19.

40. He showed them his hands and his feet - That they might either see or feel the prints of the nails.

41. While they believed not for joy - They did in some sense believe: otherwise they would not have rejoiced. But their excess of joy prevented a clear, rational belief.

43. He took it and ate before them - Not that he had any need of food; but to give them still farther evidence.

44. And he said - On the day of his ascension. In the law, and the prophets, and the psalms - The prophecies as well as types, relating to the Messiah, are contained either in the books of Moses (usually called the law) in the Psalms, or in the writings of the prophets; little being said directly concerning him in the historical books.

45. Then opened he their understanding, to understand the Scriptures - He had explained them before to the two as they went to Emmaus. But still they Understood them not, till he took off the veil from their hearts, by the illumination of his Spirit.

47. Beginning at Jerusalem - This was appointed most graciously and wisely: graciously, as it encouraged the, greatest sinners to repent, when they saw that even the murderers of Christ were not excepted from mercy: and wisely, as hereby Christianity was more abundantly attested; the facts being published first on the very spot where they happened.

49. Behold I send the promise - Emphatically so called; the Holy Ghost.

50. He led them out as far as Bethany - Not the town, but the district: to the mount of Olives, Acts i, 12, which stood within the boundaries of Bethany.

51. And while he was blessing them, he was parted from them - It was much more proper that our Lord should ascend into heaven, than that he should rise from the dead, in the sight of the apostles. For his resurrection was proved when they saw him alive after his passion: but they could not see him in heaven while they continued on earth. Please see Notes at Matt. i, 1

## NOTES ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

IN this book is set down the history of the Son of God dwelling among men; that,

I. Of the first days, where the apostle, premising the sum of the whole Chap. i, 1-14 Mentions the testimony given by John, after the baptism of Christ, and the first calling of some of the apostles. Here is noted what fell out,

The first day 15-28

The day after 29-34

The day after 35-42
The day after 43-52
The third day ii, 1-11
After this 12
II. Of the two years between, spent chiefly in journeys to and from Jerusalem,
A. The first journey, to the passover 13
a. Transactions in the city,
1. Zeal for his Father's house 14-22
2. The power and wisdom of Jesus 23-25
3. The instruction of Nicodemus iii, 1-21
b. His abode in Judea; the rest of John's testimony 22-36
c. His journey through Samaria (where he confers with the Samaritan woman) into Galilee, where he heals the nobleman's son iv, 1-54
B. The second journey to the feast of pentecost. Here may be observed transactions,
a. In the city, relating to the impotent man, healed at the pool of Bethesda v, 1-47
b. In Galilee, before the second passover and after. Here we may note,
1. His feeding the five thousand vi, 1-14
2. Walking upon the sea 15-21
3. Discourse of himself, as the bread of life 22-59
4. Reproof of those who objected to it 60-65
5. Apostasy of many, and steadiness of the apostles 66-71
6. His continuance in Galilee ` vii, 1
C. The third journey, to the feast of tabernacles 2-13 Here may be observed transactions,
a. In the city,
1. In the middle and end of the feast 14-53 viii; Where note,
1. The woman taken in adultery 2-12
2. Christ's preaching and vindicating his doctrine 13-30
3. His confuting the Jews and escape from them 31-59
4. His healing the man born blind ix, 1-7
5. Several discourses on that occasion 8-41
6. Christ the Door and the Shepherd of the sheepx, 1-18
7. Different opinions concerning him 19-21
2. At the feast of the dedication. here occur,
1. His disputes with the Jews Chap. x, 22-38
2. His escaping their fury 39
b. Beyond Jordan 40-42
III. Of the last days, which were,
A. Before the great week, where we may note,
a. The two days spent out of Judea, while Lazarus was sick and died xi, 1-6
b. The journey into Judea; the raising of Lazarus; the advice of Caiaphas; Jesus's abode in Ephraim; the order given by his adversaries 7-57
c. The sixth day, before the passover; the supper at Bethany; the ointment poured on Jesus xii, 1-11
B. In the great week, wherein was the third passover, occur,

a. On the three former days, his royal entry into the city; the desire of the Greeks; the obstinacy of the Jews; the testimony given to Jesus from heaven 12-50
b. On the fourth day, the washing the feet of the disciples; the discovery of the traitor, and his going out by night xiii, 1-30
c. On the fifth day,
1. His discourse
1. Before the paschal supper 31, xiv, 1-31
2. After it xv, and xvi.
2. His prayer xvii, 1-26
3. The beginning of his passion,
1. In the garden xviii, 1-11
2. In Caiaphas's house 12-27
d. On the sixth day,
1. His passion under Pilate,
1. In the palace of Pilate 28 xix, 1-16
2. On the cross 17-30
2. His death 30-37
3. His burial 38-42
C. After the great week,
a. On the day of the resurrection xx, 1-25
b. Eight days after 26-31
c. After that
1. He appears to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias. xxi, 1-14
2. Orders Peter to feed his sheep and lambs 15-17
3. Foretells the manner of Peter's death, and checks his curiosity about St John 18-23
4. The conclusion 24, 25

# THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

## I

1. In the beginning - (Referring to Gen. i, 1, and Prov. viii, 23.) When all things began to be made by the Word: in the beginning of heaven and earth, and this whole frame of created beings, the Word existed, without any beginning. He was when all things began to be, whatsoever had a beginning. The Word - So termed Psalm xxxiii, 6, and frequently by the seventy, and in the Chaldee paraphrase. So that St. John did not borrow this expression from Philo, or any heathen writer. He was not yet named Jesus, or Christ. He is the Word whom the Father begat or spoke from eternity; by whom the Father speaking, maketh all things; who speaketh the Father to us. We have, in the 18th verse, both a real description of the Word, and the reason why he is so called. He is the only begotten Son of the Father, who is in the bosom of the Father, and hath declared him. And the Word

was with God - Therefore distinct from God the Father. The word rendered with, denotes a perpetual tendency as it were of the Son to the Father, in unity of essence. He was with God alone; because nothing beside God had then any being. And the Word was God - Supreme, eternal, independent. There was no creature, in respect of which he could be styled God in a relative sense. Therefore he is styled so in the absolute sense. The Godhead of the Messiah being clearly revealed in the Old Testament, (Jer. xxiii, 7; Hosea i, 6; Psalm xxiii, 1, ) the other evangelists aim at this, to prove that Jesus, a true man, was the Messiah. But when, at length, some from hence began to doubt of his Godhead, then St. John expressly asserted it, and wrote in this book as it were a supplement to the Gospels, as in the Revelation to the prophets.

2. The same was in the beginning with God - This verse repeats and contracts into one the three points mentioned before. As if he had said, This Word, who was God, was in the beginning, and was with God.

3. All things beside God were made, and all things which were made, were made by the Word. In the first and second verse is described the state of things before the creation: verse 3, In the creation: verse 4, In the time of man's innocency: verse 5, In the time of man's corruption.

4. In him was life - He was the foundation of life to every living thing, as well as of being to all that is. And the life was the light of men - He who is essential life, and the giver of life to all that liveth, was also the light of men; the fountain of wisdom, holiness, and happiness, to man in his original state.

5. And the light shineth in darkness - Shines even on fallen man; but the darkness - Dark, sinful man, perceiveth it not.

6. There was a man - The evangelist now proceeds to him who testified of the light, which he had spoken of in the five preceding verses.

7. The same came for (that is, in order to give) a testimony - The evangelist, with the most strong and tender affection, interweaves his own testimony with that of John, by noble digressions, wherein he explains the office of the Baptist; partly premises and partly subjoins a farther explication to his short sentences. What St. Matthew, Mark, and Luke term the Gospel, in respect of the promise going before, St. John usually terms the testimony, intimating the certain knowledge of the relator; to testify of the light - Of Christ.

9. Who lighteth every man - By what is vulgarly termed natural conscience, pointing out at least the general lines of good and evil. And this light, if man did not hinder, would shine more and more to the perfect day.

10. He was in the world - Even from the creation.

11. He came - In the fulness of time, to his own - Country, city, temple: And his own - People, received him not.

12. But as many as received him - Jews or Gentiles; that believe on his name - That is, on him. The moment they believe, they are sons; and because they are sons, God sendeth forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

13. Who were born - Who became the sons of God, not of blood - Not by descent from Abraham, nor by the will of the flesh - By natural generation, nor by the will of man - Adopting them, but of God - By his Spirit.

14. Flesh sometimes signifies corrupt nature; sometimes the body; sometimes, as here, the whole man. We beheld his glory - We his apostles, particularly Peter, James, and John, Luke ix, 32. Grace and truth - We are all by nature liars and children of wrath, to whom both grace and truth

are unknown. But we are made partakers of them, when we are accepted through the Beloved. The whole verse might be paraphrased thus: And in order to raise us to this dignity and happiness, the eternal Word, by a most amazing condescension, was made flesh, united himself to our miserable nature, with all its innocent infirmities. And he did not make us a transient visit, but tabernacled among us on earth, displaying his glory in a more eminent manner, than even of old in the tabernacle of Moses. And we who are now recording these things beheld his glory with so strict an attention, that we can testify, it was in every respect such a glory as became the only begotten of the Father. For it shone forth not only in his transfiguration, and in his continual miracles, but in all his tempers, ministrations, and conduct through the whole series of his life. In all he appeared full of grace and truth: he was himself most benevolent and upright; made those ample discoveries of pardon to sinners, which the Mosaic dispensation could not do: and really exhibited the most substantial blessings, whereas that was but a shadow of good things to come.

15. John cried - With joy and confidence; This is he of whom I said - John had said this before our Lord's baptism, although he then knew him not in person: he knew him first at his baptism, and afterward cried, This is he of whom I said. &c. He is preferred before me - in his office: for he was before me - in his nature.

16. And - Here the apostle confirms the Baptist's words: as if he had said, He is indeed preferred before thee: so we have experienced: We all - That believe: have received - All that we enjoy out of his fulness: and in the particular, grace upon grace - One blessing upon another, immeasurable grace and love.

17. The law - Working wrath and containing shadows: was given - No philosopher, poet, or orator, ever chose his words so accurately as St. John. The law, saith he, was given by Moses: grace was by Jesus Christ. Observe the reason for placing each word thus: The law of Moses was not his own. The grace of Christ was. His grace was opposite to the wrath, his truth to the shadowy ceremonies of the law. Jesus - St. John having once mentioned the incarnation (ver. 14,) no more uses that name, the Word, in all his book.

18. No man hath seen God - With bodily eyes: yet believers see him with the eye of faith. Who is in the bosom of the Father - The expression denotes the highest unity, and the most intimate knowledge.

19. The Jews - Probably the great council sent.

20. I am not the Christ - For many supposed he was.

21. Art thou Elijah? - He was not that Elijah (the Tishbite) of whom they spoke. Art thou the prophet - Of whom Moses speaks, Deut. xviii, 15.

23. He said - I am that forerunner of Christ of whom Isaiah speaks. I am the voice - As if he had said, Far from being Christ, or even Elijah, I am nothing but a voice: a sound that so soon as it has expressed the thought of which it is the sign, dies into air, and is known no more. Isaiah xl, 3.

24. They who were sent were of the Pharisees - Who were peculiarly tenacious of old customs, and jealous of any innovation (except those brought in by their own scribes) unless the innovator had unquestionable proofs of Divine authority.

25. They asked him, Why baptizest thou then? - Without any commission from the sanhedrim? And not only heathens (who were always baptized before they were admitted to circumcision) but Jews also?

26. John answered, I baptize - To prepare for the Messiah; and indeed to show that Jews, as well as Gentiles, must be proselytes to Christ, and that these as well as those stand in need of being washed from their sins.

28. Where John was baptizing - That is, used to baptize.

29. He seeth Jesus coming and saith, Behold the Lamb - Innocent; to be offered up; prophesied of by Isaiah, Isaiah liii, 7, typified by the paschal lamb, and by the daily sacrifice: The Lamb of God - Whom God gave, approves, accepts of; who taketh away - Atoneth for; the sin - That is, all the sins: of the world - Of all mankind. Sin and the world are of equal extent.

31. I knew him not - Till he came to be baptized. How surprising is this; considering how nearly they were related, and how remarkable the conception and birth of both had been. But there was a peculiar providence visible in our saviour's living, from his infancy to his baptism, at Nazareth: John all the time living the life of a hermit in the deserts of Judea, Luke i, 80, ninety or more miles from Nazareth: hereby that acquaintance was prevented which might have made John's testimony of Christ suspected.

34. I saw it - That is, the Spirit so descending and abiding on him. And testified - From that time.

37. They followed Jesus - They walked after him, but had not the courage to speak to him.

41. He first findeth his own brother Simon - Probably both of them sought him: Which is, being interpreted, the Christ - This the evangelist adds, as likewise those words in ver. 38, that is, being interpreted, Master.

42. Jesus said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jonah - As none had told our Lord these names, this could not but strike Peter. Cephas, which is Peter - Moaning the same in Syriac which Peter does in Greek, namely, a rock.

45. Jesus of Nazareth - So Philip thought, not knowing he was born in Bethlehem. Nathanael was probably the same with Bartholomew, that is, the son of Tholomew. St. Matthew joins Bartholomew with Philip, Matt. x, 3, and St. John places Nathanael in the midst of the apostles, immediately after Thomas, chap. xxi, 2, just as Bartholomew is placed, Acts i, 13.

46. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? - How cautiously should we guard against popular prejudices? When these had once possessed so honest a heart as that of Nathanael, they led him to suspect the blessed Jesus himself for an impostor, because he had been brought up at Nazareth. But his integrity prevailed over that foolish bias, and laid him open to the force of evidence, which a candid inquirer will always be glad to admit, even when it brings the most unexpected discoveries. Can any good thing - That is, have we ground from Scripture to expect the Messiah, or any eminent prophet from Nazareth? Philip saith, Come and see - The same answer which he had received himself from our Lord the day before.

48. Under the fig tree I saw thee - Perhaps at prayer.

49. Nathanael answered - Happy are they that are ready to believe, swift to receive the truth and grace of God. Thou art the Son of God - So he acknowledges now more than he had heard from Philip: The Son of God, the king of Israel - A confession both of the person and office of Christ.

51. Hereafter ye shall see - All of these, as well as thou, who believe on me now in my state of humiliation, shall hereafter see me come in my glory, and all the angels of God with me. This seems the most natural sense of the words, though they may also refer to his ascension.

## II

1. And the third day - After he had said this. In Cana of Galilee - There were two other towns of the same name, one in the tribe of Ephraim, the other in Caelosyria.

2. Jesus and his disciples were invited to the marriage - Christ does not take away human society, but sanctifies it. Water might have quenched thirst; yet our Lord allows wine; especially at a festival solemnity. Such was his facility in drawing his disciples at first, who were afterward to go through rougher ways.

3. And wine falling short - How many days the solemnity had lasted, and on which day our Lord came, or how many disciples might follow him, does not appear. His mother saith to him, They have not wine - Either she might mean, supply them by miracle; or, Go away, that others may go also, before the want appears.

4. Jesus saith to her, Woman - So our Lord speaks also, chap. xix, 26. It is probable this was the constant appellation which he used to her. He regarded his Father above all, not knowing even his mother after the flesh. What is it to me and thee? A mild reproof of her inordinate concern and untimely interposal. Mine hour is not yet come - The time of my working this miracle, or of my going away. May we not learn hence, if his mother was rebuked for attempting to direct him in the days of his flesh, how absurd it is to address her as if she had a right to command him, on the throne of his glory? Likewise how indecent it is for us to direct his supreme wisdom, as to the time or manner in which he shall appear for us in any of the exigencies of life!

5. His mother saith to the servants - Gathering from his answer he was about to do something extraordinary.

6. The purifying of the Jews - Who purified themselves by frequent washings particularly before eating.

9. The governor of the feast - The bridegroom generally procured some friend to order all things at the entertainment.

10. And saith - St. John barely relates the words he spoke, which does not imply his approving them. When they have well drunk - does not mean any more than toward the close of the entertainment.

11. And his disciples believed - More steadfastly.

14. Oxen, and sheep, and doves - Used for sacrifice: And the changers of money - Those who changed foreign money for that which was current at Jerusalem, for the convenience of them that came from distant countries.

15. Having made a scourge of rushes - (Which were strewed on the ground, ) he drove all out of the temple, (that is, the court of it, ) both the sheep and the oxen - Though it does not appear that he struck even them; and much less, any of the men. But a terror from God, it is evident, fell upon them.

17. Psalm lxix, 9.

18. Then answered the Jews - Either some of those whom he had just driven out, or their friends: What sign showest thou? - So they require a miracle, to confirm a miracle!

19. This temple - Doubtless pointing, while he spoke, to his body, the temple and habitation of the Godhead.

20. Forty and six years - Just so many years before the time of this conversation, Herod the Great had begun his most magnificent reparation of the temple, (one part after another, ) which he

continued all his life, and which was now going on, and was continued thirty-six years longer, till within six or seven years of the destruction of the state, city, and temple by the Romans.

22. They believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said - Concerning his resurrection.

23. Many believed - That he was a teacher sent from God.

24. He did not trust himself to them - Let us learn hence not rashly to put ourselves into the power of others. Let us study a wise and happy medium between universal suspiciousness and that easiness which would make us the property of every pretender to kindness and respect.

25. He - To whom all things are naked, knew what was in man - Namely, a desperately deceitful heart.

## III

1. A ruler - One of the great council.

2. The same came - Through desire; but by night - Through shame: We know - Even we rulers and Pharisees.

3. Jesus answered - That knowledge will not avail thee unless thou be born again - Otherwise thou canst not see, that is, experience and enjoy, either the inward or the glorious kingdom of God. In this solemn discourse our Lord shows, that no external profession, no ceremonial ordinances or privileges of birth, could entitle any to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom: that an entire change of heart as well as of life was necessary for that purpose: that this could only be wrought in man by the almighty power of God: that every man born into the world was by nature in a state of sin, condemnation, and misery: that the free mercy of God had given his Son to deliver them from it, and to raise them to a blessed immortality: that all mankind, Gentiles as well as Jews, might share in these benefits, procured by his being lifted up on the cross, and to be received by faith in him: but that if they rejected him, their eternal, aggravated condemnation, would be the certain consequence. Except a man be born again - If our Lord by being born again means only reformation of life, instead of making any new discovery, he has only thrown a great deal of obscurity on what was before plain and obvious.

4. When he is old - As Nicodemus himself was.

5. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit - Except he experience that great inward change by the Spirit, and be baptized (wherever baptism can be had) as the outward sign and means of it.

6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh - Mere flesh, void of the Spirit, yea, at enmity with it; And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit - Is spiritual, heavenly, divine, like its Author.

7. Ye must be born again - To be born again, is to be inwardly changed from all sinfulness to all holiness. It is fitly so called, because as great a change then passes on the soul as passes on the body when it is born into the world.

8. The wind bloweth - According to its own nature, not thy will, and thou hearest the sound thereof - Thou art sure it doth blow, but canst not explain the particular manner of its acting. So is every one that is born of the Spirit - The fact is plain, the manner of his operations inexplicable.

11. We speak what we know - I and all that believe in me.

12. Earthly things - Things done on earth; such as the new birth, and the present privileges of the children of God. Heavenly things - Such as the eternity of the Son, and the unity of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

13. For no one - For here you must rely on my single testimony, whereas there you have a cloud of witnesses: Hath gone up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven. Who is in heaven - Therefore he is omnipresent; else he could not be in heaven and on earth at once. This is a plain instance of what is usually termed the communication of properties between the Divine and human nature; whereby what is proper to the Divine nature is spoken concerning the human, and what is proper to the human is, as here, spoken of the Divine.

14. And as Moses - And even this single witness will soon be taken from you; yea, and in a most ignominious manner. Num. xxi, 8, 9.

15. That whosoever - He must be lifted up, that hereby he may purchase salvation for all believers: all those who look to him by faith recover spiritual health, even as all that looked at that serpent recovered bodily health.

16. Yea, and this was the very design of God's love in sending him into the world. Whosoever believeth on him - With that faith which worketh by love, and hold fast the beginning of his confidence steadfast to the end. God so loved the world - That is, all men under heaven; even those that despise his love, and will for that cause finally perish. Otherwise not to believe would be no sin to them. For what should they believe? Ought they to believe that Christ was given for them? Then he was given for them. He gave his only Son - Truly and seriously. And the Son of God gave himself, Gal. iv, 4, truly and seriously.

17. God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world - Although many accuse him of it.

18. He that believeth on him is not condemned - Is acquitted, is justified before God. The name of the only-begotten Son of God - The name of a person is often put for the person himself. But perhaps it is farther intimated in that expression, that the person spoken of is great and magnificent. And therefore it is generally used to express either God the Father or the Son.

19. This is the condemnation - That is, the cause of it. So God is clear.

21. He that practiceth the truth (that is, true religion) cometh to the light - So even Nicodemus, afterward did. Are wrought in God - That is, in the light, power, and love of God.

22. Jesus went - From the capital city, Jerusalem, into the land of Judea - That is, into the country. There he baptized - Not himself; but his disciples by his order, chap. iv, 2.

23. John also was baptizing - He did not repel them that offered, but he more willingly referred them to Jesus.

25. The Jews - Those men of Judea, who now went to be baptized by Jesus; and John's disciples, who were mostly of Galilee: about purifying - That is, baptism. They disputed, which they should be baptized by.

27. A man can receive nothing - Neither he nor I. Neither could he do this, unless God had sent him: nor can I receive the title of Christ, or any honour comparable to that which he hath received from heaven. They seem to have spoken with jealousy and resentment; John answers with sweet composure of spirit.

29. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom - He whom the bride follows. But all men now come to Jesus. Hence it is plain he is the bridegroom. The friend who heareth him - Talk with the bride; rejoiceth greatly - So far from envying or resenting it.

30. He must increase, but I must decrease - So they who are now, like John, burning and shining lights, must (if not suddenly eclipsed) like him gradually decrease, while others are increasing about them; as they in their turns grew up, amidst the decays of the former generation. Let us know how to set, as well as how to rise; and let it comfort our declining days to trace, in those who are likely to succeed us in our work, the openings of yet greater usefulness.

31. It is not improbable, that what is added, to the end of the chapter, are the words of the evangelist, not the Baptist. He that is of the earth - A mere man; of earthly original, has a spirit and speech answerable to it.

32. No man - None comparatively, exceeding few; receiveth his testimony - With true faith.

33. Hath set to his seal - It was customary among the Jews for the witness to set his seal to the testimony he had given. That God is true - Whose words the Messiah speaks.

34. God giveth not him the Spirit by measure - As he did to the prophets, but immeasurably. Hence he speaketh the words of God in the most perfect manner.

36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life - He hath it already. For he loves God. And love is the essence of heaven. He that obeyeth not - A consequence of not believing.

## IV

1. The Lord knew - Though none informed him of it.

3. He left Judea - To shun the effects of their resentment.

4. And he must needs go through Samaria - The road lying directly through it.

5. Sychar - Formerly called Sichem or Shechem. Jacob gave - On his death bed, Gen. xlviii, 22.

6. Jesus sat down - Weary as he was. It was the sixth hour - Noon; the heat of the day.

7. Give me to drink - In this one conversation he brought her to that knowledge which the apostles were so long in attaining.

8. For his disciples were gone - Else he needed not have asked her.

9. How dost thou - Her open simplicity appears from her very first words. The Jews have no dealings - None by way of friendship. They would receive no kind of favour from them.

10. If thou hadst known the gift - The living water; and who it is - He who alone is able to give it: thou wouldst have asked of him - On those words the stress lies. Water - In like manner he draws the allegory from bread, chap. vi, 27, and from light, viii, 12; the first, the most simple, necessary, common, and salutary things in nature. Living water - The Spirit and its fruits. But she might the more easily mistake his meaning, because living water was a common phrase among the Jews for spring water.

12. Our father Jacob - So they fancied he was; whereas they were, in truth, a mixture of many nations, placed there by the king of Assyria, in the room of the Israelites whom he had carried away captive, 2 Kings xvii, 24. Who gave us the well - In Joseph their supposed forefather: and drank thereof - So even he had no better water than this.

14. Will never thirst - Will never (provided he continue to drink thereof) be miserable, dissatisfied, without refreshment. If ever that thirst returns, it will be the fault of the man, not the water. But the water that I shall give him - The spirit of faith working by love, shall become in him

- An inward living principle, a fountain - Not barely a well, which is soon exhausted, springing up into everlasting life - Which is a confluence, or rather an ocean of streams arising from this fountain.

15. That I thirst not - She takes him still in a gross sense.

16. Jesus saith to her - He now clears the way that he might give her a better kind of water than she asked for. Go, call thy husband - He strikes directly at her bosom sin.

17. Thou hast well said - We may observe in all our Lord's discourses the utmost weightiness, and yet the utmost courtesy.

18. Thou hast had five husbands - Whether they were all dead or not, her own conscience now awakened would tell her.

19. Sir, I perceive - So soon was her heart touched.

20. The instant she perceived this, she proposes what she thought the most important of all questions. This mountain - Pointing to Mount Gerizim. Sanballat, by the permission of Alexander the Great, had built a temple upon Mount Gerizim, for Manasseh, who for marrying Sanballat's daughter had been expelled from the priesthood and from Jerusalem, Neh. xiii, 28. This was the place where the Samaritans used to worship in opposition to Jerusalem. And it was so near Sychar, that a man's voice might be heard from the one to the other. Our fathers worshipped - This plainly refers to Abraham and Jacob (from whom the Samaritans pretended to deduce their genealogy) who erected altars in this place: Gen. xii, 6, 7, and Gen. xxxiii, 18, 20. And possibly to the whole congregation, who were directed when they came into the land of Canaan to put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim, Deut. xi, 29. Ye Jews say, In Jerusalem is the place - Namely, the temple.

21. Believe me - Our Lord uses this expression in this manner but once; and that to a Samaritan. To his own people, the Jews, his usual language is, I say unto you. The hour cometh when ye - Both Samaritans and Jews, shall worship neither in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem - As preferable to any other place. True worship shall be no longer confined to any one place or nation.

22. Ye worship ye know not what - Ye Samaritans are ignorant, not only of the place, but of the very object of worship. Indeed, they feared the Lord after a fashion; but at the same time served their own gods, 2 Kings xvii, 33. Salvation is from the Jews - So spake all the prophets, that the saviour should arise out of the Jewish nation: and that from thence the knowledge of him should spread to all nations under heaven.

23. The true worshippers shall worship the Father - Not here or there only, but at all times and in all places.

24. God is a Spirit - Not only remote from the body, and all the properties of it, but likewise full of all spiritual perfections, power, wisdom, love, holiness. And our worship should be suitable to his nature. We should worship him with the truly spiritual worship of faith, love, and holiness, animating all our tempers, thoughts, words, and actions.

25. The woman saith - With joy for what she had already learned, and desire of fuller instruction.

26. Jesus saith - Hasting to satisfy her desire before his disciples came. l am He - Our Lord did not speak this so plainly to the Jews who were so full of the Messiah's temporal kingdom. If he had, many would doubtless have taken up arms in his favour, and others have accused him to the Roman governor. Yet he did in effect declare the thing, though he denied the particular title. For in a multitude of places he represented himself, both as the Son of man, and as the Son of God: both which expressions were generally understood by the Jews as peculiarly applicable to the Messiah.

27. His disciples marvelled that he talked with a woman - Which the Jewish rabbis reckoned scandalous for a man of distinction to do. They marvelled likewise at his talking with a woman of that nation, which was so peculiarly hateful to the Jews. Yet none said - To the woman, What seekest thou? - Or to Christ, Why talkest thou with her?

28. The woman left her water pot - Forgetting smaller things.

29. A man who told me all things that ever I did - Our Lord had told her but a few things. But his words awakened her conscience, which soon told her all the rest. Is not this the Christ? - She does not doubt of it herself, but incites them to make the inquiry.

31. In the meantime - Before the people came.

34. My meat - That which satisfies the strongest appetite of my soul.

35. The fields are white already - As if he had said, The spiritual harvest is ripe already. The Samaritans, ripe for the Gospel, covered the ground round about them.

36. He that reapeth - Whoever saves souls, receiveth wages - A peculiar blessing to himself, and gathereth fruit - Many souls: that he that soweth - Christ the great sower of the seed, and he that reapeth may rejoice together - In heaven.

37. That saying - A common proverb; One soweth - The prophets and Christ; another reapeth - The apostles and succeeding ministers.

38. I - he Lord of the whole harvest, have sent you - He had employed them already in baptizing, ver. 2.

42. We know that this is the saviour of the world - And not of the Jews only.

43. He went into Galilee - That is, into the country of Galilee: but not to Nazareth. It was at that town only that he had no honour. Therefore he went to other towns.

44. Matt. xiii, 57.

47. To come down - For Cana stood much higher than Capernaum.

48. Unless ye see signs and wonders - Although the Samaritans believed without them.

52. He asked the hour when he amended - The more exactly the works of God are considered, the more faith is increased.

## V

1. A feast - Pentecost.

2. There is in Jerusalem - Hence it appears, that St. John wrote his Gospel before Jerusalem was destroyed: it is supposed about thirty years after the ascension. Having five porticos - Built for the use of the sick. Probably the basin had five sides! Bethesda signifies the house of mercy.

4. An angel - Yet many undoubtedly thought the whole thing to be purely natural. At certain times - Perhaps at a certain hour of the day, during this paschal week, went down - The Greek word implies that he had ceased going down, before the time of St. John's writing this. God might design this to raise expectation of the acceptable time approaching, to add a greater lustre to his Son's miracles, and to show that his ancient people were not entirely forgotten of him. The first - Whereas the Son of God healed every day not one only, but whole multitudes that resorted to him.

7. The sick man answered - Giving the reason why he was not made whole, notwithstanding his desire.

14. Sin no more - It seems his former illness was the effect or punishment of sin.

15. The man went and told the Jews, that it was Jesus who had made him whole - One might have expected, that when he had published the name of his benefactor, crowds would have thronged about Jesus, to have heard the words of his mouth, and to have received the blessings of the Gospel. Instead of this, they surround him with a hostile intent: they even conspire against his life, and for an imagined transgression in point of ceremony, would have put out this light of Israel. Let us not wonder then, if our good be evil spoken of: if even candour, benevolence, and usefulness, do not disarm the enmity of those who have been taught to prefer sacrifice to mercy; and who, disrelishing the genuine Gospel, naturally seek to slander and persecute the professors, but especially the defenders of it.

17. My Father worketh until now, and I work - From the creation till now he hath been working without intermission. I do likewise. This is the proposition which is explained ver. 19-30, confirmed and vindicated in ver. 31 and following verses.

18. His own Father - The Greek word means his own Father in such a sense as no creature can speak. Making himself equal with God - It is evident all the hearers so understood him, and that our Lord never contradicted, but confirmed it.

19. The Son can do nothing of himself - This is not his imperfection, but his glory, resulting from his eternal, intimate, indissoluble unity with the Father. Hence it is absolutely impossible, that the Son should judge, will, testify, or teach any thing without the Father, ver. 30, &c.; chap. vi, 38; chap. vii, 16; or that he should be known or believed on, separately from the Father. And he here defends his doing good every day, without intermission, by the example of his Father, from which he cannot depart: these doth the Son likewise - All these, and only these; seeing he and the Father are one.

20. The Father showeth him all things that himself doth - A proof of the most intimate unity. And he will show him - By doing them. At the same time (not at different times) the Father showeth and doth, and the Son seeth and doth. Greater works - Jesus oftener terms them works, than signs or wonders, because they were not wonders in his eyes. Ye will marvel - So they did, when he raised Lazarus.

21. For - He declares which are those greater works, raising the dead, and judging the world. The power of quickening whom he will follows from the power of judging. These two, quickening and judging, are proposed ver. 21, 22. The acquittal of believers, which presupposes judgment, is treated of ver. 24; the quickening some of the dead, ver. 25; and the general resurrection, ver. 28.

22. For neither doth the Father judge - Not without the Son: but he doth judge by that man whom he hath ordained, Acts xvii, 31.

23. That all men may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father - Either willingly, and so escaping condemnation, by faith: or unwillingly, when feeling the wrath of the Judge. This demonstrates the EQUALITY of the Son with the Father. If our Lord were God only by office or investiture, and not in the unity of the Divine essence, and in all respects equal in Godhead with the Father, he could not be honoured even as, that is, with the same honour that they honoured the Father. He that honoureth not the Son - With the same equal honour, greatly dishonoureth the Father that sent him.

24. And cometh not into condemnation - Unless he make shipwreck of the faith.

25. The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God - So did Jairus's daughter, the widow's son, Lazarus.

26. He hath given to the Son - By eternal generation, to have life in himself - Absolute, independent.

27. Because he is the Son of man - He is appointed to judge mankind because he was made man.

28. The time is coming - When not two or three, but all shall rise.

29. The resurrection of life - That resurrection which leads to life everlasting.

30. I can do nothing of myself - It is impossible I should do any thing separately from my Father. As I hear - Of the Father, and see, so I judge and do; A because I am essentially united to him. See ver. 19.

31. If I testify of myself - That is, if I alone, (which indeed is impossible,) my testimony is not valid.

32. There is another - The Father, ver. 37, and I know that, even in your judgment, his testimony in beyond exception.

33. He bare testimony - That I am the Christ.

34. But I have no need to receive, &c. But these things - Concerning John, whom ye yourselves reverence, I say, that ye may be saved - So really and seriously did he will their salvation. Yet they were not saved. Most, if not all of them, died in their sins.

35. He was a burning and a shining light - Inwardly burning with love and zeal, outwardly shining in all holiness. And even ye were willing for a season - A short time only.

37. He hath testified of me - Namely at my baptism. I speak not of my supposed father Joseph. Ye are utter strangers to him of whom I speak.

38. Ye have not his word - All who believe have the word of the Father (the same with the word of the Son) abiding in them, that is, deeply ingrafted in their hearts.

39. Search the Scriptures - A plain command to all men. In them ye are assured ye have eternal life - Ye know they show you the way to eternal life. And these very Scriptures testify of me.

40. Yet ye will not come unto me - As they direct you.

41. I receive not honour from men - I need it not. I seek it not from you for my own sake.

42. But I know you - With this ray he pierces the hearts of the hearers. And this doubtless he spake with the tenderest compassion.

43. If another shall come - Any false Christ.

44. While ye receive honour - That is, while ye seek the praise of men rather than the praise of God. At the feast of pentecost, kept in commemoration of the giving the law from Mount Sinai, their sermons used to be full of the praises of the law, and of the people to whom it was given. How mortifying then must the following words of our Lord be to them, while they were thus exulting in Moses and his law!

45. There is one that accuseth you - By his writings.

46. He wrote of me - Every where; in all his writings; particularly Deut. xviii, 15, 18.

## VI

1. After these things - The history of between ten and eleven months is to be supplied here from the other evangelists. Matt. xiv, 13; Mark vi, 32; Luke ix, 10.

3. Jesus went up - Before the people overtook him.

5. Jesus saith to Philip - Perhaps he had the care of providing victuals for the family of the apostles.

15. He retired to the mountain alone - Having ordered his disciples to cross over the lake.

16. Matt. xiv, 22; Mark vi, 45.

22. Who had stood on the other side - They were forced to stay a while, because there were then no other vessels; and they stayed the less unwillingly, because they saw that Jesus was not embarked.

26. Our Lord does not satisfy their curiosity, but corrects the wrong motive they had in seeking him: because ye did eat - Merely for temporal advantage. Hitherto Christ had been gathering hearers: he now begins to try their sincerity, by a figurative discourse concerning his passion, and the fruit of it, to be received by faith.

27. labour not for the meat which perisheth - For bodily food: not for that only not chiefly: not at all, but in subordination to grace, faith, love, the meat which endureth to everlasting life. labour, work for this; for everlasting life. So our Lord expressly commands, work for life, as well as from life: from a principle of faith and love. Him hath the Father sealed - By this very miracle, as well as by his whole testimony concerning him. See chap. iii, 33. Sealing is a mark of the authenticity of a writing.

28. The works of God - Works pleasing to God.

29. This is the work of God - The work most pleasing to God, and the foundation of all others: that ye believe - He expresses it first properly, afterward figuratively.

30. What sign dost thou? - Amazing, after what they had just seen!

31. Our fathers ate manna - This sign Moses gave them. He gave them bread from heaven - From the lower sublunary heaven; to which Jesus opposes the highest heaven: in which sense he says seven times, ver. 32, 33, 38, 50, 58, 62, that he himself came down from heaven.

32. Moses gave you not bread from heaven - It was not Moses who gave the manna to your fathers; but my Father who now giveth the true bread from heaven. Psalm lxxviii, 24.

33. He that - giveth life to the world - Not (like the manna) to one people only: and that from generation to generation. Our Lord does not yet say, I am that bread; else the Jews would not have given him so respectful an answer, ver. 34.

34. Give us this bread - Meaning it still, in a literal sense: yet they seem now to be not far from believing.

35. I am the bread of life - Having and giving life: he that cometh -he that believeth - Equivalent expressions: shall never hunger, thirst - Shall be satisfied, happy, for ever.

36. I have told you - Namely, ver. 26.

37. All that the Father giveth me - All that feel themselves lost, and follow the drawings of the Father, he in a peculiar manner giveth to the Son: will come to me - By faith. And him that thus cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out - I will give him pardon, holiness, and heaven, if he endure to the end - to rejoice in his light.

39. Of all which he hath already given me - See chap. xvii, 6, 12. If they endure to the end. But Judas did not.

40. Here is the sum of the three foregoing verses. This is the will of him that sent me - This is the whole of what I have said: this is the eternal, unchangeable will of God. Every one who truly believeth, shall have everlasting life. Every one that seeth and believeth - The Jews saw, and yet

believed not. And I will raise him up - As this is the will of him that sent me, I will perform it effectually.

44. Christ having checked their murmuring, continues what he was saying, ver. 40. No man comes to me, unless my Father draw him - No man can believe in Christ, unless God give him power: he draws us first, by good desires. Not by compulsion, not by laying the will under any necessity; but by the strong and sweet, yet still resistible, motions of his heavenly grace.

45. Every man that hath heard - The secret voice of God, he, and he only believeth. Isaiah liv, 13.

46. Not that any one - Must expect him to appear in a visible shape. He who is from or with God - In a more eminent manner than any creature.

50. Not die - Not spiritually; not eternally.

51. If any eat of this bread - That is, believe in me: he shall live for ever - In other words, he that believeth to the end shall be saved. My flesh which I will give you - This whole discourse concerning his flesh and blood refers directly to his passion, and but remotely, if at all, to the Lord's Supper.

52. Observe the degrees: the Jews are tried here; the disciples, ver. 60-66, the apostles, ver. 67.

53. Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man - Spiritually: unless ye draw continual virtue from him by faith. Eating his flesh is only another expression for believing.

55. Meat - drink indeed - With which the soul of a believer is as truly fed, as his body with meat and drink.

57. I live by the Father - Being one with him. He shall live by me -Being one with me. Amazing union!

58. This is - That is, I am the bread - Which is not like the manna your fathers ate, who died notwithstanding.

60. This is a hard saying - Hard to the children of the world, but sweet to the children of God. Scarce ever did our Lord speak more sublimely, even to the apostles in private. Who can hear - Endure it?

62. What if ye shall see the Son of man ascend where he was before? - How much more incredible will it then appear to you, that he should give you his flesh to eat?

63. It is the Spirit - The spiritual meaning of these words, by which God giveth life. The flesh - The bare, carnal, literal meaning, profiteth nothing. The words which I have spoken, they are spirit - Are to be taken in a spiritual sense and, when they are so understood, they are life - That is, a means of spiritual life to the hearers.

64. But there are some of you who believe not - And so receive no life by them, because you take them in a gross literal sense. For Jesus knew from the beginning - Of his ministry: who would betray him - Therefore it is plain, God does foresee future contingencies:- "But his foreknowledge causes not the fault, Which had no less proved certain unforeknown."

65. Unless it be given - And it is given to those only who will receive it on God's own terms.

66. From this time many of his disciples went back - So our Lord now began to purge his floor: the proud and careless were driven away, and those remained who were meet for the Master's use.

68. Thou hast the words of eternal life - Thou, and thou alone, speakest the words which show the way to life everlasting.

69. And we - Who have been with thee from the beginning, whatever others do, have known - Are absolutely assured, that thou art the Christ.

70. Jesus answered the - And yet even ye have not all acted suitable to this knowledge. Have I not chosen or elected you twelve? - But they might fall even from that election. Yet one of you - On this gracious warning, Judas ought to have repented; is a devil - Is now influenced by one.

## VII

1. After these things Jesus walked in Galilee - That is, continued there, for some months after the second passover. For he would not walk - Continue in Judea; because the Jews - Those of them who did not believe; and in particular the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, sought an opportunity to kill him.

2. The feast of tabernacles - The time, manner, and reason of this feast may be seen, Lev. xxiii, 34, &c.

3. His brethren - So called according to the Jewish way of speaking. They were his cousins, the sons of his mother's sister. Depart hence - From this obscure place.

4. For no man doth any thing - Of this kind, in secret; but rather desireth to be of public use. If thou really dost these things -These miracles which are reported; show thyself to the world - To all men.

6. Jesus saith, Your time is always ready - This or any time will suit you.

7. The world cannot hate you - Because ye are of the world. But me it hateth - And all that bear the same testimony.

10. He also went up to the feast - This was his last journey but one to Jerusalem. The next time he went up he suffered.

11. The Jews - The men of Judea, particularly of Jerusalem.

12. There was much murmuring among the multitude - Much whispering; many private debates with each other, among those who were come from distant parts.

13. However no man spake openly of him - Not in favour of him: for fear of the Jews - Those that were in authority.

14. Now at the middle of the feast - Which lasted eight days. It is probable this was on the Sabbath day. Jesus went up into the temple - Directly, without stopping any where else.

15. How does this man know letters, having never learned? - How comes he to be so well acquainted with sacred literature as to be able thus to expound the Scripture, with such propriety and gracefulness, seeing he has never learned this, at any place of education?

16. My doctrine is not mine - Acquired by any labour of learning; but his that sent me - Immediately infused by him.

17. If any man be willing to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God - This is a universal rule, with regard to all persons and doctrines. He that is thoroughly willing to do it, shall certainly know what the will of God is.

18. There is no unrighteousness in him - No deceit or falsehood.

19. But ye are unrighteous; for ye violate the very law which ye profess so much zeal for.

20. The people answered, Thou hast a devil - A lying spirit. Who seeketh to kill thee? - These, coming from distant parts, probably did not know the design of the priests and rulers.

21. I did - At the pool of Bethesda: one work - Out of many: and ye all marvelled at it - Are amazed, because I did it on the Sabbath day.

22. Moses gave you circumcision - The sense is, because Moses enjoined you circumcision (though indeed it was far more ancient than him) you think it no harm to circumcise a man on the Sabbath: and are ye angry at me (which anger had now continued sixteen months) for doing so much greater a good, for healing a man, body and soul, on the Sabbath?

27. When Christ cometh, none knoweth whence he is - This Jewish tradition was true, with regard to his Divine nature: in that respect none could declare his generation. But it was not true with regard to his human nature, for both his family and the place of his birth were plainly foretold.

28. Then cried Jesus - With a loud and earnest voice. Do ye both know me, and know whence I am? - Ye do indeed know whence I am as a man. But ye know not my Divine nature, nor that I am sent from God.

29. l am from him - By eternal generation: and he hath sent me - His mission follows from his generation. These two points answer those: Do ye know me? Do ye know whence I am?

30. His hour - The time of his suffering.

33. Then said Jesus - Continuing his discourse (from ver. 29) which they had interrupted.

34. Ye shall seek me - Whom ye now despise. These words are, as it were, the text which is commented upon in this and the following chapter. Where I am - Christ's so frequently saying while on earth, where I am, when he spake of his being in heaven, intimates his perpetual presence there in his Divine nature: though his going thither was a future thing, with regard to his human nature.

35. Will he go to the dispersed among the Greeks - The Jews scattered abroad in heathen nations, Greece particularly. Or, Will he teach the Greeks? - The heathens themselves.

37. On the last, the great day of the feast - On this day there was the greatest concourse of people, and they were then wont to fetch water from the fountain of Siloam, which the priests poured out on the great altar, singing one to an other, With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation. On this day likewise they commemorated God's miraculously giving water out of the rock, and offered up solemn prayers for seasonable rains.

38. He that believeth - This answers to let him come to me. And whosoever doth come to him by faith, his inmost soul shall be filled with living water, with abundance of peace, joy, and love, which shall likewise flow from him to others. As the Scripture hath said - Not expressly in any one particular place. But here is a general reference to all those scriptures which speak of the effusion of the Spirit by the Messiah, under the similitude of pouring out water. Zech. xiv, 8.

39. The Holy Ghost was not yet given - That is, those fruits of the Spirit were not yet given even to true believers, in that full measure.

40. The prophet - Whom we expect to be the forerunner of the Messiah.

42. From Bethlehem - And how could they forget that Jesus was born there? Had not Herod given them terrible reason to remember it? Micah v, 2.

48. Hath any of the rulers - Men of rank or eminence, or of the Pharisees - Men of learning or religion, believed on him?

49. But this populace, who know not the law - This ignorant rabble; are accursed - Are by that ignorance exposed to the curse of being thus seduced.

50. Nicodemus, he that came to him by night - Having now a little more courage, being one of them - Being present as a member of the great council, saith to them - Do not we ourselves act as if we knew not the law, if we pass sentence on a man before we hear him?

52. They answered - By personal reflection; the argument they could not answer, and therefore did not attempt it. Art thou also a Galilean? - One of his party? Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet - They could not but know the contrary. They knew Jonah arose out of Gethhepher; and Nahum from another village in Galilee. Yea, and Thisbe, the town of Elijah, the Tishbite, was in Galilee also. They might likewise have known that Jesus was not born in Galilee, but at Bethlehem, even from the public register there, and from the genealogies of the family of David. They were conscious this poor answer would not bear examination, and so took care to prevent a reply.

53. And every man went to his own house - So that short plain question of Nicodemus spoiled all their measures, and broke up the council! A word spoken in season, how good it is! Especially when God gives it his blessing.

## VIII

5. Moses hath commanded us to stone such - If they spoke accurately, this must have been a woman, who, having been betrothed to a husband, had been guilty of this crime before the marriage was completed; for such only Moses commanded to be stoned. He commanded indeed that other adulteresses should be put to death; but the manner of death was not specified. Deut. xxii, 23.

6. That they might have to accuse him - Either of usurping the office of a judge, if he condemned her, or of being an enemy to the law, if he acquitted her. Jesus stooping down, wrote with his finger on the ground - God wrote once in the Old Testament; Christ once in the New: perhaps the words which he afterward spoke, when they continued asking him. By this silent action, he, 1, fixed their wandering, hurrying thoughts, in order to awaken their consciences: and, 2, signified that he was not then come to condemn but to save the world.

7. He that is without sin - He that is not guilty: his own conscience being the judge) either of the same sin, or of some nearly resembling it; let him - as a witness, cast the first stone at her.

9. Beginning at the eldest - Or the elders. Jesus was left alone -By all those scribes and Pharisees who proposed the question. But many others remained, to whom our Lord directed his discourse presently after.

10. Hath no man condemned thee? - Hath no judicial sentence been passed upon thee?

11. Neither do I condemn thee - Neither do I take upon me to pass any such sentence. Let this deliverance lead thee to repentance.

12. He that followeth me shall in nowise walk in darkness - In ignorance, wickedness, misery: but shall have the light of life -He that closely, humbly, steadily follows me, shall have the Divine light continually shining upon him, diffusing over his soul knowledge, holiness, joy, till he is guided by it to life everlasting.

13. Thou testifiest of thyself; thy testimony is not valid - They retort upon our Lord his own words, chap. v, 31; if I testify of myself, my testimony is not valid. He had then added, There is another who testifieth of me. To the same effect he replies here, verse 14, Though I testify of myself, yet my testimony is valid; for I am inseparably united to the Father. I know - And from firm and certain knowledge proceeds the most unexceptionable testimony: whence I came, and whither I go - To these two heads may be referred all the doctrine concerning Christ. The former is treated of

verse 16, &c., the latter ver. 21, &c. For I know whence I came - That is, For I came from God, both as God and as man. And I know it, though ye do not.

15. Ye judge after the flesh - As the flesh, that is, corrupt nature dictates. I judge no man - Not thus; not now; not at my first coming.

16. I am not alone - No more in judging, than in testifying: but I and the Father that sent me - His Father is in him, and he is in the Father, chap. xiv, 10, 11; and so the Father is no more alone without the Son, than the Son is without the Father, Prov. viii, 22, 23, 30. His Father and he are not one and another God, but one God, (though distinct persons,) and so inseparable from each other. And though the Son came from the Father, to assume human nature, and perform his office as the Messiah upon earth, as God is sometimes said to come from heaven, for particular manifestations of himself; yet Christ did not leave the Father, nor the Father leave him, any more than God leaves heaven when he is said to come down to the earth.

17. Deut. xix, 15.

19. Then said they to him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered - Showing the perverseness of their question; and teaching that they ought first to know the Son, if they would know the Father. Where the Father is - he shows, ver. 23. Meantime he plainly intimates that the Father and he were distinct persons, as they were two witnesses; and yet one in essence, as the knowledge of him includes the knowledge of the Father.

23. Ye are - Again he passes over their interruption, and proves what he advanced, ver. 21. Of them that are beneath - From the earth. I am of them that are above - Here he directly shows whence he came, even from heaven, and whither he goes.

24. If ye believe not that I AM - Here (as in ver. 58) our Lord claims the Divine name, I AM, Exod. iii, 14. But the Jews, as if he had stopped short, and not finished the sentence, answered, Who art thou?

25. Even what I say to you from the beginning - The same which I say to you, as it were in one discourse, with one even tenor from the time I first spake to you.

26. I have many things to say and to judge of you - I have much to say concerning your inexcusable unbelief: but he that sent me is true - Whether ye believe or no. And I speak the things which I have heard from him - I deliver truly what he hath given me in charge.

27. They understood not - That by him that sent him he meant God the Father. Therefore in ver. 28, 29 he speaks plainly of the Father, and again claims the Divine name, I AM.

28. When ye shall have lifted up - On the cross, ye shall know - And so many of them did, that I AM - God over all; and that I do nothing of myself - Being one with the Father.

29. The Father hath not left me alone - Never from the moment I came into the world.

32. The truth - Written in your hearts by the Spirit of God, shall make you free - From guilt, sin, misery, Satan.

33. They - The other Jews that were by, (not those that believed,) as appears by the whole tenor of the conversation. We were never enslaved to any man - A bold, notorious untruth. At that very time they were enslaved to the Romans.

34. Jesus answered - Each branch of their objection, first concerning freedom, then concerning their being Abraham's offspring, ver. 37, &c. He that committeth sin, is, in fact, the slave of sin.

35. And the slave abideth not in the house - All sinners shall be cast out of God's house, as the slave was out of Abraham's: but I, the Son, abide therein for ever.

36. If I therefore make you free, ye - shall partake of the same privilege: being made free from all guilt and sin, ye shall abide in the house of God for ever.

37. I know that ye are Abraham's offspring - As to the other branch of your objection, I know that, ye are Abraham's offspring, after the flesh; but not in a spiritual sense. Ye are not followers of the faith of Abraham: my word hath no place in your hearts.

41. Ye do the deeds of your father - He is not named yet. But when they presumed to call God their Father, then he is expressly called the devil, ver. 44.

42. I proceeded forth - As God, and come - As Christ.

43. Ye cannot - Such is your stubbornness and pride, hear - Receive, obey my word. Not being desirous to do my will, ye cannot understand my doctrine, chap. vii, 17.

44. He was a murderer - In inclination, from the beginning - Of his becoming a devil; and abode not in the truth - Commencing murderer and liar at the same time. And certainly he was a killer of men (as the Greek word properly signifies) from the beginning of the world: for from the very creation he designed and contrived the ruin of men. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own - For he is the proper parent, and, as it were, creator of it. See the origin not only of lies, but of evil in general!

45. Because I speak the truth - Which liars hate.

46. Which of you convicteth me of sin? - And is not my life as unreprovable as my doctrine? Does not my whole behaviour confirm the truth of what I teach?

47. He that is of God - That either loves or fears him, heareth - With joy and reverence, God's words - Which I preach.

48. Say we not well - Have we not just cause to say, Thou art, a Samaritan - An enemy to our Church and nation; and hast a devil? -Art possessed by a proud and lying spirit?

49. I honour my Father - I seek his honour only.

50. I seek not my own glory - That is, as I am the Messiah, I consult not my own glory. I need not. For my Father consulteth it, and will pass sentence on you accordingly.

51. If a man keep my word - So will my Father consult my glory. We keep his doctrine by believing, his promises by hoping, his command by obeying. He shall never see death - That is, death eternal. He shall live for ever. Hereby he proves that he was no Samaritan; for the Samaritans in general were Sadducees.

54. If I honour myself - Referring to their words, Whom makest thou thyself?

56. He saw it - By faith in types, figures, and promises; as particularly in Melchisedec; in the appearance of Jehovah to him in the plains of Mamre, Gen. xviii, 1; and in the promise that in his seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Possibly he had likewise a peculiar Revelation either of Christ's first or second coming.

57. Thou art not yet fifty years old - At the most. Perhaps the gravity of our Lord's countenance, together with his afflictions and labours, might make him appear older than he really was. Hast thou seen Abraham - Which they justly supposed must have been, if Abraham had seen him.

58. Before Abraham was I AM - Even from everlasting to everlasting. This is a direct answer to the objection of the Jews, and shows how much greater he was than Abraham.

59. Then they took up stones - To stone him as a blasphemer; but Jesus concealed himself - Probably by becoming invisible; and so passed on - With the same ease as if none had been there.

## IX

2. Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? - That is, was it for his own sins, or the sins of his parents? They suppose (as many of the Jews did, though without any ground from Scripture) that he might have sinned in a pre-existent state, before he came into the world.

3. Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents - It was not the manner of our Lord to answer any questions that were of no use, but to gratify an idle curiosity. Therefore he determines nothing concerning this. The scope of his answer is, It was neither for any sins of his own, nor yet of his parents; but that the power of God might be displayed.

4. The night is coming - Christ is the light. When the light is withdrawn night comes, when no man can work - No man can do any thing toward working out his salvation after this life is ended. Yet Christ can work always. But he was not to work upon earth, only during the day, or season which was appointed for him.

5. I am the light of the world - I teach men inwardly by my Spirit, and outwardly by my preaching, what is the will of God; and I show them, by my example, how they must do it.

6. He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay - This might almost have blinded a man that had sight. But what could it do toward curing the blind? It reminds us that God is no farther from the event, when he works either with, or without means, and that all the creatures are only that which his almighty operation makes them.

7. Go, wash at the pool of Siloam - Perhaps our Lord intended to make the miracle more taken notice of. For a crowd of people would naturally gather round him to observe the event of so strange a prescription, and it is exceeding probable, the guide who must have led him in traversing a great part of the city, would mention the errand he was going upon, and so call all those who saw him to a greater attention. From the fountain of Siloam, which was without the walls of Jerusalem, a little stream flowed into the city, and was received in a kind of basin, near the temple, and called the pool of Siloam. Which is, by interpretation, Sent - And so was a type of the Messiah, who was sent of God. He went and washed, and came seeing - He believed, and obeyed, and found a blessing. Had he been wise in his own eyes, and reasoned, like Naaman, on the impropriety of the means, he had justly been left in darkness. Lord, may our proud hearts be subdued to the methods of thy recovering grace! May we leave thee to choose how thou wilt bestow favours, which it is our highest interest to receive on any terms.

11. A man called Jesus - He seems to have been before totally ignorant of him.

14. Anointing the eyes - With any kind of medicine on the Sabbath, was particularly forbidden by the tradition of the elders.

16. This man is not of God - Not sent of God. How can a man that is a sinner - That is, one living in wilful sin, do such miracles?

17. What sayest thou of him, for that he hath opened thine eyes? - What inference dost thou draw herefrom?

22. He should be put out of the synagogue - That is be excommunicated.

27. Are ye also - As well as I, at length convinced and willing to be his disciples?

29. We know not whence he is - By what power and authority he does these things.

30. The man answered - Utterly illiterate as he was. And with what strength and clearness of reason! So had God opened the eyes of his understanding, as well as his bodily eyes. Why, herein is a marvelous thing, that ye - The teachers and guides of the people, should not know, that a man

who has wrought a miracle, the like of which was never heard of before, must be from heaven, sent by God.

31. We - Even we of the populace, know that God heareth not sinners - Not impenitent sinners, so as to answer their prayers in this manner. The honest courage of this man in adhering to the truth, though he knew the consequence, ver. 22, gives him claim to the title of a confessor.

33. He could do nothing - Of this kind; nothing miraculous.

34. Born in sin - And therefore, they supposed, born blind. They cast him out - Of the synagogue; excommunicated him.

35. Having found him - For he had sought him.

36. Who is he, that I may believe? - This implies some degree of faith already. He was ready to receive whatever Jesus said.

37. Lord, I believe - What an excellent spirit was this man of! Of so deep and strong an understanding; (as he had just shown to the confusion of the Pharisees,) and yet of so teachable a temper!

39. For judgment am I come into the world - That is, the consequence of my coming will be, that by the just judgment of God, while the blind in body and soul receive their sight, they who boast they see, will be given up to still greater blindness than before.

41. If ye had been blind - Invincibly ignorant; if ye had not had so many means of knowing: ye would have had no sin - Comparatively to what ye have now. But now ye say - Ye yourselves acknowledge, Ye see, therefore your sin remaineth - Without excuse, without remedy.

## X

1. He that entereth not by the door - By Christ. He is the only lawful entrance. Into the sheepfold - The Church. He is a thief and a robber - In God's account. Such were all those teachers, to whom our Lord had just been speaking.

3. To him the door keeper openeth - Christ is considered as the shepherd, ver. 11. As the door in the first and following verses. And as it is not unworthy of Christ to be styled the door, by which both the sheep and the true pastor enter, so neither is it unworthy of God the Father to be styled the door keeper. See Acts xiv, 27; Colossians iv, 3; Rev. iii, 8; Acts xvi, 14. And the sheep hear his voice - The circumstances that follow, exactly agree with the customs of the ancient eastern shepherds. They called their sheep by name, went before them and the sheep followed them. So real Christians hear, listen to, understand, and obey the voice of the shepherd whom Christ hath sent. And he counteth them his own, dearer than any friend or brother: calleth, advises, directs each by name, and leadeth them out, in the paths of righteousness, beside the waters of comfort.

4. He goeth before them - In all the ways of God, teaching them in every point, by example as well as by precept; and the sheep follow him - They tread in his steps: for they know his voice - Having the witness in themselves that his words are the wisdom and the power of God. Reader, art thou a shepherd of souls? Then answer to God. Is it thus with thee and thy flock?

5. They will not follow a stranger - One whom Christ hath not sent, who doth not answer the preceding description. Him they will not follow - And who can constrain them to it? But will flee

from him - As from the plague. For they know not the voice of strangers - They cannot relish it; it is harsh and grating to them. They find nothing of God therein.

6. They - The Pharisees, to whom our Lord more immediately spake, as appears from the close of the foregoing chapter.

7. I am the door - Christ is both the Door and the Shepherd, and all things.

8. Whosoever are come - Independently of me, assuming any part of my character, pretending, like your elders and rabbis, to a power over the consciences of men, attempting to make laws in the Church, and to teach their own traditions as the way of salvation: all those prophets and expounders of God's word, that enter not by the door of the sheepfold, but run before I have sent them by my Spirit. Our Lord seems in particular to speak of those that had undertaken this office since he began his ministry, are thieves -Stealing temporal profit to themselves, and robbers - Plundering and murdering the sheep.

9. If any one - As a sheep, enter in by me - Through faith, he shall be safe - From the wolf, and from those murdering shepherds. And shall go in and out - Shall continually attend on the shepherds whom I have sent; and shall find pasture - Food for his soul in all circumstances.

10. The thief cometh not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy - That is, nothing else can be the consequence of a shepherd's coming, who does not enter in by me.

12. But the hireling - It is not the bare receiving hire, which denominates a man a hireling: (for the labourer is worthy of his hire; Jesus Christ himself being the Judge: yea, and the Lord hath ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel:) but the loving hire: the loving the hire more than the work: the working for the sake of the hire. He is a hireling, who would not work, were it not for the hire; to whom this is the great (if not only) motive of working. O God! If a man who works only for hire is such a wretch, a mere thief and a robber, what is he who continually takes the hire, and yet does not work at all? The wolf - signifies any enemy who, by force or fraud, attacks the Christian's faith, liberty, or life. So the wolf seizeth and scattereth the flock - He seizeth some, and scattereth the rest; the two ways of hurting the flock of Christ.

13. The hireling fleeth because he is a hireling - Because he loves the hire, not the sheep.

14. I know my sheep - With a tender regard and special care: and am known of mine - With a holy confidence and affection.

15. As the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father - With such a knowledge as implies an inexpressible union: and I lay down my life - Speaking of the present time. For his whole life was only a going unto death.

16. I have also other sheep - Which he foreknew; which are not of this fold - Not of the Jewish Church or nation, but Gentiles. I must bring them likewise - Into my Church, the general assembly of those whose names are written in heaven. And there shall be one flock - (Not one fold, a plain false print) no corrupt or divided flocks remaining. And one shepherd - Who laid down his life for the sheep, and will leave no hireling among them. The unity both of the flock and the shepherd shall be completed in its season. The shepherd shall bring all into one flock: and the whole flock shall hear the one shepherd.

17. I lay down my life that I may take it again - I cheerfully die to expiate the sins of men, to the end I may rise again for their justification.

18. I lay it down of myself - By my own free act and deed. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again - I have an original power and right of myself, both to lay it down as a ransom, and to take it again, after full satisfaction is made, for the sins of the whole world. This

commission have I received of my Father - Which I readily execute. He chiefly spoke of the Father, before his suffering: of his own glory, after it. Our Lord's receiving this commission as mediator is not to be considered as the ground of his power to lay down and resume his life. For this he had in him self, as having an original right to dispose thereof, antecedent to the Father's commission. But this commission was the reason why he thus used his power in laying down his life. He did it in obedience to his Father.

21. These are not the words - The word in the original takes in actions too.

22. It was the feast of the dedication - Instituted by Judas Maccabeus, 1 Macc. iv, 59, when he purged and dedicated the altar and temple after they had been polluted. So our Lord observed festivals even of human appointment. Is it not, at least, innocent for us to do the same?

23. In Solomon's portico - Josephus informs us, that when Solomon built the temple, he filled up a part of the adjacent valley, and built a portico over it toward the east. This was a noble structure, supported by a wall four hundred cubits high: and continued even to the time of Albinus and Agrippa, which was several years after the death of Christ.

26. Ye do not believe, because ye are not of my sheep - Because ye do not, will not follow me: because ye are proud, unholy, lovers of praise, lovers of the world, lovers of pleasure, not of God.

27, 28, 29. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, &c.- Our Lord still alludes to the discourse he had before this festival. As if he had said, My sheep are they who,

1. Hear my voice by faith;
2. Are known (that is, approved) by me, as loving me; and
3. Follow me, keep my commandments, with a believing, loving heart. And to those who,
    1. Truly believe (observe three promises annexed to three conditions) I give eternal life. He does not say, I will, but I give. For he that believeth hath everlasting life. Those whom,
    2. I know truly to love me, shall never perish, provided they abide in my love.
    3. Those who follow me, neither men nor devils can pluck out of my hand. My Father who hath, by an unchangeable decree, given me all that believe, love, and obey, is greater than all in heaven or earth, and none is able to pluck them out of his hand.

30. I and the Father are one - Not by consent of will only, but by unity of power, and consequently of nature. Are - This word confutes Sabellius, proving the plurality of persons: one - This word confutes Arius, proving the unity of nature in God. Never did any prophet before, from the beginning of the world, use any one expression of himself, which could possibly be so interpreted as this and other expressions were, by all that heard our Lord speak. Therefore if he was not God he must have been the vilest of men.

34. Psalm lxxxii, 6.

35. If he (God) called them gods unto whom the word of God came, (that is, to whom God was then speaking,) and the Scripture cannot be broken - That is, nothing which is written therein can be censured or rejected.

36. Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world - This sanctification (whereby he is essentially the Holy One of God) is mentioned as prior to his mission, and together with it implies, Christ was God in the highest sense, infinitely superior to that wherein those Judges were so called.

38. That ye may know and believe - In some a more exact knowledge precedes, in others it follows faith. I am in the Father and the Father in me. I and the Father are one - These two sentences illustrate each other.

40. To the desert place where John baptized, and gave so honourable a testimony of him.

41. John did no miracle - An honour reserved for him, whose forerunner he was.

## XI

1. One Lazarus - It is probable, Lazarus was younger than his sisters. Bethany is named, the town of Mary and Martha, and Lazarus is mentioned after them, ver. 5. Ecclesiastical history informs us, that Lazarus was now thirty years old, and that he lived thirty years after Christ's ascension.

2. It was that Mary who afterward anointed, &c. She was more known than her elder sister Martha, and as such is named before her.

4. This sickness is not to death, but for the glory of God - The event of this sickness will not be death, in the usual sense of the word, a final separation of his soul and body; but a manifestation of the glorious power of God.

7. Let us go into Judea - From the country east of Jordan, whither he had retired some time before, when the Jews sought to stone him, chap. x, 39, 40.

9. Are there not twelve hours in the day? - The Jews always divided the space from sunrise to sunset, were the days longer or shorter, into twelve parts: so that the hours of their day were all the year the same in number, though much shorter in winter than in summer. If any man walk in the day he stumbleth not - As if he had said, So there is such a space, a determined time, which God has allotted me. During that time I stumble not, amidst all the snares that are laid for me. Because he seeth the light of this world - And so I see the light of God surrounding me.

10. But if a man walk in the night - If he have not light from God; if his providence does no longer protect him.

11. Our friend Lazarus sleepeth - This he spoke, just when he died. Sleepeth - Such is the death of good men in the language of heaven. But the disciples did not yet understand this language. And the slowness of our understanding makes the Scripture often descend to our barbarous manner of speaking.

16. Thomas in Hebrew, as Didymus in Greek, signifies a twin. With him - With Jesus, whom he supposed the Jews would kill. It seems to be the language of despair.

20. Mary sat in the house - Probably not hearing what was said.

22. Whatsoever thou wilt ask, God will give it thee - So that she already believed he could raise him from the dead.

25. l am the resurrection - Of the dead. And the life - Of the living. He that believeth in me, though he die, yet shall he live - In life everlasting.

32. She fell at his feet - This Martha had not done. So she makes amends for her slowness in coming.

33. He groaned - So he restrained his tears. So he stopped them soon after, ver. 38. He troubled himself - An expression amazingly elegant, and full of the highest propriety. For the affections of

Jesus were not properly passions, but voluntary emotions, which were wholly in his own power. And this tender trouble which he now voluntarily sustained, was full of the highest order and reason.

35. Jesus wept - Out of sympathy with those who were in tears all around him, as well as from a deep sense of the misery sin had brought upon human nature.

37. Could not this person have even caused, that this man should not have died? - Yet they never dreamed that he could raise him again! What a strange mixture of faith and unbelief.

38. It was a cave - So Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their wives, except Rachel, were buried in the cave of Machpelah, Gen. xlix, 29-31. These caves were commonly in rocks, which abounded in that country, either hollowed by nature or hewn by art. And the entrance was shut up with a great stone, which sometimes had a monumental inscription.

39. Lord, by this time he stinketh - Thus did reason and faith struggle together.

40. Said I not - It appears by this, that Christ had said more to Martha than is before recorded.

41. Jesus lifted up his eyes - Not as if he applied to his Father for assistance. There is not the least show of this. He wrought the miracle with an air of absolute sovereignty, as the Lord of life and death. But it was as if he had said, I thank thee, that by the disposal of thy providence, thou hast granted my desire, in this remarkable opportunity of exerting my power, and showing forth thy praise.

43. He cried with a loud voice - That all who were present might hear. Lazarus, come forth - Jesus called him out of the tomb as easily as if he had been not only alive, but awake also.

44. And he came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes - Which were wrapt round each hand and each foot, and his face was wrapt about with a napkin - If the Jews buried as the Egyptians did, the face was not covered with it, but it only went round the forehead, and under the chin; so that he might easily see his way.

45. Many believed on Him - And so the Son of God was glorified, according to what our Lord had said, ver. 4.

46. But some of them went to the Pharisees - What a dreadful confirmation of that weighty truth, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead!

47. What do we? - What? Believe. Yea, but death yields to the power of Christ sooner than infidelity.

48. All men will believe - And receive him as the Messiah. And this will give such umbrage to the Roman that they will come and subvert both our place - Temple; and nation - Both our Church and state. Were they really afraid of this? Or was it a fair colour only? Certainly it was no more. For they could not but know, that he that raised the dead was able to conquer the Romans.

49. That year - That memorable year, in which Christ was to die. It was the last and chief of Daniel's seventy weeks, the fortieth year before the destruction of Jerusalem, and was celebrated for various causes, in the Jewish history. Therefore that year is so peculiarly mentioned: Caiaphas was the high priest both before and after it. Ye know nothing - He reproves their slow deliberations in so clear a case.

50. It is expedient that one man should die for the people - So God overruled his tongue, for he spake not of himself, by his own spirit only, but by the spirit of prophecy. And thus he gave unawares as clear a testimony to the priestly, as Pilate did to the kingly office of Christ.

52. But that, he might gather into one - Church, all the children of God that were scattered abroad - Through all ages and nations.

55. Many went up to purify themselves - That they might remove all hindrances to their eating the passover.

## XII

1. Six days before the passover - Namely, on the Sabbath: that which was called by the Jews, "The Great Sabbath." This whole week was anciently termed "The great and holy week." Jesus came - From Ephraim, chap. xi, 54.

2. It seems Martha was a person of some figure, from the great respect which was paid to her and her sister, in visits and condolences on Lazarus's death, as well as from the costly ointment mentioned in the next verse. And probably it was at their house our Lord and his disciples lodged, when he returned from Jerusalem to Bethany, every evening of the last week of his life, upon which he was now entered.

3. Then Mary, taking a pound of ointment - There were two persons who poured ointment on Christ. One toward the beginning of his ministry, at or near Nain, Luke vii, 37, &c. The other six days before his last passover, at Bethany; the account of whom is given here, as well as by St. Matthew and Mark.

7. Against the day of my burial - Which now draws nigh.

10. The chief priests consulted, how to kill Lazarus also - Here is the plain reason why the other evangelists, who wrote while Lazarus was living, did not relate his story.

12. The next day - On Sunday. Who were come to the feast - So that this multitude consisted chiefly of Galileans, not men of Jerusalem. Matt. xxi, 8.

13. Psalm cxviii, 26; Mark xi, 8; Luke xix, 36.

15. Fear not - For his meekness forbids fear, as well as the end of his coming. Zech. ix, 9.

16. These things his disciples understood not at first - The design of God's providential dispensations is seldom understood at first. We ought therefore to believe, though we understand not, and to give ourselves up to the Divine disposal. The great work of faith is, to embrace those things which we knew not now, but shall know hereafter. When he had been glorified - At his ascension.

17. When he called Lazarus out of the tomb - How admirably does the apostle express, as well the greatness of the miracle, as the facility with which it was wrought! The easiness of the Scripture style on the most grand occurrences, is more sublime than all the pomp of orators.

18. The multitude went to meet him, because they heard - From those who had seen the miracle. So in a little time both joined together, to go before and to follow him.

20. Certain Greeks - A prelude of the Gentile Church. That these were circumcised does not appear. But they came up on purpose to worship the God of Israel.

21. These came to Philip of Bethsaida in Galilee - Perhaps they used to lodge there, in their journey to Jerusalem. Or they might believe, a Galilean would be more ready to serve them herein, than a Jew. Sir - They spake to him, as to one they were little acquainted with. We would see Jesus - A modest request. They could scarce expect that he would now have time to talk with them.

23. The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified - With the Father and in the sight of every creature. But he must suffer first.

24. Unless a grain of wheat die - The late resurrection of Lazarus gave our Lord a natural occasion of speaking on this subject. And agreeable to his infinite knowledge, he singles out, from among so many thousands of seeds, almost the only one that dies in the earth: and which therefore was an exceeding proper similitude, peculiarly adapted to the purpose for which he uses it. The like is not to be found in any other grain, except millet, and the large bean.

25. He that loveth his life - More than the will of God; shall lose it eternally: and he that hateth his life - In comparison of the will of God, shall preserve it. Matt. x, 39.

26. Let him follow me - By hating his life: and where I am - In heaven. If any man serve me - Thus, him will the Father honour.

27. Now is my soul troubled - He had various foretastes of his passion. And what shall I say? - Not what shall I choose? For his heart was fixed in choosing the will of his Father: but he laboured for utterance. The two following clauses, Save me from this hour - For this cause I came - Into the world; for the sake of this hour (of suffering) seem to have glanced through his mind in one moment. But human language could not so express it.

28. Father, glorify thy name - Whatever I suffer. Now the trouble was over. I have glorified it - By thy entrance into this hour. And I will glorify it - By thy passing through it.

29. The multitude who stood and heard - A sound, but not the distinct words - In the most glorious Revelations there may remain something obscure, to exercise our faith. Said, It thundered -Thunder did frequently attend a voice from heaven. Perhaps it did so now.

31. Now - This moment. And from this moment Christ thirsted more than ever, till his baptism was accomplished. Is the judgment of this world - That is, now is the judgment given concerning it, whose it shall be. Now shall the prince of this world - Satan, who had gained possession of it by sin and death, be cast out -That is, judged, condemned, cast out of his possession, and out of the bounds of Christ's kingdom.

32. Lifted up from the earth - This is a Hebraism which signifies dying. Death in general is all that is usually imported. But our Lord made use of this phrase, rather than others that were equivalent, because it so well suited the particular manner of his death. I will draw all men - Gentiles as well as Jews. And those who follow my drawings, Satan shall not be able to keep.

34. How sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? - How can these things be reconciled? Very easily. He first dies, and then abideth for ever. Who is this Son of man? - Is he the Christ? Psalm cx, 4.

35. Then Jesus said to them - Not answering them directly, but exhorting them to improve what they had heard already. The light - I and my doctrine.

36. The children of light - The children of God, wise, holy, happy.

37. Though he had done so many miracles before them - So that they could not but see them.

38. The arm of the Lord - The power of God manifested by Christ, in his preaching, miracles, and work of redemption. Isaiah liii, 1.

39. Therefore now they could not believe - That is, by the just judgment of God, for their obstinacy and wilful resistance of the truth, they were at length so left to the hardness of their hearts, that neither the miracles nor doctrines of our Lord could make any impression upon them.

40. Isaiah vi, 10; Matt. xiii, 14; Acts xxviii, 26.

41. When he saw his glory - Christ's, Isaiah vi, 1, &c. And it is there expressly said to be the glory of the Lord, Jehovah, the Supreme God.

44. Jesus said with a loud voice - This which follows to the end of the chapter, is with St. John the epilogue of our Lord's public discourses, and a kind of recapitulation of them. Believeth not on me - Not on me alone, but also on him that sent me: because the Father hath sent the Son, and because he and the Father are one.

45. And he that seeth me - By the eye of faith.

47. I judge him not - Not now: for I am not come to judge the world. See, Christ came to save even them that finally perish! Even these are a part of that world, which he lived and died to save.

50. His commandment - Kept, is life everlasting - That is the way to it, and the beginning of it.

## XIII

1. Before the feast - Namely, on Wednesday, in the paschal week. Having loved his own - His apostles, he loved them to the end - Of his life.

2. Having now - Probably now first.

3. Jesus knowing - Though conscious of his own greatness, thus humbled himself.

4. Layeth aside his garments - That part of them which would have hindered him.

5. Into the basin - A large vessel was usually placed for this very purpose, wherever the Jews supped.

7. What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter - We do not now know perfectly any of his works, either of creation, providence, or grace. It is enough that we can love and obey now, and that we shall know hereafter.

8. If I wash thee not - If thou dost not submit to my will, thou hast no part with me - Thou art not my disciple. In a more general sense it may mean, If I do not wash thee in my blood, and purify thee by my Spirit, thou canst have no communion with me, nor any share in the blessings of my kingdom.

9. Lord, not my feet only - How fain would man be wiser than God! Yet this was well meant, though ignorant earnestness.

10. And so ye, having been already cleansed, need only to wash your feet - That is, to walk holy and undefiled.

14. Ye ought also to wash one another's feet - And why did they not? Why do we not read of any one apostle ever washing the feet of any other? Because they understood the Lord better. They knew he never designed that this should be literally taken. He designed to teach them the great lesson of humble love, as well as to confer inward purity upon them. And hereby he teaches us,

1. In every possible way to assist each other in attaining that purity;
2. To wash each other's feet, by performing all sorts of good offices to each other, even those of the lowest kind, when opportunity serves, and the necessity of any calls for them.

16. The servant is not greater than his Lord - Nor therefore ought to think much of either doing or suffering the same things.

18. I speak not of you all - When I call you happy, I know one of you twelve whom I have chosen, will betray me; whereby that scripture will be fulfilled. Psalm xli, 9.

20. And I put my own honour upon you, my ambassadors. Matt. x, 40.

21. One of you - The speaking thus indefinitely at first was profitable to them all.

23. There was lying in the bosom of Jesus - That is, sitting next to him at table. This phrase only expresses the then customary posture at meals, where the guests all leaned sidewise on couches. And each was said to lie in the bosom of him who was placed next above him. One of the disciples whom Jesus loved - St. John avoids with great care the expressly naming himself. Perhaps our Lord now gave him the first proof of his peculiar love, by disclosing this secret to him.

24. Simon Peter - Behind Jesus, who lay between them.

25. Leaning down, and so asking him privately.

26. Jesus answered - In his ear. So careful was he not to offend (if it had been possible) even Judas himself. The sop - Which he took up while he was speaking. He giveth it to Judas - And probably the other disciples thought Judas peculiarly happy! But when even this instance of our Lord's tenderness could not move him, then Satan took full possession.

27. What thou doest, do quickly - This is not a permission, much less a command. It is only as if he had said, If thou art determined to do it, why dost thou delay? Hereby showing Judas, that he could not be hid, and expressing his own readiness to suffer.

28. None knew why he said this - Save John and Judas.

30. He went out - To the chief priests. But he returned afterward, and was with them when they ate the passover, Matt. xxvi, 20, though not at the Lord's Supper.

31. Jesus saith - Namely, the next day; on Thursday, in the morning. Here the scene, as it were, is opened, for the discourse which is continued in the following chapters. Now - While I speak this, the Son of man is glorified - Being fully entered into his glorious work of redemption. This evidently relates to the glory which belongs to his suffering in so holy and victorious a manner.

33. Ye cannot come - Not yet; being not yet ripe for it. John vii, 34.

34. A new commandment - Not new in itself; but new in the school of Christ: for he had never before taught it them expressly. Likewise new, as to the degree of it, as I have loved you.

36. Peter saith, Lord, whither goest thou? - St. Peter seems to have thought, that Christ, being rejected by the Jews, would go to some other part of the earth to erect his throne, where he might reign without disturbance, according to the gross notions he had of Christ's kingdom. Thou canst not follow me now - But Peter would not believe him. And he did follow him, chap. xviii, 15. But it was afar off. And not without great loss.

38. The cock shall not have crowed - That is, cock crowing shall not be over, till thou hast denied me thrice - His three-fold denial was thrice foretold; first, at the time mentioned here; secondly, at that mentioned by St. Luke; lastly, at that recorded by St. Matthew and Mark.

## XIV

1. Let not your heart be troubled - At my departure. Believe - This is the sum of all his discourse, which is urged till they did believe, chap. xvi, 30. And then our Lord prays and departs.

2. In my Father's house are many mansions - Enough to receive both the holy angels, and your predecessors in the faith, and all that now believe, and a great multitude, which no man can number.

4. The way - Of faith, holiness, sufferings.

5. Thomas saith - Taking him in a gross sense.

6. To the question concerning the way, he answers, I am the way. To the question concerning knowledge, he answers, I am the truth. To the question whither, I am the life. The first is treated of in this verse; the second, ver. 7-17; the third, xiv, 18, &c.

7. Ye have known - Ye have begun to know him.

10. I am in the Father - The words that I speak, &c. - That is, I am one with the Father, in essence, in speaking, and in acting.

11. Believe me - On my own word, because I am God. The works - This respects not merely the miracles themselves, but his sovereign, Godlike way of performing them.

12. Greater works than these shall he do - So one apostle wrought miracles merely by his shadow, Acts v, 15; another by handkerchiefs carried from his body, Acts xix, 12; and all spake with various tongues. But the converting one sinner is a greater work than all these. Because I go to my Father - To send you the Holy Ghost.

15. If ye love me, keep my commandments - Immediately after faith he exhorts to love and good works.

16. And I will ask the Father - The 21st verse, ver. 21, shows the connection between this and the preceding verses. And he will give you another Comforter - The Greek word signifies also an advocate, instructer, or encourager. Another - For Christ himself was one. To remain with you for ever - With you, and your followers in faith, to the end of the world.

17. The Spirit of truth - Who has, reveals, testifies, and defends the truth as it is in Jesus. Whom the world - All who do not love or fear God, cannot receive, because it seeth him not - Having no spiritual senses, no internal eye to discern him; nor consequently knoweth him. He shall be in you - As a constant guest. Your bodies and souls shall be temples of the Holy Ghost dwelling in you.

18. I will not leave you orphans - A word that is elegantly applied to those who have lost any dear friend. I come to you - What was certainly and speedily to be, our Lord speaks of as if it were already.

19. But ye see me - That is, ye shall certainly see me. Because I live, ye shall live also - Because I am the living One in my Divine nature, and shall rise again in my human nature, and live for ever in heaven: therefore ye shall live the life of faith and love on earth, and hereafter the life of glory.

20. At that day - When ye see me after my resurrection; but more eminently at the day of pentecost.

21. He that hath my commandments - Written in his heart. I will manifest myself to him - More abundantly.

23. Jesus answered - Because ye love and obey me, and they do not, therefore I will reveal myself to you, and not to them. My Father will love him - The more any man loves and obeys, the more God will love him. And we will come to him, and make our abode with him - Which implies such a large manifestation of the Divine presence and love, that the former in justification is as nothing in comparison of it.

26. In my name - For my sake, in my room, and as my agent. He will teach you all things - Necessary for you to know. Here is a clear promise to the apostles, and their successors in the faith, that the Holy Ghost will teach them all that truth which is needful for their salvation.

27. Peace I leave with you - Peace in general; peace with God and with your own consciences. My peace - In particular; that peace which I enjoy, and which I create, I give - At this instant. Not as the world giveth - Unsatisfying unsettled, transient; but filling the soul with constant, even tranquillity. Lord, evermore give us this peace! How serenely may we pass through the most

turbulent scenes of life, when all is quiet and harmonious within! Thou hast made peace through the blood of thy cross. May we give all diligence to preserve the inestimable gift inviolate, till it issue in everlasting peace!

28. God the Father is greater than I - As he was man. As God, neither is greater nor less than the other.

29. I have told you - Of my going and return.

30. The prince of this world is coming - To make his grand assault. But he hath nothing in me - No right, no claim, or power. There is no guilt in me, to give him power over me; no corruption to take part with his temptation.

31. But I suffer him thus to assault me,

1. Because it is the Father's commission to me, chap. x, 18.
2. To convince the world of my love to the Father, in being obedient unto death, Phil. ii, 8. Arise, let us go hence - Into the city, to the passover. All that has been related from chap. xii, 31, was done and said on Thursday, without the city. But what follows in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters, was said in the city, on the very evening of the passover just before he went over the brook Kedron.

## XV

1. I am the true vine - So the true bread, chap. vi, 32; that is, the most excellent.

2. Every one that beareth fruit, he purifieth - by obeying the truth, 1 Pet. i, 22; and by inward or outward sufferings, Heb. xii, 10, 11. So purity and fruitfulness help each other. That it may bear more fruit - For this is one of the noblest rewards God can bestow on former acts of obedience, to make us yet more holy, and fit for farther and more eminent service.

3. Ye are clean - All of you, to whom I now speak, are purged from the guilt and power of sin; by the word - Which, applied by the Spirit, is the grand instrument of purifying the soul.

4. Abide in me - Ye who are now pure by living faith, producing all holiness; by which alone ye can be in me.

5. I am the vine, ye are the branches - Our Lord in this whole passage speaks of no branches but such as are, or at least were once, united to him by living faith.

6. If any one abide not in me - By living faith; not by Church communion only. He may thus abide in Christ, and be withered all the time, and cast into the fire at last. He is cast out - Of the vineyard, the invisible Church. Therefore he was in it once.

7. If ye abide in me, ye shall ask - Prayers themselves are a fruit of faith, and they produce more fruit.

8. So shall ye be my disciples - Worthy of the name. To be a disciple of Christ is both the foundation and height of Christianity.

9. Abide ye in my love - Keep your place in my affection. See that ye do not forfeit that invaluable blessing. How needless a caution, if it were impossible for them not to abide therein?

10. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love - On these terms, and no other, ye shall remain the objects of my special affection.

11. That my joy might remain in you - The same joy which I feel in loving the Father, and keeping his commandments.

12. Your joy will be full, if ye so love one another.

13. Greater love - To his friends. He here speaks of them only.

14. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you - On this condition, not otherwise. A thunderbolt for Antinomianism! Who then dares assert that God's love does not at all depend on man's works?

15. All things - Which might be of service to you.

16. Ye - My apostles, have not chosen me, but I have chosen you - As clearly appears from the sacred history: and appointed you, that ye may go and bear fruit - I have chosen and appointed you for this end, that ye may go and convert sinners: and that your fruit may remain - That the fruit of your labours may remain to the end of the world; yea, to eternity; that whatsoever ye shall ask - The consequence of your going and bearing fruit will be, that all your prayers will be heard.

19. Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you - Because your maxims, tempers, actions, are quite opposite to theirs. For the very same reason must the world in all ages hate those who are not of the world.

20. John xiii, 16; Matt. x, 24; Luke vi, 40.

21. All these things will they do to you, because they know not him that sent me - And in all ages and nations they who know not God will, for this cause, hate and persecute those that do.

22. They had not had sin - Not in this respect.

23. He that hateth me - As every unbeliever doth, For as the love of God is inseparable from faith, so is the hatred of God from unbelief.

25. Psalm lxix, 4.

26. When the Comforter is come, whom I will send from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me - The Spirit's coming, and being sent by our Lord from the Father, to testify of him, are personal characters, and plainly distinguish him from the Father and the Son; and his title as the Spirit of truth, together with his proceeding from the Father, can agree to none but a Divine person. And that he proceeds from the Son, as well as from the Father, may be fairly argued from his being called the Spirit of Christ, 1 Pet. i, 11; and from his being here said to be sent by Christ from the Father, as well as sent by the Father in his name.

## XVI

2. The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think he doth God service - But, blessed be God, the time is so far past, that those who bear the name of Christ do not now generally suppose they do him service by killing each other for a difference in opinion or mode of worship.

3. They have not known the Father nor me - This is the true root of persecution in all its forms.

4. I did not tell you these things at the beginning, because I was with you - To bear the chief shock in my own person, and to screen you from it.

5. None of you asketh me - Now when it is most seasonable. Peter did ask this before, chap. xiii, 36.

7. It is expedient for you - In respect of the Comforter, ver. 7, &c., and of me, ver. 16, &c., and of the Father, ver. 23, &c.

8. He - Observe his twofold office; toward the world, ver. 8, &c.; toward believers, ver. 12, &c.: will convince - All of the world - Who do not obstinately resist, by your preaching and miracles, of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment - He who is convinced of sin either accepts the righteousness of Christ, or is judged with Satan. An abundant accomplishment of this we find in the Acts of the Apostles.

9. Of sin - Particularly of unbelief, which is the confluence of all sins, and binds them all down upon us.

10. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father - Which the Spirit will testify, though ye do not then see me. But I could not go to him if I were not righteous.

11. The prince of this world is judged - And in consequence thereof dethroned, deprived of the power he had so long usurped over men. Yet those who reject the deliverance offered them will remain slaves of Satan still.

12. I have yet many things to say - Concerning my passion, death, resurrection, and the consequences of it. These things we have, not in uncertain traditions, but in the Acts, the Epistles, and the Revelation. But ye cannot bear them now - Both because of your littleness of faith, and your immoderate sorrow.

13. When he is come - It is universally allowed that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost dwell in all believers. And the internal agency of the Holy Ghost is generally admitted. That of the Father and the Son, as represented in this Gospel, deserves our deepest consideration.

15. All things that the Father hath are mine - Could any creature say this?

16. A little while and ye shall not see me - When I am buried: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me - When I am risen: because I go to my Father - I die and rise again, in order to ascend to my Father.

19. Jesus said to them - Preventing their question.

20. Ye will weep and lament - When ye see me dead; but your sorrow will be turned into joy - When ye see me risen.

22. Ye now therefore have sorrow - This gives us no manner of authority to assert all believers must come into a state of darkness. They never need lose either their peace, or love, or the witness that they are the children of God. They never can lose these, but either through sin, or ignorance, or vehement temptation, or bodily disorder.

23. Ye shall not question me about any thing - Which you do not now understand. You will not need to inquire of me; for you will know all things clearly. Whatsoever ye shall ask - Knowledge, love, or any thing else, he will give it - Our Lord here gives us a charte blanche. Believer, write down what thou wilt. He had said, chap. xiv, 13, I will do it, where the discourse was of glorifying the Father through the Son. Here, speaking of the love of the Father to believers, he saith, He will give it.

24. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name - For they had asked him directly for all they wanted.

26. At that day ye shall ask - For true knowledge begets prayer. And I say not that I will pray - This in nowise implies that he will not: it means only, The Father himself now loves you, not only because of my intercession, but also because of the faith and love which he hath wrought in you.

30. Thou knowest all things - Even our hearts. Although no question is asked thee, yet thou answerest the thoughts of every one. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God - They, as it were, echo back the words which he had spoken in ver. 27, implying, We believe in God; we believe also in thee.

## XVII

In this chapter our Lord prays,

1. For himself, ver. 1-5. John xvii, 1-5
2. For the apostles, ver. 6-19; John xvii, 6-19 and again, ver. 24- 26. John xvii, 24-26
3. For all believers, ver. 20-23. John xvii, 20-23 And
4. For the world, ver. 21-23. John xvii, 21-23 In his prayer he comprises all he had said from chap. xiii, 31, and seals, as it were, all he had hitherto done, beholding things past, present, and to come. This chapter contains the easiest words, and the deepest sense of any in all the Scripture: yet is here no incoherent rhapsody, but the whole is closely and exactly connected.

1. Father - This simplicity of appellation highly became the only- begotten Son of God; to which a believer then makes the nearest approach, when he is fullest of love and humble confidence. The hour is come - The appointed time for it; glorify thy Son - The Son glorified the Father, both before and after his own glorification. When he speaks to the Father he does not style himself the Son of man.

2. As thou hast given him power over all flesh - This answers to glorify thy Son. That he may give eternal life, &c.-This answers to that thy Son may glorify thee. To all whom thou hast given him - To all believers. This is a clear proof that Christ designed his sacrifice should avail for all: yea, that all flesh, every man, should partake of everlasting life. For as the Father had given him power over all flesh, so he gave himself a ransom for all.

3. To know - By loving, holy faith, thee the only true God - The only cause and end of all things; not excluding the Son and the Holy Ghost, no more than the Father is excluded from being Lord, 1 Cor. viii, 6; but the false gods of the heathens; and Jesus Christ - As their prophet, priest, and king: this is life eternal - It is both the way to, and the essence of, everlasting happiness.

4. I have finished the work - Thus have I glorified thee, laying the foundation of thy kingdom on earth.

5. The glory which I had - He does not say received - He always had it, till he emptied himself of it in the days of his flesh.

6. I have manifested thy name - All thy attributes; and in particular thy paternal relation to believers; to the men whom thou hast given me - The apostles, and so ver. 12. They were thine - By creation, and by descent from Abraham. And thou hast given them me - By giving them faith in what I have spoken. So ver. 9.

7. Now they know that all things - Which I have done and spoken, are of thee - And consequently right and true.

8. They have received them - By faith.

9. I pray not for the world - Not in these petitions, which are adapted to the state of believers only. (He prays for the world at ver. 21, 23, that they may believe - That they may know God hath sent him.) This no more proves that our Lord did not pray for the world, both before and afterward, than his praying for the apostles alone, ver. 6-19, proves that he did not pray for them also which shall believe through their word, ver. 20.

10. All things that are mine are thine, and that are thine are mine - These are very high and strong expressions, too grand for any mere creature to use; as implying that all things whatsoever, inclusive of the Divine nature, perfections, and operations, are the common property of the Father and the Son. And this is the original ground of that peculiar property, which both the Father and the Son have in the persons who were given to Christ as Mediator; according to what is said in the close of the verse, of his being glorified by them; namely, believing in him, and so acknowledging his glory.

11. Keep them through thy name - Thy power, mercy, wisdom, that they may be one - with us and with each other; one body, separate from the world: as we are - By resemblance to us, though not equality.

12. Those whom thou hast given me I have guarded, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition - So one even of them whom God had given him is lost. So far was even that decree from being unchangeable! That the Scripture might be fulfilled - That is, whereby the Scripture was fulfilled. The son of perdition signifies one that deservedly perishes; as a son of death, 2 Sam. xii, 5; children of hell, Matt. xxiii, 15, and children of wrath, Eph. ii, 3, signify persons justly obnoxious to death, hell, wrath. Psalm cix, 8.

13. In the world - That is, before I leave the world. My joy - The joy I feel at going to the Father.

15. That thou wouldest take them out of the world - Not yet: but that thou wouldest keep them from the evil one - Who reigns therein.

17. Sanctify - Consecrate them by the anointing of thy Spirit to their office, and perfect them in holiness, by means of thy word.

19. I sanctify myself - I devote myself as a victim, to be sacrificed.

20. For them who will believe - In all ages.

21. As thou art in me - This also is to be understood in a way of similitude, and not of sameness or equality. That the world may believe - Here Christ prays for the world. Observe the sum of his whole prayer,

1. Receive me into thy own and my glory;
2. Let my apostles share therein;
3. And all other believers:
4. And let all the world believe.

22. The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them - The glory of the only begotten shines in all the sons of God. How great is the majesty of Christians.

24. Here he returns to the apostles. I will - He asks, as having a right to be heard, and prays, not as a servant, but a Son: that they may behold my glory - Herein Is the happiness of heaven, 1 John iii, 2.

25. Righteous Father - The admission of believers to God through Christ, flows even from the justice of God.

26. I have declared to them thy name - Thy new, best name of love; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me - That thou and thy love, and I and my love, may be in them - That they may love me with that love.

## XVIII

1. A garden - Probably belonging to one of his friends. He might retire to this private place, not only for the advantage of secret devotion, but also that the people might not be alarmed at his apprehension, nor attempt, in the first sallies of their zeal, to rescue him in a tumultuous manner. Kedron was (as the name signifies) a dark shady valley, on the east side of Jerusalem, between the city and the mount of Olives, through which a little brook ran, which took its name from it. It was this brook, which David, a type of Christ, went over with the people, weeping in his flight from Absalom. Matt. xxvi, 30; Mark xiv, 26; Luke xxii, 39.

2. Mark xiv, 43; Luke xxii, 47.

3. A troop of soldiers - A cohort of Roman foot.

6. As soon as he said, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground - How amazing is it, that they should renew the assault, after so sensible an experience both of his power and mercy! But probably the priests among them might persuade themselves and their attendants, that this also was done by Beelzebub; and that it was through the providence of God, not the indulgence of Jesus, that they received no farther damage.

8. If ye seek me, let these (my disciples) go - It was an eminent instance of his power over the spirits of men, that they so far obeyed this word, as not to seize even Peter, when he had cut off the ear of Malchus.

9. John xvii, 12.

10. Then Simon Peter - No other evangelist names him. Nor could they safely. But St. John, writing after his death, might do it without any such inconvenience.

13. Annas had been high priest before his son-in-law Caiaphas. And though he had for some time resigned that office, yet they paid so much regard to his age and experience, that they brought Christ to Annas first. But we do not read of any thing remarkable which passed at the house of Annas; for, which reason, his being carried thither is omitted by the other evangelists. Matt. xxvi, 57; Mark xiv, 53; Luke xxii, 54.

17. Art thou also - As well as the others, one of this man's disciples - She does not appear to have asked with any design to hurt him.

20. I spake openly - As to the manner: continually - As to the time: in the synagogue and temple - As to the place. In secret have I said nothing - No point of doctrine which I have not taught in public.

21. Why askest thou me - Whom thou wilt not believe?

22. Answerest thou the high priest so? - With so little reverence?

24. Now Annas had sent him to Caiaphas - As is implied ver. 13. Bound - Being still bound, ver. 12.

28. They went not into the palace themselves, lest they should be defiled - By going into a house which was not purged from leaven, Deut. xvi, 4. Matt. xxvii, 2; Mark xv, 1; Luke xxiii, 1.

31. It is not lawful for us to put any man to death - The power of inflicting capital punishment had been taken from them that very year. So the scepter was departed from Judah, and transferred to the Romans.

32. Signifying what death he should die - For crucifixion was not a Jewish, but a Roman punishment. So that had he not been condemned by the Roman governor, he could not have been crucified. chap. iii, 14.

36. My kingdom is not of this world - Is not an external, but a spiritual kingdom; that I might not be delivered to the Jews - Which Pilate had already attempted to do, ver. 31, and afterward actually did, chap. xix, 16.

37. Thou sayest - The truth. To this end was I born - Speaking of his human origin: his Divine was above Pilate's comprehension. Yet it is intimated in the following words, I came into the world, that I might witness to the truth - Which was both declared to the Jews, and in the process of his passion to the princes of the Gentiles also. Every one that is of the truth - That is, a lover of it, heareth my voice - A universal maxim. Every sincere lover of truth will hear him, so as to understand and practice what he saith.

38. What is truth? - Said Pilate, a courtier; perhaps meaning what signifies truth? Is that a thing worth hazarding your life for? So he left him presently, to plead with the Jews for him, looking upon him as an innocent but weak man.

## XIX

1. Matt. xxvii, 26; Mark xv, 15.

7. By our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God - Which they understood in the highest sense, and therefore accounted blasphemy.

8. He was the more afraid - He seems to have been afraid before of shedding innocent blood.

9. Whence art thou? - That is, whose son art thou?

11. Thou couldst have no power over me - For I have done nothing to expose me to the power of any magistrate. Therefore he that delivered me to thee, namely, Caiaphas, knowing this, is more blamable than thou.

13. Pilate sat down on the judgment seat - Which was then without the palace, in a place called, in Greek, the pavement, on account of a beautiful piece of Mosaic work, with which the floor was adorned: but in Hebrew, Gabbatha - Or the high place, because it stood on an eminence, so that the judge sitting on his throne might be seen and heard by a considerable number of people.

14. It was the preparation of the passover - For this reason both the Jews and Pilate were desirous to bring the matter to a conclusion. Every Friday was called the preparation, (namely, for the Sabbath.) And as often as the passover fell on a Friday, that day was called the preparation of the passover.

17. Bearing his cross - Not the whole cross, (for that was too large and heavy,) but the transverse beam of it, to which his hands were afterward fastened. This they used to make the person to be executed carry. Matt. xxvii, 31; Mark xv, 20; Luke xxiii, 26.

19. Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews - Undoubtedly these were the very words, although the other evangelists do not express them at large.

20. It was written in Latin - For the majesty of the Roman empire; in Hebrew - Because it was the language of the nation; and in Greek - For the information of the Hellenists, who spoke that language, and came in great numbers to the feast.

22. What I have written, I have written - That shall stand.

23. The vesture - The upper garment.

24. They parted my garments among them - No circumstance of David's life bore any resemblance to this, or to several other passages in the 22nd Psalm. So that in this scripture, as in some others, the prophet seems to have been thrown into a preternatural ecstacy, wherein, personating the Messiah, he spoke barely what the Spirit dictated, without any regard to himself. Psalm xxii, 18.

25. His mother's sister - But we do not read she had any brother. She was her father's heir, and as such transmitted the right of the kingdom of David to Jesus: Mary, the wife of Cleopas - Called likewise Alpheus, the father, as Mary was the mother of James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas.

27. Behold thy mother - To whom thou art now to perform the part of a son in my place, a peculiar honour which Christ conferred on him. From that hour - From the time of our Lord's death.

29. A stalk of hyssop - Which in those countries grows exceeding large and strong. Psalm lxix, 21.

30. It is finished - My suffering: the purchase of man's redemption. He delivered up his spirit - To God, Matt. xxvii, 50.

31. Lest the bodies should remain on the cross on the Sabbath - Which they would have accounted a profanation of any Sabbath, but of that in particular. For that Sabbath was a great day - Being not only a Sabbath, but the second day of the feast of unleavened bread (from whence they reckoned the weeks to pentecost:) and also the day for presenting and offering the sheaf of new corn: so that it was a treble solemnity.

34. Forthwith there came out blood and water - It was strange, seeing he was dead, that blood should come out; more strange, that water also; and most strange of all, that both should come out immediately, at one time, and yet distinctly. It was pure and true water, as well as pure and true blood. The asseveration of the beholder and testifier of it, shows both the truth and greatness of the miracle and mystery.

35. His testimony is true - Valid, unexceptionable. And he knoweth - And his conscience beareth him witness, that he testifieth this for no other end, than that ye may believe.

36. A bone of it shall not be broken - This was originally spoken of the paschal lamb, an eminent type of Christ. Exod. xii, 46.

37. They shall look on him whom they have pierced - He was pierced by the soldier's spear. They who have occasioned his sufferings by their sins (and who has not?) shall either look upon him in this world with penitential sorrow: or with terror, when he cometh in the clouds of heaven, Rev. i, 7. Zech. xii, 10.

38. Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate - And Nicodemus also came - Acknowledging Christ, when even his chosen disciples forsook him. In that extremity Joseph was no longer afraid, Nicodemus no longer ashamed.

41. In the place where he was crucified - There was a garden in the same tract of land: but the cross did not stand in the garden.

42. Because of the preparation - That is, they chose the rather to lay him in that sepulchre which was nigh, because it was the day before the Sabbath, which also was drawing to an end, so that they had no time to carry him far.

## XX

1. Matt. xxviii, 1; Mark xvi, 1; Luke xxiv, 1.

3. Peter went out - Of the city.

6. Peter seeth the linen clothes lie - and the napkin folded up - The angels who ministered to him when he rose, undoubtedly folded up the napkin and linen clothes.

8. He saw - That the body was not there, and believed - That they had taken it away as Mary said.

9. For as yet - They had no thought of his rising again.

10. They went home - Not seeing what they could do farther.

11. But Mary stood - With more constancy. Mark xvi, 9.

16. Jesus saith to her, Mary - With his usual voice and accent.

17. Touch me not - Or rather, Do not cling to me (for she held him by the feet,) Matt. xxviii, 9. Detain me not now. You will have other opportunities of conversing with me. For I am not ascended to my Father - I have not yet left the world. But go immediately to my brethren - Thus does he intimate in the strongest manner the forgiveness of their fault, even without ever mentioning it. These exquisite touches, which every where abound in the evangelical writings, show how perfectly Christ knew our frame. I ascend - He anticipates it in his thoughts, and so speaks of it as a thing already present. To my Father and your Father, to my God and your God - This uncommon expression shows that the only- begotten Son has all kind of fellowship with God. And a fellowship with God the Father, some way resembling his own, he bestows upon his brethren. Yet he does not say, Our God: for no creature can be raised to an equality with him: but my God and your God: intimating that the Father is his in a singular and incommunicable manner; and ours through him, in such a kind as a creature is capable of.

19. Mark xvi, 14 Luke xxiv, 36.

21. Peace be unto you - This is the foundation of the mission of a true Gospel minister, peace in his own soul, 2 Cor. iv, 1. As the Father hath sent me, so send I you - Christ was the apostle of the Father, Heb. iii, 1. Peter and the rest, the apostles of Christ.

22. He breathed on them - New life and vigour, and saith, as ye receive this breath out of my mouth, so receive ye the Spirit out of my fulness: the Holy Ghost influencing you in a peculiar manner, to fit you for your great embassy. This was an earnest of pentecost.

23. Whose soever sins ye remit - (According to the tenor of the Gospel, that is, supposing them to repent and believe) they are remitted, and whose soever sins ye retain (supposing them to remain impenitent) they are retained. So far is plain. But here arises a difficulty. Are not the sins of one who truly repents, and unfeignedly believes in Christ, remitted, without sacerdotal absolution? And are not the sins of one who does not repent or believe, retained even with it? What then does this commission imply? Can it imply any more than,

1. A power of declaring with authority the Christian terms of pardon; whose sins are remitted and whose retained? As in our daily form of absolution; and
2. A power of inflicting and remitting ecclesiastical censures? That is, of excluding from, and re-admitting into, a Christian congregation.

26. After eight days - On the next Sunday.

28. And Thomas said, My Lord and my God - The disciples had said, We have seen the Lord. Thomas now not only acknowledges him to be the Lord, as he had done before, and to be risen, as his fellow disciples had affirmed, but also confesses his Godhead, and that more explicitly than any other had yet done. And all this he did without putting his hand upon his side.

30. Jesus wrought many miracles, which are not written in this book - Of St. John, nor indeed of the other evangelists.

31. But these things are written that ye may believe - That ye may be confirmed in believing. Faith cometh sometimes by reading; though ordinarily by hearing.

## XXI

2. There were together - At home, in one house.

4. They knew not that it was Jesus - Probably their eyes were holden.

6. They were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes - This was not only a demonstration of the power of our Lord, but a kind supply for them and their families, and such as might be of service to them, when they waited afterward in Jerusalem. It was likewise an emblem of the great success which should attend them as fishers of men.

7. Peter girt on his upper coat (for he was stript of it before) - Reverencing the presence of his Lord: and threw himself into the sea - To swim to him immediately. The love of Christ draws men through fire and water.

12. Come ye and dine - Our Lord needed not food. And none presumed - To ask a needless question.

14. The third time - That he appeared to so many of the apostles together.

15. Simon, son of Jonah - The appellation Christ had given him, when be made that glorious confession, Matt. xvi, 16, the remembrance of which might make him more deeply sensible of his late denial of him whom he had so confessed. Lovest thou me? - Thrice our Lord asks him, who had denied him thrice: more than these - Thy fellow disciples do? - Peter thought so once, Matt. xxvi, 33, but he now answers only- I love thee, without adding more than these. Thou knowest - He had now learnt by sad experience that Jesus knew his heart. My lambs - The weakest and tenderest of the flock.

17. Because he said the third time - As if he did not believe him.

18. When thou art old - He lived about thirty-six years after this: another shall gird thee - They were tied to the cross till the nails were driven in; and shall carry thee - With the cross: whither thou wouldest not - According to nature; to the place where the cross was set up.

19. By what death he should glorify God - It is not only by acting, but chiefly by suffering, that the saints glorify God. Follow me - Showing hereby likewise what death he should die.

20. Peter turning - As he was walking after Christ. Seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following him - There is a peculiar spirit and tenderness in this plain passage. Christ orders St. Peter to follow him in token of his readiness to be crucified in his cause. St. John stays not for the call; he rises and follows him too; but says not one word of his own love or zeal. He chose that the action only should speak this; and even when he records the circumstance, he tells us not what that action meant, but with great simplicity relates the fact only. If here and there a generous heart sees and emulates it, be it so; but he is not solicitous that men should admire it. It was addressed to his beloved Master, and it was enough that he understood it.

22. If I will that he tarry - Without dying, till I come - To judgment. Certainly he did tarry, till Christ came to destroy Jerusalem. And who can tell, when or how he died? What is that to thee? - Who art to follow me long before.

23. The brethren - That is, the Christians. Our Lord himself taught them that appellation, chap. xx, 17. Yet Jesus did not say to him, that he should not die - Not expressly. And St. John himself, at the time of writing his Gospel, seems not to have known clearly, whether he should die or not.

24. This is the disciple who testifieth - Being still alive after he had wrote. And we know that his testimony is true - The Church added these words to St. John's, Gospel, as Tertius did those to St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Rom. xvi, 22.

25. If they were to be written particularly - Every fact, and all the circumstances of it. I suppose - This expression, which softens the hyperbole, shows that St. John wrote this verse.

## NOTES ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

THIS book, in which St. Luke records the actions of the apostles, particularly of St. Peter and St. Paul, (whose companion in travel he was,) is as it were the center between the Gospel and the Epistles. It contains, after a very brief re-capitulation of the evangelical history, a continuation of the history of Christ, the event of his predictions, and a kind of supplement to what he had before spoken to his disciples, by the Holy Ghost now given unto them. It contains also the seeds, and first stamina of all those things, which are enlarged upon in the epistles. The Gospels treat of Christ the head. The Acts show that the same things befell his body; which is animated by his Spirit, persecuted by the world, defended and exalted by God. In this book is shown the Christian doctrine, and the method of applying it to Jews, heathens, and believers; that is, to those who are to be converted, and those who are converted: the hindrances of it in particular men, in several kinds of men, in different ranks and nations: the propagation of the Gospel, and that grand revolution among both Jews and heathens: the victory thereof, in Spite of all opposition, from all the power, malice, and wisdom of the whole world, spreading from one chamber into temples, houses, streets, markets, fields, inns, prisons, camps, courts, chariots, ships, villages, cities, islands: to Jews, heathens, magistrates, generals, soldiers, eunuchs, captives, slaves, women, children, sailors: to Athens, and at length to Rome.

THE PARTS OF IT ARE SEVEN

1. Pentecost, with its antecedents Chap. i-ii
2. Transactions w/the Jews, in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria iii-ix

3. Transactions at Cesarea, and the reception of the Gentiles x-xi
4. The first course of Barnabas and Paul among the Gentiles xiii- xiv
5. The embassy to, and council at Jerusalem: liberty of the Gentiles xv
6. The second course of St. Paul xvi-xix
7. His third, as far as Rom. xix-xxviii

# THE ACTS

## I

1. The former treatise - In that important season which reached from the resurrection of Christ to his ascension, the former treatise ends, and this begins: this describing the Acts of the Holy Ghost, (by the apostles,) as that does the acts of Jesus Christ. Of all things - In a summary manner: which Jesus began to do - until the day - That is, of all things which Jesus did from the beginning till that day.

2. After having given commandment - In the 3rd verse St. Luke expresses in general terms what Christ said to his apostles during those forty days. But in the 4th and following verses he declares what he said on the day of his ascension. He had brought his former account down to that day; and from that day begins the Acts of the Apostles.

3. Being seen by them forty days - That is, many times during that space. And speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God - Which was the sum of all his discourses with them before his passion also.

4. Wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard from me - When he was with them a little before, as it is recorded, Luke xxiv, 49.

5. Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost - And so are all true believers to the end of the world. But the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost also are here promised.

6. Dost thou at this time - At the time thou now speakest of? not many days hence? restore the kingdom to Israel? - They still seemed to dream of an outward, temporal kingdom, in which the Jews should have dominion over all nations. It seems they came in a body, having before concerted the design, to ask when this kingdom would come.

7. The times or the seasons - Times, in the language of the Scriptures, denote a longer; seasons, a shorter space. Which the Father hath put in his own power - To be revealed when and to whom it pleaseth him.

8. But ye shall receive power - and shall be witnesses to me - That is, ye shall be empowered to witness my Gospel, both by your preaching and suffering.

12. A Sabbath-day's journey - The Jews generally fix this to two thousand cubits, which is not a mile.

13. They went up into the upper room - The upper rooms, so frequently mentioned in Scripture, were chambers in the highest part of the house, set apart by the Jews for private prayer. These, on account of their being so retired and convenient, the apostles now used for all the offices of religion. Matt. x, 2; Mark iii, 14; Luke vi, 13.

14. His brethren - His near kinsmen, who for some time did not believe; it seems not till near his death.

15. The number of persons together - Who were together in the upper room. were a hundred and twenty - But he had undoubtedly many more in other places; of whom more than five hundred saw him at once after his resurrection, 1 Cor. xv, 6.

16. Psalm xli, 9.

18. This man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity - That is, a field was purchased with the reward of his iniquity; though very possibly Judas might design the purchase. And falling down on his face - It seems the rope broke before, or as he died.

19. In their own tongue - This expression, That is, the field of blood, St. Luke seems to have added to the words of St. Peter, for the use of Theophilus and other readers who did not understand Hebrew.

20. His bishopric - That is, his apostleship. Psalm lxix, 25.

21. All the time that the Lord Jesus was going in and out - That is, conversing familiarly: over us - as our Master. Psalm cix, 8.

22. To be a witness with us of his resurrection - And of the circumstances which preceded and followed it.

23. And they appointed two - So far the faithful could go by consulting together, but no further. Therefore here commenced the proper use of the lot, whereby a matter of importance, which cannot be determined by any ordinary method, is committed to the Divine decision.

25. Fell - By his transgression - Some time before his death: to go to his own place - That which his crimes had deserved, and which he had chosen for himself, far from the other apostles, in the region of death.

## II

1. At the pentecost of Sinai, in the Old Testament, and the pentecost of Jerusalem, in the New, where the two grand manifestations of God, the legal and the evangelical; the one from the mountain, and the other from heaven; the terrible, and the merciful one. They were all with one accord in one place - So here was a conjunction of company, minds, and place; the whole hundred and twenty being present.

2. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven - So will the Son of man come to judgment. And it filled all the house - That is, all that part of the temple where they were sitting.

3. And there appeared distinct tongues, as of fire - That is, small flames of fire. This is all which the phrase, tongues of fire, means in the language of the seventy. Yet it might intimate God's touching their tongues as it were (together with their hearts) with Divine fire: his giving them such words as were active and penetrating, even as flaming fire.

4. And they began to speak with other tongues - The miracle was not in the ears of the hearers, (as some have unaccountably supposed,) but in the mouth of the speakers. And this family praising God together, with the tongues of all the world, was an earnest that the whole world should in due time praise God in their various tongues. As the Spirit gave them utterance - Moses, the type of the law, was of a slow tongue; but the Gospel speaks with a fiery and flaming one.

5. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews - Gathered from all parts by the peculiar providence of God.

6. The multitude came together, and were confounded - The motions of their minds were swift and various.

9. Judea - The dialect of which greatly differed from that of Galilee. Asia - The country strictly so called.

10. Roman sojourners - Born at Rome, but now living at Jerusalem. These seem to have come to Jerusalem after those who are above mentioned. All of them were partly Jews by birth, and partly proselytes.

11. Cretans - One island seems to be mentioned for all. The wonderful works of God - Probably those which related to the miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, together with the effusion of his Spirit, as a fulfilment of his promises, and the glorious dispensations of Gospel grace.

12. They were all amazed - All the devout men.

13. But others mocking - The world begins with mocking, thence proceeds to cavilling, chap. iv, 7; to threats, iv, 17; to imprisoning, chap. v, 18; blows, v, 40; to slaughter, chap. vii, 58. These mockers appear to have been some of the natives of Judea, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, (who understood only the dialect of the country,) by the apostle's immediately directing his discourse to them in the next verse. They are full of sweet wine - So the Greek word properly signifies. There was no new wine so early in the year as pentecost. Thus natural men are wont to ascribe supernatural things to mere natural causes; and many times as impudently and unskilfully as in the present case.

14. Then Peter standing up - All the gestures, all the words of Peter, show the utmost sobriety; lifted up his voice - With cheerfulness and boldness; and said to them - This discourse has three parts; each of which, ver. 14, 22, 29, begins with the same appellation, men: only to the last part he prefixes with more familiarity the additional word brethren. Men of Judea - That is, ye that are born in Judea. St. Peter spoke in Hebrew, which they all understood.

15. It is but the third hour of the day - That is, nine in the morning. And on the solemn festivals the Jews rarely ate or drank any thing till noon.

16. But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet - But there is another and better way of accounting for this. Joel ii, 28

17. The times of the Messiah are frequently called the last days, the Gospel being the last dispensation of Divine grace. I will pour out of my Spirit - Not on the day of pentecost only, upon all flesh - On persons of every age, sex, and rank. And your young men shall see visions - In young men the outward sense, are most vigourous, and the bodily strength is entire, whereby they are best qualified to sustain the shock which usually attends the visions of God. In old men the internal senses are most vigourous, suited to divine dreams. Not that the old are wholly excluded from the former, nor the young from the latter.

18. And upon my servants - On those who are literally in a state of servitude.

19. And I will show prodigies in heaven above, and signs on earth beneath - Great Revelations of grace are usually attended with great judgments on those who reject it. In heaven - Treated of, ver. 20. On earth - Described in this verse. Such signs were those mentioned, ver. 22, before the passion of Christ; which are so mentioned as to include also those at the very time of the passion and resurrection, at the destruction of Jerusalem, and at the end of the world. Terrible indeed were those prodigies in particular which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem: such as the flaming sword

hanging over the city, and the fiery comet pointing down upon it for a year; the light that shone upon the temple and the altar in the night, as if it had been noon-day; the opening of the great and heavy gate of the temple without hands; the voice heard from the most holy place, Let us depart hence; the admonition of Jesus the son of Ananus, crying for seven years together, Wo, wo, wo; the vision of contending armies in the air, and of entrenchments thrown up against a city there represented; the terrible thunders and lightnings, and dreadful earthquakes, which every one considered as portending some great evil: all which, through the singular providence of God, are particularly recorded by Josephus. Blood - War and slaughter. Fire - Burnings of houses and towns, involving all in clouds of smoke.

20. The moon shall be turned into blood - A bloody colour: before the day of the Lord - Eminently the last day; though not excluding any other day or season, wherein the Lord shall manifest his glory, in taking vengeance of his adversaries.

21. But - whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord - This expression implies the whole of religion, and particularly prayer uttered in faith; shall be saved - From all those plagues; from sin and hell.

23. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God - The apostle here anticipates an objection, Why did God suffer such a person to be so treated? Did he not know what wicked men intended to do? And had he not power to prevent it? Yea. He knew all that those wicked men intended to do. And he had power to blast all their designs in a moment. But he did not exert that power, because he so loved the world! Because it was the determined counsel of his love, to redeem mankind from eternal death, by the death of his only-begotten Son.

24. Having loosed the pains of death - The word properly means, the pains of a woman in travail. As it was not possible that he should be held under it - Because the Scripture must needs be fulfilled.

25. Psalm xvi, 8.

27. Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades - The invisible world. But it does not appear, that ever our Lord went into hell. His soul, when it was separated from the body, did not go thither, but to paradise, Luke xxiii, 43. The meaning is, Thou wilt not leave my soul in its separate state, nor suffer my body to be corrupted.

28. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life - That is, Thou hast raised me from the dead. Thou wilt fill me with joy by thy countenance - When I ascend to thy right hand.

29. The patriarch - A more honourable title than king.

30. Psalm lxxxix, 4, &c.

32. He foreseeing this, spake of the resurrection Of Christ - St. Peter argues thus: It is plain, David did not speak this of himself. Therefore he spake of Christ's rising. But how does that promise of a kingdom imply his resurrection? Because he did not receive it before he died, and because his kingdom was to endure for ever, 2 Sam. vii, 13.

33. Being exalted by the right hand of God - By the right hand; that is, the mighty power of God. Our Lord was exalted at his ascension to God's right hand in heaven.

34. Sit thou on my right hand - In this and the following verse is an allusion to two ancient customs; one, to the highest honour that used to be paid to persons by placing them on the right hand, as Solomon did Bathsheba, when sitting on his throne, 1 Kings ii, 19; and the other, to the custom of conquerors, who used to tread on the necks of their vanquished enemies, as a token of their entire victory and triumph over them.

35. Until I make thine enemies thy footstool - This text is here quoted with the greatest address, as suggesting in the words of David, their great prophetic monarch, how certain their own ruin must be, if they went on to oppose Christ. Psalm cx, 1.

36. Lord - Jesus, after his exaltation, is constantly meant by this word in the New Testament, unless sometimes where it occurs, in a text quoted from the Old Testament.

37. They said to the apostles, Brethren - They did not style them so before.

38. Repent - And hereby return to God: be baptized - Believing in the name of Jesus - And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost - See the three-one God clearly proved. See chap. xxvi, 20. The gift of the Holy Ghost does not mean in this place the power of speaking with tongues. For the promise of this was not given to all that were afar off, in distant ages and nations. But rather the constant fruits of faith, even righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Whomsoever the Lord our God shall call - (Whether they are Jews or Gentiles) by his word and by his Spirit: and who are not disobedient to the heavenly calling. But it is observable St. Peter did not yet understand the very words he spoke.

40. And with many other words did he testify and exhort - In such an accepted time we should add line upon line, and not leave off, till the thing is done. Save yourselves from this perverse generation - Many of whom were probably mocking still.

41. And there were added - To the hundred and twenty.

42. And they continued steadfast - So their daily Church communion consisted in these four particulars:

1. Hearing the word;
2. Having all things common;
3. Receiving the Lord's Supper;
4. Prayer. Ye diff'rent sects, who all declare, Lo here is Christ, and Christ is there;
   Your stronger proofs divinely give, And show me where the Christians live!

43. And fear came upon every soul - Of those who did not join with them: whereby persecution was prevented, till it was needful for them.

45. And sold their possessions - Their lands and houses; and goods - Their movables. And parted them to all as any one had need - To say the Christians did this only till the destruction of Jerusalem, is not true; for many did it long after. Not that there was any positive command for so doing: it needed not; for love constrained them. It was a natural fruit of that love wherewith each member of the community loved every other as his own soul. And if the whole Christian Church had continued in this spirit, this usage must have continued through all ages. To affirm therefore that Christ did not design it should continue, is neither more nor less than to affirm, that Christ did not design this measure of love should continue. I see no proof of this.

46. Continuing daily - breaking the bread - in the Lord's Supper, as did many Churches for some ages. They partook of their food with gladness and singleness of heart - They carried the same happy and holy temper through all their common actions: eating and working with the same spirit wherewith they prayed and received the Lord's Supper.

47. The Lord added daily such as were saved - From their sins: from the guilt and power of them.

**III**

1. The ninth hour - The Jews divided the time from sunrise to sunset into twelve hours; which were consequently of unequal length at different times of the year, as the days were longer or shorter. The third hour therefore was nine in the morning; the ninth, three in the afternoon; but not exactly. For the third hour was the middle space between sunrise and noon; which, if the sun rose at five, (the earliest hour of its rising in that climate,) was half an hour after eight: if at seven (the latest hour of its rising there) was half an hour after nine. The chief hours of prayer were the third and ninth; at which seasons the morning and evening sacrifices were offered, and incense (a kind of emblem representing prayer) burnt on the golden altar.

2. At the gate of the temple, called Beautiful - This gate was added by Herod the Great, between the court of the Gentiles and that of Israel. It was thirty cubits high, and fifteen broad, and made of Corinthian brass, more pompous in its workmanship and splendour than those that were covered with silver and gold.

6. Then said Peter, Silver and gold have I none - How unlike his supposed successor! Can the bishop of Rome either say or do the same?

12. Peter answered the people - Who were running together, and inquiring into the circumstances of the fact.

13. The God of our fathers - This was wisely introduced in the beginning of his discourse, that it might appear they taught no new religion, inconsistent with that of Moses, and were far from having the least design to divert their regards from the God of Israel. Hath glorified his Son - By this miracle, whom ye delivered up - When God had given him to you, and when ye ought to have received him as a most precious treasure, and to have preserved him with all your power.

14. Ye renounced the Holy One - Whom God had marked out as such; and the Just One - Even in the judgment of Pilate.

16. His name - Himself: his power and love. The faith which is by him - Of which he is the giver, as well as the object.

17. And now, brethren - A word full of courtesy and compassion, I know - He speaks to their heart, that through ignorance ye did it - which lessened, though it could not take away, the guilt. As did also your rulers - The prejudice lying from the authority of the chief priests and elders, he here removes, but with great tenderness. He does not call them our, but your rulers. For as the Jewish dispensation ceased at the death of Christ, consequently so did the authority of its rulers.

18. But God - Who was not ignorant, permitted this which he had foretold, to bring good out of it.

19. Be converted - Be turned from sin and Satan unto God. See chap. xxvi, 20. But this term, so common in modern writings, very rarely occurs in Scripture: perhaps not once in the sense we now use it, for an entire change from vice to holiness. That the times of refreshing - Wherein God largely bestows his refreshing grace, may come - To you also. To others they will assuredly come, whether ye repent or no.

20. And he may send - The apostles generally speak of our Lord's second coming, as being just at hand. Who was before appointed - Before the foundation of the world.

21. Till the times of the restitution of all things - The apostle here comprises at once the whole course of the times of the New Testament, between our Lord's ascension and his coming in glory.

The most eminent of these are the apostolic age, and that of the spotless Church, which will consist of all the Jews and Gentiles united, after all persecutions and apostacies are at an end.

22. The Lord shall raise you up a prophet like unto me - And that in many particulars. Moses instituted the Jewish Church: Christ instituted the Christian. With the prophesying of Moses was soon joined the effect, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt: with the prophesying of Christ that grand effect, the deliverance of his people from sin and death. Those who could not bear the voice of God, yet desired to hear that of Moses. Much more do those who are wearied with the law, desire to hear the voice of Christ. Moses spake to the people all, and only those things, which God had commanded him: so did Christ. But though he was like Moses, yet he was infinitely superior to him, in person, as well as in office. Deut. xviii, 15.

23. Every soul who will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people - One cannot imagine a more masterly address than this, to warn the Jews of the dreadful consequence of their infidelity, in the very words of their favourite prophet, out of a pretended zeal for whom they rejected Christ.

24. These days - The days of the Messiah.

25. Ye are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant - That in, heirs of the prophecies. To you properly, as the first heirs, belong the prophecies and the covenant. Gen. xii, 3.

26. To bless you, by turning you from your iniquities - Which is the great Gospel blessing.

## IV

1. And as they were speaking to the people, the priests - came upon them - So wisely did God order, that they should first bear a full testimony to the truth in the temple, and then in the great council; to which they could have had no access, had they not been brought before it as criminals.

2. The priests being grieved - That the name of Jesus was preached to the people; especially they were offended at the doctrine of his resurrection; for as they had put him to death, his rising again proved him to be the Just One, and so brought his blood upon their heads. The priests were grieved, lest their office and temple services should decline, and Christianity take root, through the preaching of the apostles, and their power of working miracles: the captain of the temple - Being concerned to prevent all sedition and disorder, the Sadducees - Being displeased at the overturning of all their doctrines, particularly with regard to the resurrection.

4. The number of the men - Beside women and children, were about five thousand - So many did our Lord now feed at once with the bread from heaven!

5. Rulers, and elders, and scribes - Who were eminent for power, for wisdom, and for learning.

6. Annas, who had been the high priest, and Caiaphas, who was so then.

7. By what name - By what authority, have ye done this? - They seem to speak ambiguously on purpose.

8. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost - That moment. God moves his instruments, not when they please, but just when he sees it needful. Ye rulers - He gives them the honour due to their office.

10. Be it known to you all - Probably the herald of God proclaimed this with a loud voice. Whom God hath raised from the dead - They knew in their own consciences that it was so. And

though they had hired the soldiers to tell a most senseless and incredible tale to the contrary, Matt. xxviii, 12, 15, yet it is observable, they did not, so far as we can learn, dare to plead it before Peter and John.

11. Psalm cxviii, 22.

12. There is no other name whereby we must be saved - The apostle uses a beautiful gradation, from the temporal deliverance which had been wrought for the poor cripple, by the power of Christ, to that of a much nobler and more important kind, which is wrought by Christ for impotent and sinful souls. He therein follows the admirable custom of his great Lord and Master, who continually took occasion from earthly to speak of spiritual things.

13. Illiterate and uneducated men - Even by such men (though not by such only) hath God in all ages caused his word to be preached before the world.

17. Yet that it spread no farther - For they look upon it as a mere gangrene. So do all the world upon genuine Christianity. Let us severely threaten them - Great men, ye do nothing. They have a greater than you to flee to.

18. They charged them not to speak - Privately; nor teach - Publicly.

19. Whether it be just to obey you rather than God, judge ye - Was it not by the same spirit, that Socrates, when they were condemning him to death, for teaching the people, said, "O ye Athenians, I embrace and love you; but I will obey God rather than you. And if you would spare my life on condition I should cease to teach my fellow citizens, I would die a thousand times rather than accept the proposal."

21. They all glorified God - So much wiser were the people than those who were over them.

24. The sense is, Lord, thou hast all power. And thy word is fulfilled. Men do rage against thee: but it is in vain.

25. Psalm ii, 1.

27. Whom thou hast anointed - To be king of Israel.

28. The sense is, but they could do no more than thou wast pleased to permit, according to thy determinate counsel, to save mankind by the sufferings of thy Son. And what was needful for this end, thou didst before determine to permit to be done.

30. Thou stretchest forth thy hand - Exertest thy power.

31. They were all filled - Afresh; and spake the word with boldness - So their petition was granted.

32. And the multitude of them that believed - Every individual person were of one heart and one soul - Their love, their hopes, their passions joined: and not so much as one - In so great a multitude: this was a necessary consequence of that union of heart; said that aught of the things which he had was his own - It is impossible any one should, while all were of one soul. So long as that truly Christian love continued, they could not but have all things common.

33. And great grace - A large measure of the inward power of the Holy Ghost, was upon them all - Directing all their thoughts, words, and actions.

34. For neither was there any one among them that wanted - We may observe, this is added as the proof that great grace was upon them all. And it was the immediate, necessary consequence of it: yea, and must be to the end of the world. In all ages and nations, the same cause, the same degree of grace, could not but in like circumstances produce the same effect. For whosoever were possessors of houses and lands sold them - Not that there was any particular command for this; but there was great grace and great love: of which this was the natural fruit.

35. And distribution was made - At first by the apostles themselves, afterward by them whom they appointed.

36. A son of consolation - Not only on account of his so largely assisting the poor with his fortune; but also of those peculiar gifts of the Spirit, whereby he was so well qualified both to comfort and to exhort.

37. Having an estate - Probably of considerable value. It is not unlikely that it was in Cyprus. Being a Levite, he had no portion, no distinct inheritance in Israel.

## V

1. But a certain man named Ananias - It is certain, not a believer, for all that believed were of one heart and of one soul: probably not baptized; but intending now to offer himself for baptism.

2. And bringing a certain part - As if it had been the whole: perhaps saying it was so.

3. To lie to the Holy Ghost - Who is in us. And to keep back - Here was the first instance of it. This was the first attempt to bring propriety of goods into the Christian Church.

4. While it remained, did it not remain thine? - It is true, whosoever among the Christians (not one excepted) had houses or lands, sold them, and laid the price at the feet of the apostles. But it was in his own choice to be a Christian or not: and consequently either to sell his land, or keep it. And when it was sold, was it not in thy power? - For it does not appear that he professed himself a Christian when he sold it. Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? - So profanely to dissemble on so solemn an occasion? Thou hast not lied to men only, but to God also. Hence the Godhead of the Holy Ghost evidently appears: since lying to him, ver. 3, is lying to God.

5. And Ananias fell down and expired - And this severity was not only just, considering that complication of vain glory, covetousness, fraud, and impiety, which this action contained: but it was also wise and gracious, as it would effectually deter any others from following his example. It was likewise a convincing proof of the upright conduct of the apostles, in managing the sums with which they were intrusted; and in general of their Divine mission. For none can imagine that Peter would have had the assurance to pronounce, and much less the power to execute such a sentence, if he had been guilty himself of a fraud of the same kind; or had been belying the Holy Ghost in the whole of his pretensions to be under his immediate direction.

7. About the space of three hours - How precious a space! The woman had a longer time for repentance.

8. If ye sold the land for so much - Naming the sum.

10. The Church - This is the first time it is mentioned: and here is a native specimen of a New Testament Church; which is a company of men, called by the Gospel, grafted into Christ by baptism, animated by love, united by all kind of fellowship, and disciplined by the death of Ananias and Sapphira.

12. And they were all - All the believers.

13. None of the rest - No formalists or hypocrites, durst join themselves - In an outward show only, like Ananias and Sapphira.

14. But so much the more were true believers added, because unbelievers kept at a distance.

17. The high priest - and the sect of the Sadducees - A goodly company for the priest! He, and these deniers of any angel or resurrection, were filled with zeal - Angry, bitter, persecuting zeal.

20. The words of this - That is, these words of life: words which show the way to life everlasting.

23. We found the prison shut - The angel probably had shut the doors again.

24. They doubted what this should be - They were even at their wits' end. The world, in persecuting the children of God, entangle themselves in numberless difficulties.

28. Did not we strictly command you, not to teach? - See the poor cunning of the enemies of the Gospel. They make laws and interdicts at their pleasure, which those who obey God cannot but break; and then take occasion thereby to censure and punish the innocent, as guilty. Ye would bring the blood of this man upon us - An artful and invidious word. The apostles did not desire to accuse any man. They simply declared the naked truth.

29. Then Peter - In the name of all the apostles, said - He does not now give them the titles of honour, which he did before, chap. iv, 8; but enters directly upon the subject, and justifies what he had done. This is, as it were, a continuation of that discourse, but with an increase of severity.

30. Hath raised up Jesus - Of the seed of David, according to the promises made to our fathers.

31. Him hath God exalted - From the grave to heaven; to give repentance - Whereby Jesus is received as a Prince; and forgiveness of sins - Whereby he is received as a saviour. Hence some infer, that repentance and faith are as mere gifts as remission of sins. Not so: for man co-operates in the former, but not in the latter. God alone forgives sins.

32. And also the Holy Ghost - A much greater witness.

34. But a certain Pharisee - And as such believing the resurrection of the dead; a doctor, or teacher of the law - That is, a scribe, and indeed one of the highest rank; had in honour by all the people - Except the Sadducees; rising up in the council - So God can raise defenders of his servants, whensoever and wheresoever he pleases.

36. Before these days - He prudently mentions the facts first, and then makes the inference.

38. Let them alone - In a cause which is manifestly good, we should immediately join. In a cause, on the other hand, which is manifestly evil, we should immediately oppose. But in a sudden, new, doubtful occurrence, this advice is eminently useful. If this counsel or this work - He seems to correct himself, as if it were some sudden work, rather than a counsel or design. And so it was. For the apostles had no counsel, plan, or design of their own; but were mere instruments in the hand of God, working just as he led them from day to day.

41. Rejoicing - to suffer shame - This is a sure mark of the truth, joy in affliction, such is true, deep, pure.

## VI

1. There arose a murmuring - Here was the first breach made on those who were before of one heart and of one soul. Partiality crept in unawares on some; and murmuring on others. Ah Lord! how short a time did pure, genuine, undefiled Christianity remain in the world! O the depth! How unsearchable are thy counsels! marvelous are thy ways, O King of saints! The Hellenists were Jews born out of Palestine. They were so called, because they used the Greek as their in other tongue. In this partiality of the Hebrews, and murmuring of the Hellenists, were the needs of a general

persecution sown. Did God ever, in any age or country, withdraw his restraining providence, and let loose the world upon the Christians, till there was a cause among themselves? Is not an open, general persecution, always both penal and medicinal? A punishment of those that will not accept of milder reproofs, as well as a medicine to heal their sickness? And at the same time a means both of purifying and strengthening those whose heart is still right with God.

2. It is not right that we should leave the word of God and serve tables - In the first Church, the primary business of apostles, evangelists, and bishops, was to preach the word of God; the secondary, to take a kind of paternal care (the Church being then like a family,) for the food, especially of the poor, the strangers, and the widows. Afterward, the deacons of both sexes were constituted for this latter business. And whatever time they had to spare from this, they employed in works of spiritual mercy. But their proper office was, to take care of the poor. And when some of them afterward preached the Gospel, they did this not by virtue of their deaconship, but of another commission, that of evangelists, which they probably received, not before, but after they were appointed deacons. And it is not unlikely that others were chosen deacons, or stewards, in their room, when any of these commenced evangelists.

3. Of good report - That there may be no room to suspect them of partiality or injustice. Full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom - For it is not a light matter to dispense even the temporal goods of the Church. To do even this well, a large measure both of the gifts and grace of God is requisite. Whom we will set over this business - It would have been happy for the Church, had its ordinary ministers in every age taken the same care to act in concert with the people committed to their charge, which the apostles themselves, extraordinary as their office was, did on this and other occasions.

4. We will constantly attend to prayer, and to the ministry of the word - This is doubtless the proper business of a Christian bishop: to speak to God in prayer; to men in preaching his word, as an ambassador for Christ.

5. And they chose - It seems seven Hellenists, as their names show. And Nicholas a proselyte - To whom the proselytes would the more readily apply.

7. And the word of God grew - The hindrances being removed.

9. There arose certain of the synagogue which is called - It was one and the same synagogue which consisted of these several nations. Saul of Cilicia was doubtless a member of it; whence it is not at all improbable, that Gamaliel presided over it. Libertines - So they were styled, whose fathers were once slaves, and afterward made free. This was the ease of many Jews who had been taken captive by the Romans.

14. We have heard him say - So they might. But yet the consequence they drew would not follow.

15. As the face of an angel - Covered with supernatural lustre. They reckoned his preaching of Jesus to be the Christ was destroying Moses and the law; and God bears witness to him, with the same glory as he did to Moses, when he gave the law by him.

## VII

2. And he said - St. Stephen had been accused of blasphemy against Moses, and even against God; and of speaking against the temple and the law, threatening that Jesus would destroy the one, and change the other. In answer to this accusation, rehearsing as it were the articles of his historical creed, he speaks of God with high reverence, and a grateful sense of a long series of acts of goodness to the Israelites, and of Moses with great respect, on account of his important and honourable employments under God: of the temple with regard, as being built to the honour of God; yet not with such superstition as the Jews; putting them in mind, that no temple could comprehend God. And he was going on, no doubt, when he was interrupted by their clamour, to speak to the last point, the destruction of the temple, and the change of the law by Christ. Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken - The sum of his discourse is this: I acknowledge the glory of God revealed to the fathers, ver. 2; the calling of Moses, ver. 34, &c.; the dignity of the law, verses 8, 38, 44; the holiness of this place, verses 7, 45, 47. And indeed the law is more ancient than the temple; the promise more ancient than the law. For God showed himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their children freely, ver. 2, &c.; 9, &c.; 17,&c.; 32, 34, 35; and they showed faith and obedience to God, ver. 4, 20, &c., 23, particularly by their regard for the law, ver. 8, and the promised land, ver. 16. Meantime, God never confined his presence to this one place or to the observers of the law. For he hath been acceptably worshipped before the law was given, or the temple built, and out of this land, ver. 2, 9, 33, 44. And that our fathers and their posterity were not tied down to this land, their various sojournings, ver. 4, &c.; 14, 29, 44, and exile, ver. 43, show. But you and your fathers have always been evil, ver. 9; have withstood Moses, ver. 25, &c., 39, &c.; have despised the land, ver. 39, forsaken God, ver. 40, &c., superstitiously honoured the temple, ver. 48, resisted God and his Spirit, ver 50, killed the prophets and the Messiah himself, ver. 51, and kept not the law for which ye contend, ver. 53. Therefore God is not bound to you; much less to you alone. And truly this solemn testimony of Stephen is most worthy of his character, as a man full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith and power: in which, though he does not advance so many regular propositions, contradictory to those of his adversaries, yet he closely and nervously answers them all. Nor can we doubt but he would, from these premises, have drawn inferences touching the destruction of the temple, the abrogation of the Mosaic law, the punishment of that rebellious people; and above all, touching Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, had not his discourse been interrupted by the clamours of the multitude, stopping their ears, and rushing upon him. Men, brethren, and fathers - All who are here present, whether ye are my equals in years, or of more advanced age. The word which in this and in many other places is rendered men is a mere expletive. The God of glory - The glorious God, appeared to Abraham before he dwelt in Haran - Therefore Abraham knew God, long before he was in this land. Gen. xii, 1.

3. Which I will show thee - Abraham knew not where he went.

4. After his father was dead - While Terah lived, Abraham lived partly with him, partly in Canaan: but after he died, altogether in Canaan.

5. No, not to set his foot on - For the field mentioned, ver. 16, he did not receive by a Divine donation, but bought it; even thereby showing that he was a stranger in the land.

6. Gen. xv, 13.

7. They shall serve me - Not the Egyptians.

8. And so he begat Isaac - After the covenant was given, of which circumcision was the seal. Gen. xvii, 10.

9. But God was with him - Though he was not in this land. Gen. xxxvii, 28.

12. Sent our fathers first - Without Benjamin.

14. Seventy-five souls - So the seventy interpreters, (whom St. Stephen follows,) one son and a grandson of Manasseh, and three children of Ephraim, being added to the seventy persons mentioned Gen. xlvi, 27.

16. And were carried over to Shechem - It seems that St. Stephen, rapidly running over so many circumstances of history, has not leisure (nor was it needful where they were so well known) to recite them all distinctly. Therefore he here contracts into one, two different sepulchres, places, and purchases, so as in the former history, to name the buyer, omitting the seller, in the latter, to name the seller, omitting the buyer. Abraham bought a burying place of the children of Heth, Gen. xxiii. Gen. xxiii, 1-20 There Jacob was buried. Jacob bought a field of the children of Hamor. There Joseph was buried. You see here, how St. Stephen contracts these two purchases into one. This concise manner of speaking, strange as it seems to us, was common among the Hebrews; particularly, when in a case notoriously known, the speaker mentioned but part of the story, and left the rest, which would have interrupted the current of his discourse, to be supplied in the mind of the hearer. And laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought - The first land which these strangers bought was for a sepulchre. They sought for a country in heaven. Perhaps the whole sentence might be rendered thus: So Jacob went down into Egypt and died, he and our fathers, and were carried over to Shechem, and laid by the sons (that is, decendants) of Hamor, the father of Shechem, in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money.

17. Exod. i, 7.

18. Another king - Probably of another family.

19. Exposed - Cast out to perish by hunger or wild beasts.

20. In which time - A sad but a seasonable time. Exod. ii, 2.

21. Pharaoh's daughter took him up - By which means, being designed for a kingdom, he had all those advantages of education, which he could not have had, if he had not been exposed.

22. In all the wisdom of the Egyptians - Which was then celebrated in all the world, and for many ages after. And mighty in words - Deep, solid, weighty, though not of a ready utterance.

23. It came into his heart - Probably by an impulse from God.

24. Seeing one wronged - Probably by one of the task masters.

25. They understood it not - Such was their stupidity and sloth; which made him afterward unwilling to go to them.

26. He showed himself - Of his own accord, unexpectedly.

27. Who appointed thee - "Under the presence of the want of a call by man, the instruments of God are often rejected."

30. The angel - The Son of God; as appears from his styling himself Jehovah. In a flame of fire - Signifying the majesty of God then present. Exod. iii, 2.

33. Then said the Lord, Loose thy shoes - An ancient token of reverence; for the place is holy ground - The holiness of places depends on the peculiar presence of God there.

35. This Moses whom they refused - Namely, forty years before. Probably, not they, but their fathers did it, and God imputes it to them. So God frequently imputes the sins of the fathers to those of their children who are of the same spirit. Him did God send to be a deliverer - Which is much more than a judge; by the hand of - That is, by means of the angel - This angel who spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai expressly called himself Jehovah, a name which cannot, without the highest presumption, be assumed by any created angel, since he whose name alone is Jehovah, is the Most

High over all the earth, Psalm lxxxiii, 18. Psalm lxxxiii, 18. It was therefore the Son of God who delivered the law to Moses, under the character of Jehovah, and who is here spoken of as the angel of the covenant, in respect of his mediatorial office.

37. The Lord will raise you up a prophet - St. Stephen here shows that there is no opposition between Moses and Christ. Deut. xviii, 15

38. This is he - Moses. With the angel, and with our fathers - As a mediator between them. Who received the living oracles - Every period beginning with, And the Lord said unto Moses, is properly an oracle. But the oracles here intended are chiefly the ten commandments. These are termed living, because all the word of God, applied by his Spirit, is living and powerful, Heb. iv, 12, enlightening the eyes, rejoicing the heart, converting the soul, raising the dead. Exod. xix, 3.

40. Make us gods to go before us - Back into Egypt. Exod. xxxii, 1.

41. And they made a calf - In imitation of Apis, the Egyptian God: and rejoiced in the works of their hands - In the God they had made.

42. God turned - From them in anger; and gave them up - Frequently from the time of the golden calf, to the time of Amos, and afterward. The host of heaven - The stars are called an army or host, because of their number, order, and powerful influence. In the book of the prophets - Of the twelve prophets, which the Jews always wrote together in one book. Have ye offered - The passage of Amos referred to, chap. v, 25, &c., Amos v, 25 consists of two parts; of which the former confirms ver. 41, of the sin of the people; the latter the beginning of ver. 42, concerning their punishment. Have ye offered to me - They had offered many sacrifices; but God did not accept them as offered to him, because they sacrificed to idols also; and did not sacrifice to him with an upright heart. Amos v, 25.

43. Ye took up - Probably not long after the golden calf: but secretly; else Moses would have mentioned it. The shrine - A small, portable chapel, in which was the image of their God. Moloch was the planet Mars, which they worshipped under a human shape. Remphan, that is, Saturn, they represented by a star. And I will carry you beyond Babylon - That is, beyond Damascus (which is the word in Amos) and Babylon. This was fulfilled by the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii, 6.

44. Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony - The testimony was properly the two tables of stone, on which the ten commandments were written. Hence the ark which contained them is frequently called the ark of the testimony; and the whole tabernacle in this place. The tabernacle of the testimony - according to the model which he had seen - When he was caught up in the visions of God on the mount.

45. Which our fathers having received - From their ancestors; brought into the possession of the Gentiles - Into the land which the Gentiles possessed before. So that God's favour is not a necessary consequence of inhabiting this land. All along St. Stephen intimates two things:

1. That God always loved good men in every land:
2. That he never loved bad men even in this. Josh iii, 14.

46. Who petitioned to find a habitation for the God of Jacob - But he did not obtain his petition: for God remained without any temple till Solomon built him a house. Observe how wisely the word is chosen with respect to what follows.

48. Yet the Most High inhabiteth not temples made with hands - As Solomon declared at the very dedication of the temple, 1 Kings viii, 27. The Most High - Whom as such no building can contain. Isaiah lxvi, 1.

49. What is the place of my rest? - Have I need to rest?

51. Ye stiff necked - Not bowing the neck to God's yoke; and uncircumcised in heart - So they showed themselves, ver. 54; Act vii, 54 and ears - As they showed, ver. 57. Act vii, 57 So far were they from receiving the word of God into their hearts, that they would not hear it even with their ears. Ye - And your fathers, always - As often as ever ye are called, resist the Holy Ghost - Testifying by the prophets of Jesus, and the whole truth. This is the sum of what he had shown at large.

53. Who have received the law by the administration of angels - God, when he gave the law on Mount Sinai, was attended with thousands of his angels, Gal. iii, 19; Psalm lxviii, 17.

55. But he looking steadfastly up to heaven, saw the glory of God - Doubtless he saw such a glorious representation, God miraculously operating on his imagination, as on Ezekiel's, when he sat in his house at Babylon, and saw Jerusalem, and seemed to himself transported thither, chap. viii, 1-4. And probably other martyrs, when called to suffer the last extremity, have had extraordinary assistance of some similar kind.

56. I see the Son of man standing - As if it were just ready to receive him. Otherwise he is said to sit at the right hand of God.

57. They rushed upon him - Before any sentence passed.

58. The witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man, whose name was Saul - O Saul, couldst thou have believed, if one had told thee, that thou thyself shouldst be stoned in the same cause? and shouldst triumph in committing thy soul likewise to that Jesus whom thou art now blaspheming? His dying prayer reached thee, as well as many others. And the martyr Stephen, and Saul the persecutor, (afterward his brother both in faith and martyrdom,) are now joined in everlasting friendship, and dwell together in the happy company of those who have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.

59. And they stoned Stephen, invoking and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit - This is the literal translation of the words, the name of God not being in the original. Nevertheless such a solemn prayer to Christ, in which a departing soul is thus committed into his hands, is such an act of worship, as no good man could have paid to a mere creature; Stephen here worshipping Christ in the very same manner in which Christ worshipped the Father on the cross.

## VIII

1. At that time there was great persecution against the Church - Their adversaries having tasted blood, were the more eager. And they were all dispersed - Not all the Church: if so, who would have remained for the apostles to teach, or Saul to persecute? But all the teachers except the apostles, who, though in the most danger, stayed with the flock.

2. Devout men - Who feared God more than persecution. And yet were they not of little faith? Else they would not have made so great lamentation.

3. Saul made havoc of the Church - Like some furious beast of prey. So the Greek word properly signifies. Men and women - Regarding neither age nor sex.

4. Therefore they that were dispersed went every where - These very words are reassumed, after as it were a long parenthesis, chap. xi, 19, and the thread of the story continued.

5. Stephen - Being taken away, Philip, his next colleague, (not the apostle,) rises in his place.

9. A certain man - using magic - So there was such a thing as witchcraft once! In Asia at least, if not in Europe or America.

12. But when they believed - What Philip preached, then they saw and felt the real power of God, and submitted thereto.

13. And Simon believed - That is, was convinced of the truth.

14. And the apostles hearing that Samaria - The inhabitants of that country, had received the word of God - By faith, sent Peter and John - He that sends must be either superior, or at least equal, to him that is sent. It follows that the college of the apostles was equal if not superior to Peter.

15. The Holy Ghost - In his miraculous gifts? Or his sanctifying graces? Probably in both.

18. Simon offered them money - And hence the procuring any ministerial function, or ecclesiastical benefice by money, is termed Simony.

21. Thou hast neither part - By purchase, nor lot - Given gratis, in this matter - This gift of God. For thy heart is not right before God - Probably St. Peter discerned this long before he had declared it; although it does not appear that God gave to any of the apostles a universal power of discerning the hearts of all they conversed with; any more than a universal power of healing all the sick they came near. This we are sure St. Paul had not; though he was not inferior to the chief of the apostles. Otherwise he would not have suffered the illness of Epaphroditus to have brought him so near to death, Phil. ii, 25-27; nor have left so useful a fellow labourer as Trophimus sick at Miletus, 2 Tim. iv, 20.

22. Repent - if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee - Without all doubt if he had repented, he would have been forgiven. The doubt was, whether he would repent. Thou art in the gall of bitterness - In the highest degree of wickedness, which is bitterness, that is, misery to the soul; and in the bond of iniquity - Fast bound therewith.

26. The way which is desert - There were two ways from Jerusalem to Gaza, one desert, the other through a more populous country.

27. An eunuch - Chief officers were anciently called eunuchs, though not always literally such; because such used to be chief ministers in the eastern courts. Candace, queen of the Ethiopians - So all the queens of Ethiopia were called.

28. Sitting in his chariot, he read the Prophet Isaiah - God meeteth those that remember him in his ways. It is good to read, hear, seek information even in a journey. Why should we not redeem all our time?

30. And Philip running to him, said, Understandest thou what thou readest? - He did not begin about the weather, news, or the like. In speaking for God, we may frequently come to the point at once, without circumlocution.

31. He desired Philip to come up and sit with him - Such was his modesty, and thirst after instruction.

32. The portion of Scripture - By reading that very chapter, the fifty-third of Isaiah, many Jews, yea, and atheists, have been converted. Some of them history records. God knoweth them all. Isaiah liii, 7

33. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away - That is, when he was a man, he had no justice shown him. To take away a person's judgment, is a proverbial phrase for oppressing him. And who shall declare, or count his generation - That is, who can number his seed, Isaiah liii, 10; which he hath purchased by laying down his life?

36. And as they went on the way they came to a certain water - Thus, even the circumstances of the journey were under the direction of God. The kingdom of God suits itself to external circumstances, without any violence, as air yields to all bodies, and yet pervades all. What hindereth me to be baptized? - Probably he had been circumcised: otherwise Cornelius would not have been the first fruits of the Gentiles.

38. And they both went down - Out of the chariot. It does not follow that he was baptized by immersion. The text neither affirms nor intimates any thing concerning it.

39. The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip - Carried him away with a miraculous swiftness, without any action or labour of his own. This had befallen several of the prophets.

40. But Philip was found at Azotus - Probably none saw him, from his leaving the eunuch, till he was there.

## IX

1. Acts xxii, 3, &c.; Acts xxvi, 9, &c.

2. Bound - By the connivance, if not authority, of the governor, under Aretas the king. See Acts ix, 14, 24.

3. And suddenly - When God suddenly and vehemently attacks a sinner, it is the highest act of mercy. So Saul, when his rage was come to the height, is taught not to breathe slaughter. And what was wanting in time to confirm him in his discipleship, is compensated by the inexpressible terror he sustained. By his also the suddenly constituted apostle was guarded against the grand snare into which novices are apt to fall.

4. He heard a voice - Severe, yet full of grace.

5. To kick against the goads - is a Syriac proverb, expressing an attempt that brings nothing but pain.

6. It shall be told thee - So God himself sends Saul to be taught by a man, as the angel does Cornelius, chap. x, 5. Admirable condescension! that the Lord deals with us by men, like ourselves.

7. The men - stood - Having risen before Saul; for they also fell to the ground, chap. xxvi, 14. It is probable they all journeyed on foot. Hearing the noise - But not an articulate voice. And seeing the light, but not Jesus himself, chap. xxvi, 13, &c.

9. And he was three days - An important season! So long he seems to have been in the pangs of the new birth. Without sight - By scales growing over his eyes, to intimate to him the blindness of the state he had been in, to impress him with a deeper sense of the almighty power of Christ, and to turn his thoughts inward, while he was less capable of conversing with outward objects. This was likewise a manifest token to others, of what had happened to him in his journey, and ought to have humbled and convinced those bigoted Jews, to whom he had been sent from the sanhedrim.

11. Behold he is praying - He was shown thus to Ananias.

12. A man called Ananias - His name also was revealed to Saul.

13. But he answered - How natural it is to reason against God.

14. All that call on thy name - That is, all Christians.

15. He is a chosen vessel to bear my name - That is, to testify of me. It is undeniable, that some men are unconditionally chosen or elected, to do some works for God

16. For I - Do thou as thou art commanded. I will take care of the rest; will show him - In fact, through the whole course of his ministry. How great things he must suffer - So far will he be now from persecuting others.

17. The Lord hath sent me - Ananias does not tell Saul all which Christ had said concerning him. It was not expedient that he should know yet to how great a dignity he was called.

24. They guarded the gates day and night - That is, the governor did, at their request, 2 Cor. xi, 32.

26. And coming to Jerusalem - Three years after, Gal. i, 18. These three years St. Paul passes over, chap. xxii, 17, likewise.

27. To the apostles - Peter and James, Gal. i, 18, 19. Gal. i, 18,

19 And declared - He who has been an enemy to the truth ought not to be trusted till he gives proof that he is changed.

31. Then the Church - The whole body of Christian believers, had peace - Their bitterest persecutor being converted. And being built up - In holy, loving faith, continually increasing, and walking in - That is, speaking and acting only from this principle, the fear of God and the comfort of the Holy Ghost - An excellent mixture of inward and outward peace, tempered with filial fear.

35. Lydda was a large town, one day's journey from Jerusalem. It stood in the plain or valley of Sharon, which extended from Cesarea to Joppa, and was noted for its fruitfulness.

36. Tabitha, which is by interpretation Dorcas - She was probably a Hellenist Jew, known among the Hebrews by the Syriac name Tabitha, while the Greeks called her in their own language, Dorcas. They are both words of the same import, and signify a roe or fawn.

38. The disciples sent to him - Probably none of those at Joppa had the gift of miracles. Nor is it certain that they expected a miracle from him.

39. While she was with the in - That is, before she died.

40. Peter having put them all out - That he might have the better opportunity of wrestling with God in prayer, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, sat up - Who can imagine the surprise of Dorcas, when called back to life? Or of her friends, when they saw her alive? For the sake of themselves, and of the poor, there was cause of rejoicing, and much more, for such a confirmation of the Gospel. Yet to herself it was matter of resignation, not joy, to be called back to these scenes of vanity: but doubtless, her remaining days were still more zealously spent in the service of her saviour and her God. Thus was a richer treasure laid up for her in heaven, and she afterward returned to a more exceeding weight of glory, than that from which so astonishing a providence had recalled her for a season.

## X

1. And there was a certain man - The first fruits of the Gentiles, in Cesarea - Where Philip had been before, chap. viii, 40; so that the doctrine of salvation by faith in Jesus was not unknown there. Cesarea was the seat of the civil government, as Jerusalem was of the ecclesiastical. It is observable, that the Gospel made its way first through the metropolitan cities. So it first seized Jerusalem and Cesarea: afterward Philippi, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome itself. A centurion, or captain, of that called the Italian band - That is, troop or company.

2. Who gave much alms to the people - That is, to the Jews, many of whom were at that time extremely poor.

3. He saw in a vision - Not in a trance, like Peter: plainly, so as to leave one not accustomed to things of this kind no room to suspect any imposition.

4. Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God - Dare any man say, These were only splendid sins? Or that they were an abomination before God? And yet it is certain, in the Christian sense Cornelius was then an unbeliever. He had not then faith in Christ. So certain it is, that every one who seeks faith in Christ, should seek it in prayer, and doing good to all men: though in strictness what is not exactly according to the Divine rule must stand in need of Divine favour and indulgence.

8. A devout soldier - How many such attendants have our modern officers? A devout soldier would now be looked upon as little better than a deserter from his colours.

10. And he became very hungry - At the usual meal time. The symbols in visions and trances, it is easy to observe, are generally suited to the state of the natural faculties.

11. Tied at the corners - Not all in one knot, but each fastened as it were up to heaven.

14. But Peter said, In nowise, Lord - When God commands a strange or seemingly improper thing, the first objection frequently finds pardon. But it ought not to be repeated. This doubt and delay of St. Peter had several good effects. Hereby the will of God in this important point was made more evident and incontestable. And Peter also, having been so slow of belief himself, could the more easily bear the doubting of his brethren, chap. xi, 2, &c.

15. What God hath purified - Hath made and declared clean. Nothing but what is clean can come down from heaven. St. Peter well remembered this saying in the council at Jerusalem, chap. xv, 9.

16. This was done thrice - To make the deeper impression.

17. While Peter doubted in himself, behold the men - Frequently the things which befall us within and from without at the same time, are a key to each other. The things which thus concur and agree together, ought to be diligently attended to.

19. Behold three men seek thee, arise therefore and go down, and go with them, doubting nothing - How gradually was St. Peter prepared to receive this new admonition of the Spirit! Thus God is went to lead on his children by degrees, always giving them light for the present hour.

24. Cornelius was waiting for them - Not engaging himself in any secular business during that solemn time, but being altogether intent on this one thing.

26. I myself also am a man - And not God, who alone ought to be worshipped, Matt. iv, 10. Have all his pretended successors attended to this?

28. But God hath showed me - He speaks sparingly to them of his former doubt, and his late vision.

29. I ask for what intent ye have sent for me? - St. Peter knew this already. But he puts Cornelius on telling the story, both that the rest might be informed, and Cornelius himself more impressed by the narration: the repetition of which, even as we read it, gives a new dignity and spirit to Peter's succeeding discourse,

30. Four days ago I was fasting - The first of these days he had the vision; the second his messengers came to Joppa; on the third, St. Peter set out; and on the fourth, came to Cesarea.

31. Thy prayer is heard - Doubtless he had been praying for instruction, how to worship God in the most acceptable manner.

33. Now therefore we are all present before God - The language of every truly Christian congregation.

34. I perceive of a truth - More clearly than ever, from such a concurrence of circumstances. That God is not a respecter of persons - Is not partial in his love. The words mean, in a particular sense, that he does not confine his love to one nation; in a general, that he is loving to every man, and willeth all men should be saved.

35. But in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness - He that, first, reverences God, as great, wise, good, the cause, end, and governor of all things; and secondly, from this awful regard to him, not only avoids all known evil, but endeavours, according to the best light he has, to do all things well; is accepted of him - Through Christ, though he knows him not. The assertion is express, and admits of no exception. He is in the favour of God, whether enjoying his written word and ordinances or not. Nevertheless the addition of these is an unspeakable blessing to those who were before in some measure accepted. Otherwise God would never have sent an angel from heaven to direct Cornelius to St. Peter.

36. This is the word which God sent - When he sent his Son into the world, preaching - Proclaiming by him-peace between God and man, whether Jew or Gentile, by the God-man. He is Lord of both; yea, Lord of and over all.

37. Ye know the word which was published - You know the facts in general, the meaning of which I shall now more particularly explain and confirm to you. The baptism which John preached - To which he invited them by his preaching, in token of their repentance. This began in Galilee, which is near Cesarea.

38. How God anointed Jesus - Particularly at his baptism, thereby inaugurating him to his office: with the Holy Ghost and with power - It is worthy our remark, that frequently when the Holy Ghost is mentioned there is added a word particularly adapted to the present circumstance. So the deacons were to be full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, chap. vi, 3. Barnabas was full of the Holy Ghost and faith, chap. xi, 24. The disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost, chap. xiii, 52. And here, where his mighty works are mentioned, Christ himself is said to be anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power. For God was with him-He speaks sparingly here of the majesty of Christ, as considering the state of his hearers.

41. Not now to all the people - As before his death; to us who did eat and drink with him - That is, conversed familiarly and continually with him, in the time of his ministry.

42. It is he who is ordained by God the Judge of the living and the dead - Of all men, whether they are alive at his coming, or had died before it. This was declaring to them, in the strongest terms, how entirely their happiness depended on a timely and humble subjection to him who was to be their final Judge.

43. To him give all the prophets witness - Speaking to heathens he does not quote any in particular; that every one who believeth in him - Whether he be Jew or Gentile; receiveth remission of sins - Though he had not before either feared God, or worked righteousness.

44. The Holy Ghost fell on all that were hearing the word - Thus were they consecrated to God, as the first fruits of the Gentiles. And thus did God give a clear and satisfactory evidence, that he had accepted them as well as the Jews.

45. The believers of the circumcision - The believing Jews.

47. Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost? - He does not say they have the baptism of the Spirit; therefore they do not need baptism

with water. But just the contrary: if they have received the Spirit, then baptize them with water. How easily is this question decided, if we will take the word of God for our rule! Either men have received the Holy Ghost or not. If they have not, Repent, saith God, and be baptized, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. If they have, if they are already baptized with the Holy Ghost, then who can forbid water?

48. In the name of the Lord - Which implies the Father who anointed him, and the Spirit with which he was anointed to his office. But as the Gentiles had before believed in God the Father, and could not but now believe in the Holy Ghost, under whose powerful influence they were at this very time, there was the less need of taking notice, that they were baptized into the belief and profession of the sacred Three: though doubtless the apostle administered the ordinances in that very form which Christ himself had prescribed.

## XI

4. Peter laid all things before them - So he did not take it ill to be questioned, nor desire to be treated as infallible. And he answers the more mildly because it related to a point which he had not readily believed himself.

5. Being in a trance - Which suspends the use of the outward senses.

14. Saved - With the full Christian salvation, in this world and the world to come.

17. To us, when we believed - The sense is, because we believed, not because we were circumcised, was the Holy Ghost given to us. What was I - A mere instrument in God's hand. They had inquired only concerning his eating with the Gentiles. He satisfies them likewise concerning his baptizing them, and shows that he had done right in going to Cornelius, not only by the command of God, but also by the event, the descent of the Holy Ghost. And who are we that we should withstand God? Particularly by laying down rules of Christian communion which exclude any whom he has admitted into the Church of the first born, from worshipping God together. O that all Church governors would consider how bold an usurpation this is on the authority of the supreme Lord of the Church! O that the sin of thus withstanding God may not be laid to the charge of those, who perhaps with a good intention, but in an over fondness for their own forms, have done it, and are continually doing it.

18. They glorified God - Being thoroughly satisfied. Repentance unto life - True repentance is a change from spiritual death to spiritual life, and leads to life everlasting.

19. They who had been dispersed - St. Luke here resumes the thread of his narration, in the very words wherewith he broke it off, chap. viii, 6. As far as Phenicia to the north, Cyprus to the west, and Antioch to the east.

20. Some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene - Who were more accustomed to converse with the Gentiles. Who coming into Antioch - Then the capital of Syria, and, next to Rome and Alexandria, the most considerable city of the empire. Spake to the Greeks - As the Greeks were the most celebrated of the Gentile nations near Judea, the Jews called all the Gentiles by that name. Here we have the first account of the preaching the Gospel to the idolatrous Gentiles. All those to whom it had been preached before, did at least worship one God, the God of Israel.

21. And the hand of the Lord - That is, the power of his Spirit.

26. And the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch - Here it was that they first received this standing appellation. They were before termed Nazarenes and Galileans.

28. Agabus rising up - In the congregation. All the world - The word frequently signifies all the Roman empire. And so it is doubtless to be taken here.

29. Then - Understanding the distress they would otherwise be in on that account, the disciples determined to send relief to the brethren in Judea - Who herein received a manifest proof of the reality of their conversion.

30. Sending it to the elders - Who gave it to the deacons, to be distributed by them, as every one had need.

## XII

1. About that time - So wisely did God mix rest and persecution in due time and measure succeeding each other. Herod - Agrippa; the latter was his Roman, the former his Syrian name. He was the grandson of Herod the Great, nephew to Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist; brother to Herodias, and father to that Agrippa before whom St. Paul afterward made his defense. Caligula made him king of the tetrarchy of his uncle Philip, to which he afterward added the territories of Antipas. Claudius made him also king of Judea, and added thereto the dominions of Lysanias.

2. James the brother of John - So one of the brothers went to God the first, the other the last of the apostles.

3. Then were the days of unleavened bread - At which the Jews came together from all parts.

4. Four quaternions - Sixteen men, who watched by turns day and night.

5. Continual prayer was made for him - Yet when their prayer was answered, they could scarce believe it, ver. 15. But why had they not prayed for St. James also? Because he was put to death as soon as apprehended.

6. Peter was sleeping - Easy and void of fear; between two soldiers - Sufficiently secured to human appearance.

7. His chains - With which his right arm was bound to one of the soldiers, and his left arm to the other.

8. Gird thyself - Probably he had put off his girdle, sandals, and upper garment, before he lay down to sleep.

10. The first and second ward - At each of which doubtless was a guard of soldiers. The gate opened of its own accord - Without either Peter or the angel touching it. And they went on through one street - That Peter might know which way to go. And the angel departed from him - Being himself sufficient for what remained to be done.

11. Now I know of a truth - That this is not a vision, ver. 9.

12. And having considered - What was best to be done. Many were gathered together - At midnight.

13. The gate - At some distance from the house; to hearken - If any knocked.

14. And knowing Peter's voice - Bidding her open the door.

15. They said, Thou art mad - As we say, Sure you are not in your senses to talk so. It is his angel - It was a common opinion among the Jews, that every man had his particular guardian angel, who frequently assumed both his shape and voice. But this is a point on which the Scriptures are silent.

17. Beckoning to them - Many of whom being amazed, were talking together. And he said, Show these things to James - The brother or kinsman of our Lord, and author of the epistle which bears his name. He appears to have been a person of considerable weight and importance, probably the chief overseer of that province, and of the Church in Jerusalem in particular. He went into another place - Where he might be better concealed till the storm was over.

19. Herod commanded them to be put to death - And thus the wicked suffered in the room of the righteous. And going down from Judea - With shame, for not having brought forth Peter, according to his promise.

20. Having gained Blastus - To their side, they sued for, and obtained peace - Reconciliation with Herod. And so the Christians of those parts were, by the providence of God, delivered from scarcity. Their country was nourished - Was provided with, corn, by the king's country - Thus Hiram also, king of Tyre, desired of Solomon food or corn for his household, 1 Kings v, 9.

21. And on a set day - Which was solemnized yearly, in honour of Claudius Cesar; Herod, arrayed in royal apparel - In a garment so wrought with silver, that the rays of the rising sun striking upon, and being reflected from it, dazzled the eyes of the beholders. The people shouted, It is the voice of a God - Such profane flattery they frequently paid to princes. But the commonness of a wicked custom rather increases than lessens the guilt of it.

23. And immediately - God does not delay to vindicate his injured honour; an angel of the Lord smote him - Of this other historians say nothing: so wide a difference there is between Divine and human history! An angel of the Lord brought out Peter; an angel smote Herod. Men did not see the instruments in either case. These were only known to the people of God. Because he gave not glory to God - He willingly received it to himself, and by this sacrilege filled up the measure of his iniquities. So then vengeance tarried not. And he was eaten by worms, or vermin - How changed! And on the fifth day expired in exquisite torture. Such was the event! The persecutor perished, and the Gospel grew and multiplied.

25. Saul returned - To Antioch; taking John, surnamed Mark - The son of Mary, (at whose house the disciples met, to pray for Peter,) who was sister to Barnabas.

## XIII

1. Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod - His foster brother, now freed from the temptations of a court.

2. Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them - This was not ordaining them. St. Paul was ordained long before, and that not of men, neither by man: it was only inducting him to the province for which our Lord had appointed him from the beginning, and which was now revealed to the prophets and teachers. In consequence of this they fasted, prayed, and laid their hands on them, a rite which was used not in ordination only, but in blessing, and on many other occasions.

3. Then having fasted - Again. Thus they did also, chap. xiv, 23.

5. In the synagogues - Using all opportunities that offered.

6. Paphos was on the western, Salamis on the eastern part of the island.

7. The proconsul - The Roman governor of Cyprus, a prudent man - And therefore not overswayed by Elymas, but desirous to inquire farther.

9. Then Saul, who was also called Paul - It is not improbable, that coming now among the Romans, they would naturally adapt his name to their own language, and so called him Paul instead of Saul. Perhaps the family of the proconsul might be the first who addressed to or spoke of him by this name. And from this time, being the apostle of the Gentiles, he himself used the name which was more familiar to them.

10. O full of all guile - As a false prophet, and all mischief - As a magician. Thou son of the devil - A title well suited to a magician; and one who not only was himself unrighteous, but laboured to keep others from all goodness. Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? - Even now thou hast heard the truth of the Gospel.

11. And immediately a mist - Or dimness within, and darkness without, fell upon him.

12. Being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord - Confirmed by such a miracle.

13. John withdrawing from them returned - Tired with the fatigue, or shrinking from danger.

14. Antioch in Pisidia - Different from the Antioch mentioned ver. 1.

15. And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the chief of the synagogue sent to them - The law was read over once every year, a portion of it every Sabbath: to which was added a lesson taken out of the prophets. After this was over, any one might speak to the people, on any subject he thought convenient. Yet it was a circumstance of decency which Paul and Barnabas would hardly omit, to acquaint the rulers with their desire of doing it: probably by some message before the service began.

16. Ye that fear God - Whether proselytes or heathens.

17. The God - By such a commemoration of God's favours to their fathers, at once their minds were conciliated to the speaker, they were convinced of their duty to God, and invited to believe his promise, and the accomplishment of it. The six verses 17-22, contain the whole sum of the Old Testament. Of this people - Paul here chiefly addresses himself to those whom he styles, Ye that fear God: he speaks of Israel first; and ver. 26, speaks more directly to the Israelites themselves. Chose - And this exalted the people; not any merit or goodness of their own, Ezek. xx, 5. Our fathers - Abraham and his posterity. Isaiah i, 2.

18. Deut. i, 31.

19. Seven nations - Enumerated Deut. vii, 1; about four hundred and fifty years - That is, from the choice of the fathers to the dividing of the land; it was about four hundred and fifty years.

21. He gave them Saul forty years - Including the time wherein Samuel judged Israel.

22. Having removed him - Hence they might understand that the dispensations of God admit of various changes. I have found David, a man after my own heart - This expression is to be taken in a limited sense. David was such at that time, but not at all times. And he was so, in that respect, as he performed all God's will, in the particulars there mentioned: But he was not a man after God's own heart, in other respects, wherein he performed his own will. In the matter of Uriah, for instance, he was as far from being a man after God's own heart as Saul himself was. It is therefore a very gross, as well as dangerous mistake, to suppose this is the character of David in every part of his

behaviour. We must beware of this, unless we would recommend adultery and murder as things after God's own heart.

1 Sam. xvi, 12, 13.

24. John having first preached - He mentions this, as a thing already known to them. And so doubtless it was. For it gave so loud an alarm to the whole Jewish nation, as could not but be heard of in foreign countries, at least as remote as Pisidia.

25. His course - His work was quickly finished, and might therefore well be termed a course or race. Luke iii, 16.

27. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers - He here anticipates a strong objection, "Why did not they at Jerusalem, and especially their rulers, believe?" They know not him, because they understood not those very prophets whom they read or heard continually. Their very condemning him, innocent as he was, proves that they understood not the prophecies concerning him.

29. They fulfilled all things that were written of him - So far could they go, but no farther.

31. He was seen many days by them who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem - This last journey both presupposes all the rest, and was the most important of all.

33. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee - It is true, he was the Son of God from eternity. The meaning therefore is, I have this day declared thee to be my Son. As St. Paul elsewhere, declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead, Rom. i, 4. And it is with peculiar propriety and beauty that God is said to have begotten him, on the day when he raised him from the dead, as he seemed then to be born out of the earth anew. Psalm ii, 7.

34. No more to return to corruption - That is, to die no more. I will give you the sure mercies of David - The blessings promised to David in Christ. These are sure, certain, firm, solid, to every true believer in him. And hence the resurrection of Christ necessarily follows; for without this, those blessings could not be given. Isaiah lv, 3.

35. He saith - David in the name of the Messiah. Psalm xvi, 10.

36. David, having served the will of God in his generation, fell asleep - So his service extended not itself beyond the bounds of the common age of man: but the service of the Messiah to all generations, as his kingdom to all ages. Served the will of God - Why art thou here thou who art yet in the world? Is it not that thou also mayest serve the will of God? Art thou serving it now? Doing all his will? And was added to his fathers - Not only in body. This expression refers to the soul also, and supposes the immortality of it.

39. Every one that believeth is justified from all things - Has the actual forgiveness of all his sins, at the very time of his believing; from which ye could not be justified - Not only ye cannot now; but ye never could. For it afforded no expiation for presumptuous sins. By the law of Moses - The whole Mosaic institution! The division of the law into moral and ceremonial was not so common among the Jews, as it is among us. Nor does the apostle here consider it at all: but Moses and Christ are opposed to each other.

40. Beware - A weighty and seasonable admonition. No reproof is as yet added to it.

41. I work a work which ye will in nowise believe - This was originally spoken to those, who would not believe that God would ever deliver them from the power of the Chaldeans. But it is applicable to any who will not believe the promises, or the works of God. Hab. i, 5.

42. When the Jews were going out - Probably many of them, not bearing to hear him, went out before he had done. The Sabbath between - So the Jews call to this day the Sabbath between the

first day of the month Tisri (on which the civil year begins) and the tenth of the same month, which is the solemn day of expiation.

43. Who speaking to them - More familiarly, persuaded them to continue - For trials were at hand, in the grace of God - That is, to adhere to the Gospel or Christian faith.

46. Then Paul and Barnabas speaking boldly, said - Those who hinder others must be publicly reproved. It was necessary - Though ye are not worthy: he shows that he had not preached to them, from any confidence of their believing, but seeing ye judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life - They indeed judged none but themselves worthy of it. Yet their rejecting of the Gospel was the same as saying, "We are unworthy of eternal life." Behold! - A thing now present! An astonishing revolution! We turn to the Gentiles - Not that they left off preaching to the Jews in other places. But they now determined to lose no more time at Antioch on their ungrateful countrymen, but to employ themselves wholly in doing what they could for the conversion of the Gentiles there.

47. For so hath the Lord commanded us - By sending us forth, and giving us an opportunity of fulfilling what he had foretold. I have set thee - The Father speaks to Christ. Isaiah xlix, 6.

48. As many as were ordained to eternal life - St. Luke does not say fore-ordained. He is not speaking of what was done from eternity, but of what was then done, through the preaching of the Gospel. He is describing that ordination, and that only, which was at the very time of hearing it. During this sermon those believed, says the apostle, to whom God then gave power to believe. It is as if he had said, "They believed, whose hearts the Lord opened;" as he expresses it in a clearly parallel place, speaking of the same kind of ordination, chap. xvi, 14, &c. It is observable, the original word is not once used in Scripture to express eternal predestination of any kind. The sum is, all those and those only, who were now ordained, now believed. Not that God rejected the rest: it was his will that they also should have been saved: but they thrust salvation from them. Nor were they who then believed constrained to believe. But grace was then first copiously offered them. And they did not thrust it away, so that a great multitude even of Gentiles were converted. In a word, the expression properly implies, a present operation of Divine grace working faith in the hearers.

## XIV

1. They so spake - Persecution having increased their strength.

9. He had faith to be healed - He felt the power of God in his soul; and thence knew it was sufficient to heal his body also.

11. The gods are come down - Which the heathens supposed they frequently did; Jupiter especially. But how amazingly does the prince of darkness blind the minds of them that believe not! The Jews would not own Christ's Godhead, though they saw him work numberless miracles. On the other hand, the heathens seeing mere men work one miracle, were for deifying them immediately.

13. The priest of Jupiter - Whose temple and image were just without the gate of the city, brought garlands - To put on the victims, and bulls - The usual offerings to Jupiter.

14. They sprang in among the people, crying out - As in a fire, or other sudden and great danger.

15. To turn from these vanities - From worshipping any but the true God. He does not deign to call them gods; unto the living God - Not like these dead idols; who made the heaven and the earth, the sea - Each of which they supposed to have its own gods.

16. Who in times past - He prevents their objection, "But if these things are so, we should have heard the in from our fathers." Suffered - An awful judgment, all nations - The multitude of them that err does not turn error into truth, to walk in their own ways - The idolatries which they had chosen.

17. He left not himself without witness - For the heathens had always from God himself a testimony both of his existence and of his providence; in that he did good - Even by punishments he testifies of himself; but more peculiarly by benefits; giving rain - By which air, earth, and sea, are, as it were, all joined together; from heaven - The seat of God; to which St. Paul probably pointed while he spoke, filling the body with food, the soul with gladness.

19. Who persuaded the multitude - Moved with equal ease either to adore or murder him.

20. But as the disciples stood round - Probably after sunset. The enraged multitude would scarce have suffered it in the day time: he rose and went into the city - That he should be able to do this, just after he had been left for dead, was a miracle little less than a resurrection from the dead. Especially considering the manner wherein the Jewish malefactors were stoned. The witnesses first threw as large a stone as they could lift, with all possible violence upon his head, which alone was sufficient to dash the skull in pieces. All the people then joined, as long as any motion or token of life remained.

23. When they had ordained them presbyters in every Church - Out of those who were themselves but newly converted. So soon can God enable even a babe in Christ to build up others in the common faith: they commended them to the Lord - An expression implying faith in Christ, as well as love to the brethren.

25. Perga and Attalia were cities of Pamphylia.

26. Recommended to the grace - Or favour, of God, for the work which they had fulfilled - This shows the nature and design of that laying on of hands, which was mentioned chap. xiii, 3.

## XV

1. Coming down from Judea - Perhaps to supply what they thought Paul and Barnabas had omitted.

2. They (the brethren) determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others should go up to Jerusalem about this question - This is the journey to which St. Paul refers, Gal. ii, 1, 2, when he says he went up by Revelation: which is very consistent with this; for the Church in sending them might be directed by a Revelation made either immediately to St. Paul, or to some other person, relating to so important an affair. Important indeed it was, that these Jewish impositions should be solemnly opposed in time; because multitudes of converts were still zealous for the law, and ready to contend for the observance of it. Indeed many of the Christians of Antioch would have acquiesced in the determination of Paul alone. But as many others might have prejudices against him, for his having been so much concerned for the Gentiles, it was highly expedient to take the concurrent judgment of all the apostles on this occasion.

4. They were received - That is solemnly welcomed.

5. But certain Pharisees - For even believers are apt to retain their former turn of mind, and prejudices derived therefrom. The law of Moses - The whole law, both moral and ritual.

7. After much debate - It does not appear that this was among the apostles themselves. But if it had, if they themselves had debated at first, yet might their final decision be from an unerring direction. For how really soever they were inspired, we need not suppose their inspiration was always so instantaneous and express, as to supersede any deliberation in their own minds, or any consultation with each other. Peter rose up - This is the last time he is mentioned in the Acts.

8. God bare them witness - That he had accepted them, by giving them the Holy Ghost.

9. Purifying - This word is repeated from chap. x, 15; their hearts - The heart is the proper seat of purity; by faith - Without concerning themselves with the Mosaic law.

10. Now therefore - Seeing these things are so: why tempt ye God? - Why do ye provoke him to anger, by putting so heavy a yoke on their neck?

11. The Lord Jesus - He does not here say our Lord; because in this solemn place he means the Lord of all, we - Jews, shall be saved even as they - Gentiles, namely, through the grace of the Lord Jesus, not by our observance of the ceremonial law.

12. Miracles and wonders - By which also what St. Peter had said was confirmed.

14. Simon hath declared - James, the apostle of the Hebrews, calls Peter by his Hebrew name. To take out of them a people for his name - That is to believe in him, to be called by his name.

15. To this agree - St. Peter had urged the plain fact, which St. James confirms by Scripture prophecy. The words of the prophets - One of whom is immediately cited.

16. After this - After the Jewish dispensation expires. I will build again the fallen tabernacle of David - By raising from his seed the Christ, who shall build on the ruins of his fallen tabernacle a spiritual and eternal kingdom. Amos ix, 11.

17. The Gentiles on whom my name is called - That is, who are called by my name; who are my people.

18. Known unto God are all his works from eternity - Which the apostle infers from the prophecy itself, and the accomplishment of it. And this conversion of the Gentiles being known to him from eternity, we ought not to think a new or strange thing. It is observable, he does not speak of God's works in the natural world, (which had been nothing to his present purpose,) but of his dealing with the children of men. Now he could not know these, without knowing the characters and actions of particular persons, on a correspondence with which the wisdom and goodness of his providential dispensations is founded. For instance, he could not know how he would deal with heathen idolaters (whom he was now calling into his Church) without knowing there would be heathen idolaters: and yet this was a thing purely contingent, a thing as dependent on the freedom of the human mind, as any we can imagine. This text, therefore, among a thousand more, is an unanswerable proof, that God foreknows future contingencies, though there are difficulties relating hereto which men cannot solve.

20. To abstain from fornication - Which even the philosophers among the heathens did not account any fault. It was particularly frequent in the worship of their idols, on which account they are here named together. And from things strangled - That is, from whatever had been killed, without pouring out the blood. When God first permitted man to eat flesh, he commanded Noah, and in him all his posterity, whenever they killed any creature for food, to abstain from the blood thereof.

It was to be poured upon the ground as water: doubtless in honour of that blood which was in due time poured out for the sin of the world.

21. Perhaps the connection is, To the Jews we need write nothing on these heads; for they hear the law continually.

22. With the whole Church - Which therefore had a part therein; to send chosen men - Who might put it beyond all dispute, that this was the judgment of the apostles and all the brethren.

23. Writing thus, and sending it by their hand - The whole conduct of this affair plainly shows that the Church in those days had no conception of St. Peter's primacy, or of his being the chief judge in controversies. For the decree is drawn up, not according to his, but the Apostle James's proposal and direction: and that in the name, not of St. Peter, but of all the apostles and elders, and of the whole Church. Nay, St. Peter's name is not mentioned at all, either in the order for sending to Jerusalem on the question, ver. 2, or in the address of the messengers concerning it, ver. 4, or in the letter which was written in answer.

24. Forasmuch as, &c. - The simplicity, weightiness, and conciseness of this letter are highly observable.

26. Men that have hazarded their lives - This is spoken of Paul and Barnabas.

27. Who will tell you the same things - Which we have written.

28. These necessary things - All of these were necessary for that time. But the first of them was not necessary long; and the direction concerning it was therefore repealed by the same Spirit, as we read in the former Epistle to the Corinthians.

29. Blood - The eating which was never permitted the children of God from the beginning of the world. Nothing can be clearer than this. For,

1. From Adam to Noah no man ate flesh at all; consequently no man then ate blood.
2. When God allowed Noah and his posterity to eat flesh, he absolutely forbade them to eat blood; and accordingly this, with the other six precepts of Noah, was delivered down from Noah to Moses.
3. God renewed this prohibition by Moses, which was not repealed from the time of Moses till Christ came.
4. Neither after his coming did any presume to repeal this decree of the Holy Ghost, till it seemed good to the bishop of Rome so to do, about the middle of the eighth century.
5. From that time those Churches which acknowledged his authority held the eating of blood to be an indifferent thing. But,
6. In all those Churches which never did acknowledge the bishop of Rome's authority, it never was allowed to eat blood; nor is it allowed at this day. This is the plain fact; let men reason as plausibly as they please on one side or the other. From which keeping yourselves ye will do well - That is, ye will find a blessing. This gentle manner of concluding was worthy the apostolical wisdom and goodness. But how soon did succeeding councils of inferior authority change it into the style of anathemas! Forms which have proved an occasion of consecrating some of the most devilish passions under the most sacred names; and like some ill-adjusted weapons of war, are most likely to hurt the hand from which they are thrown.

35. Paul and Barnabas abode in Antioch - And it was during this time that Peter came down from Jerusalem, and that St. Paul withstood him to the face, for separating himself from the Gentiles, Gal. ii, 11, &c.

36. Let us go and visit the brethren in every city where we have preached - This was all that St. Paul designed at first; but it was not all that God designed by his journey, whose providence carried him much farther than he intended. And see how they do - How their souls prosper: how they grow in faith, hope love: what else ought to be the grand and constant inquiry in every ecclesiastical visitation? Reader, how dost thou do?

37. Barnabas counselled to take John - His kinsman.

38. But Paul thought it not right - To trust him again, who had deserted them before: who had shrunk from the labour and danger of converting those they were now going to confirm.

39. And there was a sharp contention - Literally, a paroxysm, or fit of a fever. But nothing in the text implies that the sharpness was on both sides. It is far more probable that it was not; that St. Paul, who had the right on his side, as he undoubtedly had,) maintained it with love. And Barnabas taking Mark with him, sailed away to Cyprus - Forsaking the work in which he was engaged, he went away to his own country.

40. But Paul departed - Held on his intended course: being recommended by the brethren to the grace of God - We do not find that Barnabas stayed for this. O how mighty is the grace of God! which in the midst of the world, in the midst of sin, among so many snares of Satan, and in spite of the incredible weakness and depravity of nature, yet overcomes all opposition, sanctifies, sustains, and preserves us to the end! It appears not only that Paul and Barnabas were afterward thoroughly reconciled, 1 Cor. ix, 6; Gal. ii, 9; but also that John was again admitted by St. Paul as a companion in his labours, Colossians iv, 10; Phil. i, 24; 2 Tim. iv, 11.

## XVI

3. He took and circumcised him because of the Jews - The unbelieving Jews, to whom he designed he should preach. For they would not have conversed with him at all, so long as he was uncircumcised.

6. And having gone through Phrygia - And spoken there what was sufficient, as well as in the region of Galatia, being forbid by the Spirit (probably by an inward dictate) to speak as yet in the proconsular Asia, the time for it not being come.

7. Coming to Mysia, and passing it by, as being a part of Asia, they attempted to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not - Forbidding them as before. Sometimes a strong impression, for which we are not able to give any account, is not altogether to be despised.

9. A vision appeared to Paul by night - It was not a dream, though it was by night. No other dream is mentioned in the New Testament than that of Joseph and of Pilate's wife. A man of Macedonia - Probably an angel clothed in the Macedonian habit, or using the language of the country, and representing the inhabitants of it. Help us - Against Satan, ignorance, and sin.

10. We sought to go into Macedonia - This is the first place in which St. Luke intimates his attendance on the apostle. And here he does it only in an oblique manner. Nor does he throughout the history once mention his own name, or any one thing which he did or said for the service of

Christianity; though Paul speaks of him in the most honourable terms, Colossians iv, 14; 2 Tim. iv, 11; and probably as the brother whose praise in the Gospel went through all the Churches, 2 Cor. viii, 18. The same remark may be made on the rest of the sacred historians, who every one of them show the like amiable modesty.

11. We ran with a straight course - Which increased their confidence that God had called them.

12. The first city - Neapolis was the first city they came to in that part of Macedonia which was nearest to Asia: in that part which was farthest from it, Philippi. The river Strymon ran between them. Philippi was a Roman colony.

13. We went out of the gate - The Jews usually held their religious assemblies (either by choice or constraint) at a distance from the heathens: by a river side - Which was also convenient for purifying themselves. Where prayer was wont to be made - Though it does not appear there was any house built there. We spake - At first in a familiar manner. Paul did not immediately begin to preach.

14. A worshipper of God - Probably acquainted with the prophetic writings whose heart the Lord opened - The Greek word properly refers to the opening of the eyes: and the heart has its eyes, Eph. i, 18. These are closed by nature and to open them is the peculiar work of God.

15. She was baptized and her family - Who can believe that in so many families there was no infant? Or that the Jews, who were so long accustomed to circumcise their children, would not now devote them to God by baptism? She entreated us - The souls of the faithful cleave to those by whom they were gained to God. She constrained us - By her importunity. They did not immediately comply, lest any should imagine they sought their own profit by coming into Macedonia.

17. These men are - A great truth: but St. Paul did not need, nor would accept, of such testimony.

19. The magistrates - The supreme magistrates of the city. In the next verse they are called by a title which often signifies pretors. These officers exercised both the military and civil authority.

20. Being Jews - A nation peculiarly despised by the Romans.

21. And teach customs which it is not lawful for us to receive - The world has received all the rules and doctrines of all the philosophers that ever were. But this is a property of Gospel truth: it has something in it peculiarly intolerable to the world.

23. They laid many stripes upon them - Either they did not immediately say they were Romans, or in the tumult it was not regarded. Charging the jailer - Perhaps rather to quiet the people than because they thought them criminal.

24. Secured their feet in the stocks - These were probably those large pieces of wood, in use among the Romans, which not only loaded the legs of the prisoner, but also kept them extended in a very painful manner.

25. Paul and Silas sung a hymn to God - Notwithstanding weariness, hunger stripes, and blood. And the prisoners heard - A song to which they were not accustomed.

28. But Paul cried - As they were all then in the dark, it is not easy to say, how Paul knew of the jailer's purpose; unless it were by some immediate notice from God, which is by no means incredible. With a loud voice - Through earnestness, and because he was at some distance. Do thyself no harm - Although the Christian faith opens the prospect into another life, yet it absolutely forbids and effectually prevents a man's discharging himself from this.

30. Sirs - He did not style them so the day before. What must I do to be saved? - From the guilt I feel and the vengeance I fear? Undoubtedly God then set his sins in array before him, and convinced him in the clearest and strongest manner that the wrath of God abode upon him.

31. Thou shalt be saved and thy household - If ye believe. They did so, and were saved.

33. He washed their stripes - It should not be forgot, that the apostles had not the power of working miraculous cures when they pleased, either on themselves, or their dearest friends. Nor was it expedient they should, since it would have frustrated many wise designs of God, which were answered by their sufferings.

34. He set a table before them and rejoiced - Faith makes a man joyful, prudent, liberal.

35. The pretors sent - Being probably terrified by the earthquake; saying, Let those men go - How different from the charge given a few hours before! And how great an ease of mind to the jailer!

37. They have beaten us publicly, being Roman - St. Paul does not always plead this privilege. But in a country where they were entire strangers, such treatment might have brought upon them a suspicion of having been guilty of some uncommon crime, and so have hindered the course of the Gospel.

40. When they had seen the brethren, they comforted them and departed - Though many circumstances now invited their stay, yet they wisely complied with the request of the magistrates, that they might not seem to express any degree of obstinacy or revenge, or give any suspicion of a design to stir up the people.

## XVII

1. And taking their journey through Amphipolis and Apollonia - St. Luke seems to have been left at Philippi; and to have continued in those parts, travelling from place to place among the Churches, till St. Paul returned thither. For here he leaves off speaking of himself as one of St. Paul's company; neither does he resume that style, till we find them together there, chap. xx, 5, 6. After this he constantly uses it to the end of the history. Amphipolis and Apollonia were cities of Macedonia.

2. And Paul, according to his custom - Of doing all things, as far as might be, in a regular manner, went in to them three Sabbath days - Not excluding the days between.

4. Of the principal women, not a few - Our free thinkers pique themselves upon observing, that women are more religious than men; and this, in compliment both to religion and good manners, they impute to the weakness of their understandings. And indeed as far as nature can go, in imitating religion by performing the outward acts of it, this picture of religion may make a fairer show in women than in men, both by reason of their more tender passions, and their modesty, which will make those actions appear to more advantage. But in the case of true religion, which always implies taking up the cross, especially in time of persecution, women lie naturally under a great disadvantage, as having less courage than men. So that their embracing the Gospel was a stronger evidence of the power of him whose strength is perfected in weakness, as a stronger assistance of the Holy Spirit was needful for them to overcome their natural fearfulness.

11. These were more ingenuous - Or generous. To be teachable in the things of God is true generosity of soul. The receiving the word with all readiness of mind, and the most accurate search into the truth, are well consistent.

12. Many of the - Of the Jews. And of the Grecian women - Who were followed by their husbands.

16. While Paul was waiting for the - Having no design, as it seems, to preach at Athens, but his zeal for God drew him into it unawares, without staying till his companions came.

18. Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosopher - The Epicureans entirely denied a providence, and held the world to be the effect of mere chance; asserting sensual pleasure to be man's chief good, and that the soul and body died together. The Stoics held, that matter was eternal; that all things were governed by irresistible fate; that virtue was its own sufficient reward, and vice its own sufficient punishment. It is easy to see, how happily the apostle levels his discourse at some of the most important errors of each, while, without expressly attacking either, he gives a plain summary of his own religious principles. What would this babbler say? - Such is the language of natural reason, full of, and satisfied with itself. Yet even here St. Paul had some fruit; though nowhere less than at Athens. And no wonder, since this city was a seminary of philosophers, who have ever been the pest of true religion. He seemeth to be a proclaimer - This he returns upon them at the 23rd verse; of strange gods - Such as are not known even at Athens. Because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection - A God and a goddess. And as stupid as this mistake was, it is the less to be wondered at, since the Athenians might as well count the resurrection a deity, as shame, famine, and many others.

19. The Areopagus, or hill of Mars, (dedicated to Mars, the heathen God of war,) was the place where the Athenians held their supreme court of judicature. But it does not appear he was carried thither as a criminal. The original number of its Judges was twelve; but afterward it increased to three hundred. These were generally men of the greatest families in Athens, and were famed for justice and integrity.

21. And the strangers sojourning there - And catching the distemper of them. Some new thing - The Greek word signifies some newer thing. New things quickly grew cheap, and they wanted those that were newer still.

22. Then Paul standing in the midst of the Areopagus - An ample theatre; said - Giving them a lecture of natural divinity, with admirable wisdom, acuteness, fulness, and courtesy. They inquire after new things: Paul in his divinely philosophical discourse, begins with the first, and goes on to the last things, both which were new things to them. He points out the origin and the end of all things, concerning which they had so many disputes, and equally refutes both the Epicurean and Stoic. I perceive - With what clearness and freedom does he speak! Paul against Athens!

23. I found an altar - Some suppose this was set up by Socrates, to express in a covert way his devotion to the only true God, while he derided the plurality of the heathen gods, for which he was condemned to death: and others, that whoever erected this altar, did it in honour to the God of Israel, of whom there was no image, and whose name Jehovah was never made known to the idolatrous Gentiles. Him proclaim I unto you - Thus he fixes the wandering attention of these blind philosophers; proclaiming to them an unknown, and yet not a new God.

24. God who made the world - Thus is demonstrated even to reason, the one true, good God; absolutely different from the creatures, from every part of the visible creation.

25. Neither is he served as though he needed any thing - or person - The Greek word equally takes in both. To all - That live and breathe;-in him we live; and breathe - In him we move. By breathing life is continued. I breathe this moment: the next is not in my power: and all things - For in him we are. So exactly do the parts of this discourse answer each other.

26. He hath made of one blood the whole nation of men - By this expression the apostle showed them in the most unaffected manner, that though he was a Jew, be was not enslaved to any narrow views, but looked on all mankind as his brethren: having determined the times - That it is God who gave men the earth to inhabit, Paul proves from the order of times and places, showing the highest wisdom of the Disposer, superior to all human counsels. And the bounds of their habitation - By mountains, seas, rivers, and the like.

27. If haply - The way is open; God is ready to be found. But he will lay no force upon man; they might feel after him - This is in the midst between seeking and finding. Feeling being the lowest and grossest of all our senses, is fitly applied to the low knowledge of God; though he be not far from every one of us - We need not go far to seek or find him. He is very near us; in us. It is only perverse reason which thinks he is afar off.

28. In him - Not in ourselves, we live, and move, and have our being - This denotes his necessary, intimate, and most efficacious presence. No words can better express the continual and necessary dependence of all created beings, in their existence and all their operations, on the first and almighty cause, which the truest philosophy as well as divinity teaches. As certain also of your own poets have said - Aratus, whose words these are, was an Athenian, who lived almost three hundred years before this time. They are likewise to be found, with the alteration of one letter only, in the hymn of Cleanthes to Jupiter or the supreme being, one of the purest and finest pieces of natural religion in the whole world of Pagan antiquity.

29. We ought not to think - A tender expression especially in the first per son plural. As if he had said, Can God himself be a less noble being than we who are his offspring? Nor does he only here deny, that these are like God, but that they have any analogy to him at all, so as to be capable of representing him.

30. The times of ignorance - What! does he object ignorance to the knowing Athenians? Yes, and they acknowledge it by this very altar. God overlooked - As one paraphrases, "The beams of his eye did in a manner shoot over it." He did not appear to take notice of them, by sending express messages to them as he did to the Jews. But now - This day, this hour, saith Paul, puts an end to the Divine forbearance, and brings either greater mercy or punishment. Now he commandeth all men every where to repent - There is a dignity and grandeur in this expression, becoming an ambassador from the King of heaven. And this universal demand of repentance declared universal guilt in the strongest manner, and admirably confronted the pride of the haughtiest Stoic of them all. At the same time it bore down the idle plea of fatality. For how could any one repent of doing what he could not but have done?

31. He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world - How fitly does he speak this, in their supreme court of justice? By the man - So he speaks, suiting himself to the capacity of his hearers. Whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead - God raising Jesus demonstrated hereby, that he was to be the glorious Judge of all. We are by no means to imagine that this was all which the apostle intended to have said, but the indolence of some of his hearers and the petulancy of others cut him short.

32. Some mocked - Interrupting him thereby. They took offense at that which is the principal motive of faith, from the pride of reason. And having once stumbled at this, they rejected all the rest.

33. So Paul departed - Leaving his hearers divided in their judgment.

34. Among whom was even Dionysius the Areopagite - One of the Judges of that court: on whom some spurious writings have been fathered in later ages, by those who are fond of high sounding nonsense.

## XVIII

1. Paul departing from Athens - He did not stay there long. The philosophers there were too easy, too indolent, and too wise in their own eyes to receive the Gospel.

2. Claudius, the Roman emperor, had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome - All who were Jews by birth. Whether they were Jews or Christians by religion, the Roman were too stately to regard.

3. They were tent makers by trade - For it was a rule among the Jews (and why is it not among the Christians?) to bring up all their children to some trade, were they ever so rich or noble.

5. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia - Silas seems to have stayed a considerable time at Berea: but Timotheus had come to the apostle while he was at Athens, and been sent by him to comfort and confirm the Church at Thessalonica, 1 Thess. iii, 1-5. But now at length both Silas and Timotheus came to the apostle at Corinth. Paul was pressed in spirit - The more probably from what Silas and Timotheus related. Every Christian ought diligently to observe any such pressure in his own spirit, and if it agree with Scripture, to follow it: if he does not he will feel great heaviness.

6. He shook his raiment - To signify he would from that time refrain from them: and to intimate, that God would soon shake them off as unworthy to be numbered among his people. I am pure - None can say this but he that has born a full testimony against sin. From henceforth I will go to the Gentiles - But not to them altogether. He did not break off all intercourse with the Jews even at Corinth. Only he preached no more in their synagogue.

7. He went into the house of one named Justus - A Gentile, and preached there, though probably he still lodged with Aquila.

8. And many hearing - The conversation of Crispus, and the preaching of Paul.

10. I am with thee: therefore fear not all the learning, politeness, grandeur, or power of the inhabitants of this city. Speak and hold not thy peace - For thy labour shall not be in vain. For I have much people in this city - So he prophetically calls them that afterward believed.

11. He continued there a year and six months - A long time! But how few souls are now gained in a longer time than this? Who is in the fault? Generally both teachers and hearers.

12. When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia - Of which Corinth was the chief city. This Gallio, the brother of the famous Seneca, is much commended both by him and by other writers, for the sweetness and generosity of his temper, and easiness of his behaviour. Yet one thing he lacked! But he knew it not and had no concern about it.

15. But if it be - He speaks with the utmost coolness and contempt, a question of names - The names of the heathen gods were fables and shadows. But the question concerning the name of Jesus is of more importance than all things else under heaven. Yet there is this singularity (among a thousand others) in the Christian religion, that human reason, curious as it is in all other things, abhors to inquire into it.

17. Then they all took Sosthenes - The successor of Crispus, and probably Paul's chief accuser, and beat him - It seems because he had occasioned them so much trouble to no purpose, before the judgment seat - One can hardly think in the sight of Gallio, though at no great distance from him. And it seems to have had a happy effect. For Sosthenes himself was afterward a Christian, 1 Cor. i, 1.

18. Paul continued many days - After the year and six months, to confirm the brethren. Aquila having shaved his head - As was the custom in a vow, chap. xxi, 24; Num. vi, 18. At Cenchrea - A seaport town, at a small distance from Corinth.

21. I must by all means keep the feast at Jerusalem - This was not from any apprehension that he was obliged in conscience to keep the Jewish feasts; but to take the opportunity of meeting a great number of his countrymen to whom he might preach Christ, or whom he might farther instruct, or free from the prejudices they had imbibed against him. But I will return to you - So he did, chap. xix, 1.

22. And landing at Cesarea, he went up - Immediately to Jerusalem; and saluted the Church - Eminently so called, being the mother Church of Christian believers: and having kept the feast there, he went down from thence to Antioch.

23. He went over the country of Galatia and Phrygia - It is supposed, spending about four years therein, including the time he stayed at Ephesus.

24. An eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures - Of the Old Testament. Every talent may be of use in the kingdom of God, if joined with the knowledge of the Scriptures and fervour of spirit.

25. This man had been instructed - Though not perfectly, in the way of the Lord - In the doctrine of Christ. Knowing only the baptism of John - Only what John taught those whom he baptized, namely, to repent and believe in a Messiah shortly to appear.

26. He spake - Privately; and taught publicly. Probably he returned to live at Alexandria, soon after he had been baptized by John; and so had no opportunity of being fully acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel, as delivered by Christ and his apostles. And explained to him the way of God more perfectly - He who knows Christ, is able to instruct even those that are mighty in the Scriptures.

27. Who greatly helped through grace - It is through grace only that any gift of any one is profitable to another. Them that had believed - Apollos did not plant, but water. This was the peculiar gift which he had received. And he was better able to convince the Jews, than to convert the heathens.

## XIX

1. Having passed through - Galatia and Phrygia, which were termed the upper parts of Asia Minor. Certain disciples - Who had been formerly baptized by John the Baptist, and since imperfectly instructed in Christianity.

2. Have ye received the Holy Ghost? - The extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, as well as his sanctifying graces? We have not so much as heard - Whether there be any such gifts.

3. Into what were ye baptized - Into what dispensation? To the sealing of what doctrine? Into John's baptism - We were baptized by John and believe what he taught.

4. John baptized - That is, the whole baptism and preaching of John pointed at Christ. After this John is mentioned no more in the New Testament. Here he gives way to Christ altogether.

5. And hearing this, they were baptized - By some other. Paul only laid his hands upon them. They were baptized - They were baptized twice; but not with the same baptism. John did not administer that baptism which Christ afterward commanded, that is, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

9. The way - The Christian way of worshipping God. He departed - Leaving them their synagogue to themselves. Discoursing daily - Not on the Sabbath only, in the school of one Tyrannus - Which we do not find was any otherwise consecrated, than by preaching the Gospel there.

10. All who desired it among the inhabitants of the proconsular Asia, now heard the word: St. Paul had been forbidden to preach it in Asia before, chap. xvi, 6. But now the time was come.

11. Special miracles - Wrought in a very uncommon manner.

12. Evil spirits - Who also occasioned many of those diseases, which yet might appear to be purely natural.

13. Exorcists - Several of the Jews about this time pretended to a power of casting out devils, particularly by certain arts or charms, supposed to be derived from Solomon. Undertook to name - Vain undertaking! Satan laughs at all those who attempt to expel him either out of the bodies or the souls of men but by Divine faith. All the light of reason is nothing to the craft or strength of that subtle spirit. His craft cannot be known but by the Spirit of God nor can his strength be conquered but by the power of faith.

17. And the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified - So that even the malice of the devil wrought for the furtherance of the Gospel.

18. Many came confessing - Of their own accord, and openly declaring their deeds - The efficacy of God's word, penetrating the inmost recesses of their soul, wrought that free and open confession to which perhaps even torments would not have compelled them.

19. Curious arts - Magical arts, to which that soft appellation was given by those who practiced them. Ephesus was peculiarly famous for these. And as these practices were of so much reputation there, it is no wonder the books which taught them should bear a great price. Bringing their books together - As it were by common consent, burnt them - Which was far better than selling them, even though the money had been given to the poor. Fifty thousand pieces of silver - If these pieces of silver be taken for Jewish shekels, the sum will amount to six thousand two hundred and fifty pounds.

20. So powerfully did the word of God grow - In extent, and prevail - In power and efficacy.

21. After these things were ended - Paul sought not to rest, but pressed on, as if he had yet done nothing. He is already possessed of Ephesus and Asia. He purposes for Macedonia and Achaia. He has his eye upon Jerusalem, then upon Rome; afterward on Spain, Rom. xv, 28. No Cesar, no Alexander the Great, no other hero, comes up to the magnanimity of this little Benjamite. Faith and love to God and man had enlarged his heart, even as the sand of the sea.

24. Silver shrines - Silver models of that famous temple, which were bought not only by the citizens, but by strangers from all parts. The artificers - The other silversmiths.

25. The workmen - Employed by him and them.

26. Saying, that they are not gods which are made with hands - This manifestly shows, that the contrary opinion did then generally prevail, namely, that there was a real Divinity in their sacred images. Though some of the later heathens spoke of them just as the Romanists do now.

27. There is danger, not only that this our craft [trade] should come into disgrace, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised - No wonder a discourse should make so deep an impression, which was edged both by interest and superstition. The great goddess was one of the standing titles of Diana. Her majesty destroyed - Miserable majesty, which was capable of being thus destroyed! Whom all Asia and the world - That is, the Roman empire, worshippeth - Although under a great variety of titles and characters. But the multitude of those that err does not turn error into truth.

29. They rushed with one accord - Demetrius and his company, into the theatre - Where criminals were wont to be thrown to the wild beasts, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus - When they could not find Paul. Probably they hoped to oblige them to fight with the wild beasts, as some think St. Paul had done before.

30. When Paul would have gone in to the people - Being above all fear, to plead the cause of his companions, and prove they are not gods which are made with hands.

31. The principal officers of Asia - The Asian priests, who presided over the public games, which they were then celebrating in honour of Diana.

32. The greater part did not know for what they were come together - Which is commonly the case in such an assembly.

33. And they thrust forward - Namely, the artificers and workmen, Alexander - Probably some well-known Christian whom they saw in the crowd: the Jews pushing him on - To expose him to the more danger. And Alexander waving with his hand - In token of desiring silence, would have made a defense - For himself and his brethren.

34. But when they knew that he was a Jew - And consequently an enemy to their worship of images; they prevented him, by crying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

35. The register - Probably the chief governor of the public games. The image which fell down from Jupiter - They believed that very image of Diana, which stood in her temple, fell down from Jupiter in heaven. Perhaps he designed to insinuate, as if falling down from Jupiter, it was not made with hands, and so was not that sort of idols which Paul had said were no gods.

37. Nor blasphemers of your goddess - They simply declared the one God, and the vanity of idols in general.

38. There are proconsuls - One in every province. There was one at Ephesus.

39. In a lawful assembly - In such a regular assembly as has authority to judge of religious and political affairs.

40. This concourse - He wisely calls it by an inoffensive name.

## XX

1. After the tumult was ceased - So Demetrius gained nothing. Paul remained there till all was quiet.

2. He came into Greece - That part of it which lay between Macedonia and Achaia.

3. An ambush being laid for him - In his way to the ship.

4. To Asia - There some of them left him. But Trophimus went with him to Jerusalem, chap. xxi, 29. Aristarchus, even to Rome, chap. xxvii, 2.

6. We set sail - St. Luke was now with St. Paul again, as we learn from his manner of expressing himself.

7. To break bread - That is, to celebrate the Lord's Supper; continued his discourse - Through uncommon fervour of spirit.

8. There were many lamps in the room where they were assembled - To prevent any possible scandal.

9. In the window - Doubtless kept open, to prevent heat, both from the lamps and the number of people.

10. Paul fell or him - It is observable, our Lord never used this gesture. But Elijah and Elisha did as well as Paul. His life is in him - He is alive again.

11. So departed - Without taking any rest at all.

12. And they brought the young man alive - But alas! How many of those who have allowed themselves to sleep under sermons, or as it were to dream awake, have slept the sleep of eternal death, and fallen to rise no more!

13. Being himself to go on foot - That he might enjoy the company of his Christian brethren a little longer, although he had passed the night without sleep, and though Assos was of difficult and dangerous access by land.

14. Mitylene - Was a city and part of the isle of Lesbos, about seven miles distant from the Asiatic coast.

16. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus - Which lay on the other side of the bay. He hasted to be at Jerusalem on the day of pentecost - Because then was the greatest concourse of people.

17. Sending to Ephesus, he called the elders of the Church - These are called bishops in the 28th verse, (rendered overseers in our translation.) Perhaps elders and bishops were then the same; or no otherwise different than are the rector of a parish and his curates.

18. Ye know - Happy is he who can thus appeal to the conscience of his hearers.

19. Serving - See the picture of a faithful servant! The Lord - Whose the church is, with all humility, and with tears, and trials - These are the concomicants of it. The service itself is described more particularly in the following verse. This humility he recommends to the Ephesians themselves, Eph. iv, 2. His tears are mentioned again, verse 31, as also 2 Cor. ii, 4; Phil. iii, 18. These passages laid together supply us with the genuine character of St. Paul. Holy tears, from those who seldom weep on account of natural occurrences, are no mean specimen of the efficacy and proof of the truth of Christianity. Yet joy is well consistent therewith, ver. 24. The same person may be sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

20. I have preached - Publicly; and taught - From house to house. Else he had not been pure from their blood. For even an apostle could not discharge his duty by public preaching only. How much less can an ordinary pastor!

21. Repentance toward God - The very first motion of the soul toward God is a kind of repentance.

22. Bound by the Spirit - Strongly impelled by him.

23. Save that - Only this I know in general; the Holy Ghost witnesseth - By other persons. Such was God's good pleasure to reveal these things to him, not immediately, but by the ministry of others.

24. Nor do I count my life precious - It adds great force to this and all the other passages of Scripture, in which the apostles express their contempt of the world, that they were not uttered by persons like Seneca and Antoninus, who talked elegantly of despising the world in the full affluence of all its enjoyments; but by men who daily underwent the greatest calamities, and exposed their lives in proof of their assertions.

25. Ye shall see my face no more - He wisely inserts this, that what follows might make the deeper impression.

27. For I have not shunned - Otherwise if any had perished, their blood would have been on his head.

28. Take heed therefore - I now devolve my care upon you; first to yourselves; then to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers - For no man, or number of men upon earth, can constitute an overseer, bishop, or any other Christian minister. To do this is the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost: to feed the Church of God - That is, the believing, loving, holy children of God; which he hath purchased - How precious is it then in his sight! with his own blood - For it is the blood of the only begotten Son of God, 1 John i, 7.

29. Grievous wolves - From without, namely, false apostles. They had, not yet broke in on the Church at Ephesus.

30. Yea, from among yourselves men will arise - Such were the Nicolaitans, of whom Christ complains, Rev. ii, 6; to draw away disciples - From the purity of the Gospel and the unity of the body.

31. I ceased not to warn every one night and day - This was watching indeed! Who copies after this example?

32. The word of his grace - It is the grand channel of it, to believers as well as unbelievers. Who is able to build you up - To confirm and increase your faith, love, holiness. God can thus build us up, without any instrument. But he does build us up by them. O beware of dreaming that you have less need of human teachers after you know Christ than before! And to give you an inheritance - Of eternal glory, among them that are sanctified - And so made meet for it. A large number of these Paul doubtless knew, and remembered before God.

33. I have coveted - Here the apostle begins the other branch of his farewell discourse, like old Samuel, 1 Sam. xii, 3, taking his leave of the children of Israel.

34. These hands - Callous, as you see, with labour. Who is he that envies such a bishop or archbishop as this?

35. I have showed you - Bishops, by my example, all things - And this among the rest; that thus labouring - So far as the labours of your office allow you time; ye ought to help the weak - Those who are disabled by sickness, or any bodily infirmity, from maintaining themselves by their own labour. And to remember - Effectually, so as to follow it; the word which he himself said - Without doubt his disciples remembered many of his words which are not recorded. It is happier to give - To imitate God, and have him, as it were, indebted to us.

37. They all wept - Of old, men, yea, the best and bravest of men, were easily melted into tears; a thousand instances of which might be produced from profane as well as sacred writers. But now, notwithstanding the effeminacy which almost universally prevails, we leave those tears to women and children.

38. Sorrowing most for that word which he spake, that they should see his face no more - What sorrow will be in the great day, when God shall speak that word to all who are found on the left hand, that they shall see his face no more!

## XXI

1. And when we were torn away from the in - Not without doing violence both to ourselves and them.

3. We landed at Tyre - That there should be Christians there was foretold, Psalm lxxxvii, 4. What we read in that psalm of the Philistines and Ethiopians also may be compared with chap. viii, 40; xxvii, 4.

4. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days - ln order to spend a Sabbath with them. Who told Paul by the Spirit - That afflictions awaited him at Jerusalem. This was properly what they said by the Spirit. They themselves advised him not to go up. The disciples seemed to understand their prophetic impulse to be an intimation from the Spirit, that Paul, if he were so minded, might avoid the danger, by not going to Jerusalem.

7. Having finished our voyage - From Macedonia, chap. xx, 6, we came to Ptolemais - A celebrated city on the sea coast, anciently called Accos. It is now, like many other once noble cities, only a heap of ruins.

8. We came to Cesarea - So called from a stately temple which Herod the Great dedicated there to Augustus Cesar. It was the place where the Roman governor of Judea generally resided and kept his court. The evangelist, who was one of the seven deacons - An evangelist is a preacher of the Gospel to those who had never heard it, as Philip had done to the Samaritans, to the Ethiopian eunuch, and to all the towns from Azotus to Cesarea, chap. viii, 5, 26, 40. It is not unlikely he spent the following years preaching in Tyre and Sidon, and the other heathen cities in the neighbourhood of Galilee, his house being at Cesarea, a convenient situation for that purpose. We abode with him - We lodged at his house during our stay at Cesarea.

10. A certain prophet came - The nearer the event was, the more express were the predictions which prepared Paul for it.

11. Binding his own feet and hands - In the manner that malefactors were wont to be bound when apprehended. So shall the Jews bind the man whose girdle this is - St. Paul's bonds were first particularly foretold at Cesarea, to which he afterward came in bonds, chap. xxiii, 33.

12. Both we, (his fellow travelers,) and they of the place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem - St. Paul knew that this prediction had the force of a command. They did not know this.

13. Breaking my heart - For the apostles themselves were not void of human affections. I am ready not only to be bound, but to die - And to him that is ready for it, the burden is light.

14. And when he would not be persuaded - This was not obstinacy, but true Christian resolution. We should never be persuaded, either to do evil, or to omit doing any good which is in our power; saying, the will of the Lord be done - Which they were satisfied Paul knew.

15. We took up our carriages - Our baggage; which probably went by sea before. What they took with them now in particular was the alms they were carrying to Jerusalem, chap. xxiv, 17.

16. The disciples brought us to one Mnason, a Cyprian, an old disciple - He was a native of Cyprus, but an inhabitant of Jerusalem, and probably one of the first converts there.

18. Paul went in with us - That it might appear we are all of one mind, to James - Commonly called the Lord's brother; the only apostle then presiding over the Churches in Judea.

20. They are all zealous for the law - For the whole Mosaic dispensation. How astonishing is this! Did none of the apostles, beside St. Paul, know that this dispensation was now abolished? And if they did both know and testify this, how came their hearers not to believe them?

21. They have been informed concerning thee, that thou teachest the Jews - not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after the customs - Of the Mosaic law. And so undoubtedly he did. And so he wrote to all the Churches in Galatia, among whom were many Jews. Yea, and James himself had long before assented to Peter, affirming before all the apostles and all the brethren, chap. xv, 10, That this very law was a yoke which (said he) neither our fathers nor we were able to bear - Amazing! that they did not know this! Or, that if they did, they did not openly testify it at all hazards, to every Jewish convert in Jerusalem!

22. What is it therefore - What is to be done? The multitude must needs come together - They will certainly gather together in a tumultuous manner, unless they be some way pacified.

23. Therefore - To obviate their prejudice against thee: do this that we say to thee - Doubtless they meant this advice well: but could Paul follow it in godly sincerity? Was not the yielding so far to the judgment of others too great a deference to be paid to any mere men?

24. And all will know - that thou thyself walkest orderly, keeping the law - Ought he not, without any reverence to man, where the truth of God was so deeply concerned, to have answered plainly, I do not keep the Mosaic law; neither need any of you. Yea, Peter doth not keep the law. And God himself expressly commanded him not to keep it; ordering him to go in to men uncircumcised, and to eat with them, chap. xi, 3, which the law utterly forbids.

26. Then Paul took the men - Yielding his own judgment to their advice, which seemed to flow not out of spiritual but carnal wisdom; seeming to be what he really was not: making as if he believed the law still in force. Declaring - Giving notice to the priests in waiting, that he designed to accomplish the days of purification, till all the sacrifice should be offered, as the Mosaic law required, Num. vi, 13.

27. And when the seven days were about to be accomplished - When after giving notice to the priests, they were entering upon the accomplishment of those days. It was toward the beginning of them that Paul was seized. The Jews that were from Asia - Some of those Jews who came from Asia to the feast.

28. Against the people - The Jewish nation; and the law - Of Moses; and this place - The temple. Yea, and hath even brought Greeks into the temple - They might come into the outer court. But they imagined Paul had brought then into the inner temple, and had thereby polluted it.

30. And immediately the gates were shut - Both to prevent any farther violation of the temple; and to prevent Paul's taking sanctuary at the horns of the altar.

31. And as they went about to kill him - It was a rule among the Jews, that any uncircumcised person who came into the inner temple, might be stoned without farther process. And they seemed to think Paul, who brought such in thither, deserved no better treatment. Word came to the tribune - A cohort or detachment of soldiers, belonging to the Roman legion, which lodged in the adjacent castle of Antonia, were stationed on feast days near the temple, to prevent disorders. It is evident, Lysias himself was not present, when the tumult began. Probably he was the oldest Roman tribune

(or colonel) then at Jerusalem. And as such he was the commanding officer of the legion quartered at the castle.

33. Then the tribune - Having made his way through the multitude, came near and took him - And how many great ends of providence were answered by this imprisonment? This was not only a means of preserving his life, (after he had suffered severely for worldly prudence,) but gave him an opportunity of preaching the Gospel safely, in spite of all tumult, chap. xxii, 22, yea, and that in those places to which otherwise he could have had no access, verse 40. And commanded him to be bound with two chains - Taking it for granted he was some notorious offender. And thus the prophecy of Agabus was fulfilled, though by the hands of a Roman.

35. When he came upon the stairs - The castle of Antonia was situate on a rock fifty cubits high, at that corner of the outward temple, where the western and northern porticos joined, to each of which there were stairs descending from it.

37. As Paul was about to be brought into the castle - The wisdom of God taught to make use of that very time and place.

38. Art not thou that Egyptian - Who came into Judea when Felix had been some years governor there! Calling himself a prophet, he drew much people after him; and having brought them through the wilderness, led them to Mount Olivet, promising that the walls of the city should fall down before them. But Felix marching out of Jerusalem against him, his followers quickly dispersed, many of whom were taken or slain; but he himself made his escape.

40. In the Hebrew tongue - That dialect of it, which was then commonly spoken at Jerusalem.

## XXII

1. Hear ye now my defense - Which they could not hear before for the tumult.

3. I am verily - This defense answers all that is objected, chap. xxi, 28. As there, so here also mention is made of the person of Paul, ver. 3, of the people and the law, ver. 3, 5, 12; of the temple, ver. 17; of teaching all men, ver. 15-17, 21; and of the truth of his doctrine, ver. 6. But he speaks closely and nervously, in few words, because the time was short. But brought up at the feet of Gamaliel - The scholars usually sat on low seats, or upon mats on the floor, at the feet of their masters, whose seats were raised to a considerable height. Accurately instructed - The learned education which Paul had received was once no doubt the matter of his boasting and confidence. Unsanctified learning made his bonds strong, and furnished him with numerous arguments against the Gospel. Yet when the grace of God had changed his heart, and turned his accomplishments into another channel, he was the fitter instrument to serve God's wise and merciful purposes, in the defense and propagation of Christianity.

4. And persecuted this way - With the same zeal that you do now. Binding both men and women - How much better was his condition, now he was bound himself.

5. The high priest is my witness - Is able to testify. The brethren - Jews: so this title was not peculiar to the Christians.

6. About noon - All was done in the face of the sun. A great light shone - By whatever method God reveals himself to us, we shall have everlasting cause to recollect it with pleasure. Especially when he has gone in any remarkable manner out of his common way for this gracious purpose. If

so, we should often dwell on the particular circumstances, and be ready, on every proper occasion, to recount those wonders of power and love, for the encouragement and instruction of others.

9. They did not hear the voice - Distinctly; but only a confused noise.

12. A devout man according to the law - A truly religious person, and though a believer in Christ, yet a strict observer of the law of Moses.

16. Be baptized, and wash away thy sins - Baptism administered to real penitents, is both a means and seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily in the primitive Church bestow this on any, unless through this means.

17. When I was returned to Jerusalem - From Damascus, and was praying in the temple - Whereby he shows that he still paid the temple its due honour, as the house of prayer. I was in a trance - Perhaps he might continue standing all the while, so that any who were near him would hardly discern it.

18. And I saw him - Jesus, saying to me, Depart quickly out of Jerusalem - Because of the snares laid for thee: and in order to preach where they will hear.

19. And I said - It is not easy for a servant of Christ, who is himself deeply impressed with Divine truths, to imagine to what a degree men are capable of hardening their hearts against thee. He is often ready to think with Paul, It is impossible for any to resist such evidence. But experience makes him wiser and shows that wilful unbelief is proof against all truth and reason.

20. When the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by - A real convert still retains the remembrance of his former sins. He confesses thorn and is humbled for them, all the days of his life.

22. And they heard him to this word - Till he began to speak of his mission to the Gentiles, and this too in such a manner as implied that the Jews were in danger of being cast off.

23. They rent their garments - In token of indignation and horror at this pretended blasphemy, and cast dust into the air - Through vehemence of rage, which they knew not how to vent.

25. And as they - The soldiers ordered by the tribune, were binding him with thongs - A freeman of Rome might be bound with a chain and beaten with a staff: but he might not be bound with thongs, neither scourged, or beaten with rods: Paul said to the centurion - The captain, who stood by to see the orders of the tribune executed.

26. Consider what thou art about to do; for this man is a Roman - Yea, there was a stronger reason to consider. For this man was a servant of God.

28. But I was free born - Not barely as being born at Tarsus; for this was not Roman colony. But probably either his father, or some of his ancestors, had been made free of Rome, for some military service. We learn hence, that we are under no obligation as Christians to give up our civil privileges (which we are to receive and prize as the gift of God) to every insolent invader. In a thousand circumstances, gratitude to God, and duty to men, will oblige us to insist upon them; and engage us to strive to transmit them improved, rather than impaired to posterity.

## XXIII

1. And Paul earnestly beholding the council - Professing a clear conscience by his very countenance; and likewise waiting to see whether any of them was minded to ask him any question,

said, I have lived in all good conscience before God till this day - He speaks chiefly of the time since he became a Christian. For none questioned him concerning what he had been before. And yet even in his unconverted state, although he was in an error, yet he had acted from conscience, before God - Whatever men may think or say of me.

3. Then said Paul - Being carried away by a sudden and prophetic impulse. God is about to smite thee, thou whited wall - Fair without; full of dirt and rubbish within. And he might well be so termed, not only as he committed this outrage, while gravely sitting on the tribunal of justice but also as, at the same time that he stood high in the esteem of the citizens, he cruelly defrauded the priests of their legal subsistence, so that some of them even perished for want. And God did remarkably smite him; for about five years after this, his house being reduced to ashes, in a tumult begun by his own son, he was besieged in the royal palace; where having hid himself in an old aqueduct, he was dragged out and miserably slain.

5. I was not aware, brethren, that it was the high priest - He seems to mean, I did not advert to it, in the prophetic transport of my mind: but he does not add, that his not adverting to it proceeded from the power of the Spirit coming upon him; as knowing they were not able to bear it. This answer admirably shows the situation of mind he was then in, partly with regard to the bystanders, whom he thus softens, adding also the title of brethren, and justifying their reproof by the prohibition of Moses; partly with regard to himself, who, after that singular transport subsided, was again under the direction of the general command. Exod. xxii, 28.

6. I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: for the hope of the resurrection of the dead am I called in question - So he was in effect; although not formally, or explicitly.

8. The Pharisees confess both - Both the resurrection, and the existence of angels and separate spirits.

9. And the scribes of the Pharisees' side arising - Every sect contains both learned and unlearned. The former used to be the mouth of the party. If a spirit - St. Paul in his speech from the stairs had affirmed, that Jesus, whom they knew to have been dead, was alive, and that he had spoken to him from heaven, and again in a vision. So they add nothing, only they construe it in their own way, putting an angel or spirit for Jesus.

11. And the night following, the Lord Jesus - What Paul had before purposed in spirit, chap. xix, 21, God now in due time confirms. Another declaration to the same effect is made by an angel of God, chap. xxvii, 23. And from the 23rd chapter the sum of this book turns on the testimony of Paul to the Romans. How would the defenders of St. Peter's supremacy triumph, could they find out half as much ascribed to him! Be of good courage, Paul - As he laboured under singular distresses and persecutions, so he was favoured with extraordinary assurances of the Divine assistance. Thou must testify - Particular promises are usually given when all things appear desperate. At Rome also - Danger is nothing in the eyes of God: all hindrances farther his work. A promise of what is afar off, implies all that necessarily lies between. Paul shall testify at Rome: therefore he shall come to Rome; therefore he shall escape the Jews, the sea, the viper.

12. Some of the Jews bound themselves - Such execrable vows were not uncommon among the Jews. And if they were prevented from accomplishing what they had vowed, it was an easy matter to obtain absolution from their rabbis.

15. Now therefore ye - Which they never scrupled at all, as not doubting but they were doing God service.

17. And Paul - Though he had an express promise of it from Christ, was not to neglect any proper means of safety.

19. And the tribune taking him by the hand - In a mild, condescending way. Lysias seems to have conducted this whole affair with great integrity, humanity, and prudence.

24. Provide beasts - If a change should be necessary, to set Paul on - So we read of his riding once; but not by choice.

27. Having learned that he was a Roman - True; but not before he rescued him. Here he uses art.

31. The soldiers brought him by night to Antipatris - But not the same night they set out. For Antipatris was about thirty-eight of our miles northwest of Jerusalem. Herod the Great rebuilt it, and gave it this name in honour of his father Antipater: Cesarea was near seventy miles from Jerusalem, and about thirty from Antipatris.

35. In Herod's palace - This was a palace and a court built by Herod the Great. Probably some tower belonging to it might be used for a kind of state prison.

## XXIV

1. Ananias - Who would spare no trouble on the occasion, with several of the elders, members of the sanhedrim.

2. Tertullus began - A speech how different from St. Paul's; which is true, modest, solid, and without paint. Felix was a man of the most infamous character, and a plague to all the provinces over which he presided.

4. But that I may not trouble thee any farther - By trespassing either on thy patience or modesty. The eloquence of Tertullus was as bad as his cause: a lame introduction, a lame transition, and a lame conclusion. Did not God confound the orator's language?

10. Knowing - for several years thou hast been a judge over this nation - And so not unacquainted with our religious rites and customs, and consequently more capable of understanding and deciding a cause of this nature. There was no flattery in this. It was a plain fact. He governed Judea six or seven years. I answer for myself - As it may be observed, his answer exactly corresponds with the three articles of Tertullus's charge: sedition, heresy, and profanation of the temple. As to the first, he suggests,. that he had not been long enough at Jerusalem to form a party and attempt an insurrection: (for it was about twelve days since he came up thither; five of which he had been at Cesarea, ver. 1; one or two were spent in his journey thither, and most of the rest he had been confined at Jerusalem.) And he challenges them, in fact, to produce any evidence of such practices, ver. 11-13. As to the second, he confesses himself to be a Christian; but maintains this to be a religion perfectly agreeable to the law and the prophets, and therefore deserving a fair reception, ver. 14, 16. And as for profaning the temple, he observes that he behaved there in a most peaceful and regular manner, so that his innocence had been manifest even before the sanhedrim, where the authors of the tumult did not dare to appear against him.

14. After the way which they call heresy - This appellation St. Paul corrects. Not that it was then an odious word; but it was not honourable enough. A party or sect (so that word signifies) is formed by men. This way was prescribed by God. The apostle had now said what was sufficient

for his defense; but having a fair occasion, he makes an ingenuous confession of his faith in this verse, his hope in the next, his love in the 17th. ver. 14, 15, 17 So worship I the God of my fathers - This was a very proper plea before a Roman magistrate; as it proved that he was under the protection of the Roman laws, since the Jews were so: whereas had he introduced the worship of new gods he would have forfeited that protection. Believing all things which are written - Concerning the Messiah.

15. Both of the just and of the unjust - In a public court this was peculiarly proper to be observed.

16. For this cause - With a view to this, I also exercise myself - As well as they.

19. Who ought to have been present before thee - But the world never commit greater blunders, even against its own laws, than when it is persecuting the children of God.

21. Unless they think me blamable for this one word - Which nevertheless was the real truth. chap. xxiii, 6.

22. After I have been more accurately informed - Which he afterward was; and he doubtless (as well as Festus and Agrippa) transmitted a full account of these things to Rome.

23. He commanded the centurion to let him have liberty - To be only a prisoner at large. Hereby the Gospel was spread more and more; not to the satisfaction of the Jews. But they could not hinder it.

24. And after Paul had been kept some days in this gentle confinement at Cesarea, Felix, who had been absent for a short time, coming thither again, with Drusilla, his wife - The daughter of Herod Agrippa, one of the finest women of that age. Felix persuaded her to forsake her husband, Azizus, king of Emessa, and to be married to himself, though a heathen. She was afterward, with a son she had by Felix, consumed in an eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Concerning the faith in Christ - That is, the doctrine of Christ.

25. And as he reasoned of justice, temperance, and judgment to come - This was the only effectual way of preaching Christ to an unjust, lewd judge. Felix being terrified - How happily might this conviction have ended, had he been careful to pursue the views which were then opening upon his mind! But, like thousands, he deferred the consideration of these things to a more convenient season. A season which, alas! never came. For though he heard again, he was terrified no more. In the meantime we do not find Drusilla, though a Jewess, was thus alarmed. She had been used to hear of a future judgment: perhaps too she trusted to the being a daughter of Abraham, or to the expiation of the law, and so was proof against the convictions which seized on her husband, though a heathen. Let this teach us to guard against all such false dependencies as tend to elude those convictions that might otherwise be produced in us by the faithful preaching of the word of God. Let us stop our ears against those messengers of Satan, who appear as angels of light; who would teach us to reconcile the hope of salvation with a corrupt heart or an unholy life. Go thy way for this time - O how will every damned soul one day lament his having neglected such a time as this!

26. He hoped also - An evil hope: so when he heard his eye was not single. No marvel then that he profited nothing by all St. Paul's discourses: that money would be given - By the Christians for the liberty of so able a minister. And waiting for this, unhappy Felix fell short of the treasure of the Gospel.

27. But after two years - After St. Paul had been two years a prisoner, Felix desiring to gratify the Jews, left Paul bound - Thus men of the world, to gratify one another, stretch forth their hands to the things of God! Yet the wisdom of Felix did not profit him, did not satisfy the Jews at all.

Their accusations followed him to Rome, and had utterly ruined him, but for the interest which his brother Pallas had with Nero.

## XXV

2. Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews appeared against Paul - In so long a time their rage was not cooled. So much louder a call had Paul to the Gentiles.

4. But Festus answered - So Festus's care to preserve the imperial privileges was the means of preserving Paul's life. By what invisible springs does God govern the world! With what silence, and yet with what wisdom and energy!

5. Let those of you who are able - Who are best able to undertake the journey, and to manage the cause. If there be any wickedness in him - So he does not pass sentence before he hears the cause.

6. Not more than ten days - A short space for a new governor to stay at such a city as Jerusalem. He could not with any convenience have heard and decided the cause of Paul within that time.

7. Bringing many accusations - When many accusations are heaped together, frequently not one of them is true.

8. While he answered - To a general charge a general answer was sufficient.

9. Art thou willing to go up to Jerusalem - Festus could have ordered this without asking Paul. But God secretly overruled the whole, that he might have an occasion of appealing to Rome.

10. I am standing at Cesar's judgment seat - For all the courts of the Roman governors were held in the name of the emperor, and by commission from him. No man can give me up - He expresses it modestly: the meaning is, Thou canst not. I appeal to Cesar - Which any Roman citizen might do before sentence was passed.

12. The council - It was customary for a considerable number of persons of distinction to attend the Roman governors. These constituted a kind of council, with whom they frequently advised.

13. Agrippa - The son of Herod Agrippa, chap. xii, 1; and Bernice - His sister, with whom he lived in a scandalous familiarity. This was the person whom Titus Vespasian so passionately loved, that he would have made her empress, had not the clamours of the Roman prevented it.

15. Desiring judgment against him - As upon a previous conviction, which they falsely pretended.

16. It is not the custom of the Roman - How excellent a rule, to condemn no one unheard! A rule, which as it is common to all nations, (courts of inquisition only excepted,) so it ought to direct our proceedings in all affairs, not only in public, but private life.

18. Such things as I supposed - From their passion and vehemence.

19. But had certain questions - How coldly does he mention the things of the last importance! And about one Jesus - Thus does Festus speak of Him, to whom every knee shall bow! Whom Paul affirmed to be alive - And was this a doubtful question? But why, O Festus, didst thou doubt concerning it? Only because thou didst not search into the evidence of it. Otherwise that evidence might have opened to thee, till it had grown up into full conviction; and thy illustrious prisoner have led thee into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

23. With the tribunes and principal men of the city - The chief officers, both military and civil.

## XXVI

And Paul stretching forth his hand - Chained as it was: a decent expression of his own earnestness, and proper to engage the attention of his hearers; answered for himself - Not only refuting the accusations of the Jews, but enlarging upon the faith of the Gospel.

2. King Agrippa - There is a peculiar force in thus addressing a person by name. Agrippa felt this.

3. Who art accurately acquainted - Which Festus was not; with the customs - In practical matters; and questions - In speculative. This word Festus had used in the absence of Paul, chap. xxv, 19, who, by the Divine leading, repeats and explains it. Agrippa had had peculiar advantages for an accurate knowledge of the Jewish customs and questions, from his education under his father Herod, and his long abode at Jerusalem. Nothing can be imagined more suitable or more graceful, than this whole discourse of Paul before Agrippa; in which the seriousness of the Christian, the boldness of the apostle, and the politeness of the gentleman and the scholar, appear in a most beautiful contrast, or rather a most happy union.

4. From my youth, which was from the beginning - That is, which was from the beginning of my youth.

5. If they would testify - But they would not, for they well knew what weight his former life must add to his present testimony.

6. And now - This and the two following verses are in a kind of ver. 6, 7, 8 parenthesis, and show that what the Pharisees rightly taught concerning the resurrection, Paul likewise asserted at this day. The ninth verse is connected with the fifth. For Pharisaism ver. 9, 5 impelled him to persecute. I stand in judgment for the hope of the promise - Of the resurrection. So it was in effect. For unless Christ had risen, there could have been no resurrection of the dead. And it was chiefly for testifying the resurrection of Christ, that the Jews still persecuted him.

7. Our twelve tribes - For a great part of the ten tribes also had at various times returned from the east to their own country, James i, 1; 1 Pet. i, 1. Worshipping continually night and day - That is, this is what they aim at in all their public and private worship.

8. Is it judged by you an incredible thing - It was by Festus, chap. xxv, 19, to whom Paul answers as if he had heard him discourse.

9. I thought - When I was a Pharisee: that I ought to do many things - Which he now enumerates.

10. I shut up many of the saints - Men not only innocent, but good, just, holy. I gave my vote against them - That is, I joined with those who condemned them. Perhaps the chief priests did also give him power to vote on these occasions.

11. I compelled them - That is, some of them; to blaspheme - This is the most dreadful of all! Repent, ye enemies of the Gospel. If Spira, who was compelled, suffered so terribly, what will become of those who compel, like Saul, but do not repent like him.

12. Acts ix, 2.

13. O King - Most seasonably, in the height of the narration, does he thus fix the king's attention. Above the brightness of the sun - And no marvel. For what is the brightness of this created sun, to the Sun of righteousness, the brightness of the Father's glory?

14. In the Hebrew tongue - St. Paul was not now speaking in Hebrew: when he was, chap. xxiii, 7, he did not add, In the Hebrew tongue. Christ used this tongue both on earth and from heaven.

17. Delivering thee from the people - The Jews and the Gentiles, to whom, both Jews and Gentiles, I now send thee - Paul gives them to know, that the liberty he enjoys even in bonds, was promised to him, as well as his preaching to the Gentiles. I, denotes the authority of the sender. Now, the time whence his mission was dated. For his apostleship, as well as his conversion, commenced at this moment.

18. To open - He opens them, who sends Paul; and he does it by Paul who is sent; their eyes - Both of the Jews and Gentiles: that they may turn - Through the power of the Almighty, from the spiritual darkness wherein they were involved, to the light of Divine knowledge and holiness, and from the power of Satan, who now holds them in sin, guilt, and misery, to the love and happy service of God: that they may receive through faith - (He seems to place the same blessings in a fuller light,) pardon, holiness, and glory.

19. From that time - Having received power to obey, I was not disobedient - I did obey, I used that power, Gal. i, 16. So that even this grace whereby St Paul was influenced was not irresistible.

20. I declared - From that hour to this, both to Jew and Gentile, that they should repent - This repentance, we may observe, is previous both to inward and outward holiness.

21. For these things - The apostle now applies all that he had said.

22. Having obtained help from God - When all other help failed, God sent the Roman from the castle, and so fulfilled the promise he had made, ver. 17.

24. Festus said, Paul, thou art beside thyself - To talk of men's rising from the dead! And of a Jew's enlightening not only his own nation, but tho polite and learned Greeks and Romans! Nay, Festus, it is thou that art beside thyself. That strikest quite wide of the mark. And no wonder: he saw that nature did not act in Paul; but the grace that acted in him he did not see. And therefore he took all this ardour which animated the apostle for a mere start of learned phrensy.

25. I am not mad, most excellent Festus - The style properly belonging to a Roman propretor. How inexpressibly beautiful is this reply! How strong! yet how decent and respectful! Mad men seldom call men by their names, and titles of honour. Thus also St. Paul refutes the charge. But utter the words of truth (confirmed in the next verse) and sobriety - The very reverse of madness. And both these remain, even when the men of God act with the utmost vehemence.

26. For the king knoweth of these things - St. Paul having refuted Festus, pursues his purpose, returning naturally, and as it were, step by step, from Festus to Agrippa. To whom I speak with freedom - This freedom was probably one circumstance which Festus accounted madness.

27. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? - He that believes these, believes Paul, yea, and Christ. The apostle now comes close to his heart. What did Agrippa feel when he heard this? I know that thou believest! - Here Paul lays so fast hold on the king that he can scarce make any resistance.

28. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian! - See here, Festus altogether a heathen, Paul alogether a Christian, Agrippa halting between both. Poor Agrippa! But almost persuaded! So near the mark, and yet fall short! Another step, and thou art within the vail. Reader, stop not with Agrippa; but go on with Paul.

29. I would to God - Agrippa had spoke of being a Christian, as a thing wholly in his own power. Paul gently corrects this mistake; intimating, it is the gift and the work of God; that all that hear me - It was modesty in St. Paul, not to apply directly to them all; yet he looks upon them and observes them; were such as I am - Christians indeed; full of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. He speaks from a full sense of his own happiness, and an overflowing love to all.

30. And as he said this, the king rose up - An unspeakably precious moment to Agrippa. Whether he duly improved it or no, we shall see in that day.

31. This man doth nothing worthy of death, or of bonds - They speak of his whole life, not of one action only. And could ye learn nothing more than this from that discourse? A favourable judgment of such a preacher, is not all that God requires.

## XXVII

1. As soon as it was determined to sail - As being a shorter and less expensive passage to Rome.

2. Adramyttium - was a sea port of Mysia. Aristarchus and Luke went with Paul by choice, not being ashamed of his bonds.

3. Julius treating Paul courteously - Perhaps he had heard him make his defense.

4. We sailed under Cyprus - Leaving it on the left hand.

7. Cnidus - was a cape and city of Caria.

8. The Fair Havens still retain the name. But the city of Lasea is now utterly lost, together with many more of the hundred cities for which Crete was once so renowned.

9. The fast, or day of atonement, was kept on the tenth of Tisri, that is, the

25th of September. This was to them an ill time of sailing; not only because winter was approaching, but also because of the sudden storms, which are still common in the Mediterranean at that time of the year. Paul exhorted them - Not to leave Crete. Even in external things, faith exerts itself with the greatest presence of mind, and readiness of advice.

10. Saying to them - To the centurion and other officers.

11. The centurion regarded the master - And indeed it is a general rule, believe an artificer in his own art. Yet when there is the greatest need, a real Christian will often advise even better than him.

12. Which is a haven - Having a double opening, one to the southwest, the other to the northwest.

14. There arose against it - The south wind; a tempestuous wind, called in those parts Euroclydon. This was a kind of hurricane, not carrying them any one way, but tossing them backward and forward. These furious winds are now called levanters, and blow in all directions from the northeast to the southeast.

16. We were hardly able to get masters of the boat - To prevent its being staved.

18. They lightened the ship - Casting the heavy goods into the sea.

19. We cast out the tackling of the ship - Cutting away even those masts that were not absolutely necessary.

20. Neither sun nor stars appeared for many days - Which they could the less spare, before the compass was found out.

21. This loss - Which is before your eyes.

23. The God whose I am, and whom I serve - How short a compendium of religion! Yet how full! Comprehending both faith, hope, and love.

24. God hath given - Paul had prayed for them. And God gave him their lives; perhaps their souls also. And the centurion, subserving the providence of God, gave to Paul the lives of the prisoners. How wonderfully does his providence reign in the most contingent things! And rather

will many bad men be preserved with a few good, (so it frequently happens,) than one good man perish with many bad. So it was in this ship: so it is in the world. Thee - At such a time as this, there was not the same danger, which might otherwise have been, of St. Paul's seeming to speak out of vanity, what he really spoke out of necessity. All the souls - Not only all the prisoners, as Julius afterward did, ver. 43; ask for souls, they shall be given thee: yea, more than thou hopest for, that sail with thee - So that Paul, in the sight of God, was the master and pilot of the ship.

27. The fourteenth night - Since they left Crete, ver. 18, 19. In the Adriatic sea - So the ancients called all that part of the Mediterranean, which lay south of Italy.

30. The sailors were attempting to flee out of the ship - Supposing the boat would go more safely over the shallows.

31. Unless these mariners abide in the ship - Without them ye know not how to manage her, ye cannot be saved - He does not say we. That they would not have regarded. The soldiers were not careful for the lives of the prisoners: nor was Paul careful for his own. We may learn hence, to use the most proper means for security and success, even while we depend on Divine Providence, and wait for the accomplishment of God's own promise. He never designed any promise should encourage rational creatures to act in an irrational manner; or to remain inactive, when he has given them natural capacities of doing something, at least, for their own benefit. To expect the accomplishment of any promise, without exerting these, is at best vain and dangerous presumption, if all pretense of relying upon it be not profane hypocrisy.

33. Ye continue fasting, having taken nothing - No regular meal, through a deep sense of their extreme danger. Let us not wonder then, if men who have a deep sense of their extreme danger of everlasting death, for a time forget even to eat their bread, or to attend to their worldly affairs. Much less let us censure that as madness, which may be the beginning of true wisdom.

34. This is for your preservation - That ye may be the better able to swim to shore.

36. Then they were all encouraged - By his example, as well as words.

38. Casting out the wheat - So firmly did they now depend on what St. Paul had said.

39. They did not know the land - Which they saw near them: having a level shore.

40. Loosing the rudder bands - Their ships had frequently two rudders, one on each side. were fastened while they let the ship drive; but were now loosened, when they had need of them to steer her into the creek.

41. A place where two seas met - Probably by reason of a sand bank running parallel with the shore.

42. The counsel - Cruel, unjust, ungrateful.

44. They all escaped safe to land - And some of them doubtless received the apostle as a teacher sent from God. These would find their deliverance from the fury of the sea, but an earnest of an infinitely greater deliverance, and are long ere this lodged with him in a more peaceful harbour than Malta, or than the earth could afford.

## XXVIII

1. Melita or Malta, is about twelve miles broad, twenty long, and sixty distant from Sicily to the south. It yields abundance of honey, (whence its name was taken,) with much cotton, and is

very fruitful, though it has only three feet depth of earth above the solid rock. The Emperor Charles the Fifth gave it, in 1530, to the knights of Rhodes, driven out of Rhodes by the Turks. They are a thousand in number, of whom five hundred always reside on the island.

2. And the barbarians - So the Roman and Greeks termed all nations but their own. But surely the generosity shown by these uncultivated inhabitants of Malta, was far more valuable than all the varnish which the politest education could give, where it taught not humanity and compassion.

4. And when the barbarians saw - they said - Seeing also his chains, Doubtless this man is a murderer - Such rarely go unpunished even in this life; whom vengeance hath not suffered to live - They look upon him as a dead man already. It is with pleasure that we trace among these barbarians the force of conscience, and the belief of a particular providence: which some people of more learning have stupidly thought it philosophy to despise. But they erred in imagining, that calamities must always be interpreted as judgments. Let us guard against this, lest, like them, we condemn not only the innocent, but the excellent of the earth.

5. Having shaken off the venomous animal, he suffered no harm - The words of an eminent modern historian are, "No venomous kind of serpent now breeds in Malta, neither hurts if it be brought thither from another place. Children are seen there handling and playing even with scorpions; I have seen one eating them." If this be so, it seems to be fixed by the wisdom of God, as an eternal memorial of what he once wrought there.

6. They changed their minds, and said he was a God - Such is the stability of human reason! A little before he was a murderer; and presently he is a God: (just as the people of Lystra; one hour sacrificing, and the next stoning:) nay, but there is a medium. He is neither a murderer nor a God, but a man of God. But natural men never run into greater mistakes, than in judging of the children of God.

7. The chief man of the island - In wealth if not in power also. Three days - The first three days of our stay on the island.

11. Whose sign was - It was the custom of the ancients to have images on the head of their ships, from which they took their names. Castor and Pollux - Two heathen gods who were thought favourable to mariners.

15. The brethren - That is, the Christians, came out thence to meet us - It is remarkable that there is no certain account by whom Christianity was planted at Rome. Probably some inhabitants of that city were at Jerusalem on the day of pentecost, chap. ii, 10; and being then converted themselves, carried the Gospel thither at their return. Appii-Forum was a town fifty-one miles from Rome; the Three Taverns about thirty. He took courage - He saw Christ was at Rome also, and now forgot all the troubles of his journey.

16. With the soldier - To whom he was chained, as the Roman custom was.

17. And after three days - Given to rest and prayer, Paul called the chief of the Jews together - He always sought the Jews first; but being now bound, he could not so conveniently go round to them. Though I have done nothing - Seeing him chained, they might have suspected he had. Therefore he first obviates this suspicion.

19. When the Jews opposed it - He speaks tenderly of them, not mentioning their repeated attempts to murder him. Not that I had any thing to accuse my nation of - Not that I had any design to accuse others, but merely to defend myself.

20. The hope of Israel - What Israel hopes for, namely, the Messiah and the resurrection.

21. We have neither received letters concerning thee - There must have been a peculiar providence in this, nor has any of the brethren - The Jews, related - Professedly, in a set discourse, or spoke - Occasionally, in conversation, any evil of thee - How must the bridle then have been in their mouth!

22. This sect we know is every where spoken against - This is no proof at all of a bad cause, but a very probable mark of a good one.

23. To whom he expounded, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus - These were his two grand topics,

1. That the kingdom of the Messiah was of a spiritual, not temporal nature:
2. That Jesus of Nazareth was the very person foretold, as the Lord of that kingdom.

On this head he had as much need to persuade as to convince, their will making as strong a resistance as their understanding.

24. And some believed the things that were spoken - With the heart, as well as understanding.

25. Well spake the Holy Ghost to your fathers - Which is equally applicable to you.

26. Hearing ye shall hear - That is, ye shall most surely hear, and shall not understand - The words manifestly denote a judicial blindness, consequent upon a wilful and obstinate resistance of the truth. First they would not, afterward they could not, believe. Isaiah vi, 9, &c.; Matt. xiii, 14; John xii, 40.

28. The salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles - Namely, from this time. Before this no apostle had been at Rome. St. Paul was the first.

30. And Paul continued two whole years - After which this book was written, long before St. Paul's death, and was undoubtedly published with his approbation by St. Luke, who continued with him to the last, 2 Tim. iv, 11. And received all that came to him - Whether they were Jews or Gentiles. These two years completed twenty-five years after our saviour's passion. Such progress had the Gospel made by that time, in the parts of the world which lay west of Jerusalem, by the ministry of St. Paul among the Gentiles. How far eastward the other apostles had carried it in the same time, history does not inform us.

31. No man forbidding him - Such was the victory of the word of God. While Paul was preaching at Rome, the Gospel shone with its highest lustre. Here therefore the Acts of the Apostles end; and end with great advantage. Otherwise St. Luke could easily have continued his narrative to the apostle's death.

## NOTES ON ST PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

MANY of the writings of the New Testament are written in the form of epistles. Such are not only those of St. Paul, James, Peter, Jude, but also both the treatises of St. Luke, and all the writings of St. John. Nay, we have seven epistles herein which the Lord Jesus himself sent by the hand of John to the seven churches; yea, the whole Rev. is no other than an epistle from Him. Concerning the epistles of St. Paul, we may observe, he writes in a very different manner to those churches which he had planted himself, and to those who had not seen his face in the flesh. In his letters to the former, a loving or sharp familiarity appears, as their behaviour was more or less suitable to

the gospel. To the latter, he proposes the pure, unmixed gospel, in a more general and abstract manner. As to the time wherein he wrote his epistles, it is probable he wrote about the year of Christ, according to the common reckoning, 48 From Corinth, The Epistle to the Thessalonians. 49 From Phrygia, To the Galatians. 52 From Ephesus, The First to the Corinthians. From Troas, The First Epistle to Timothy. From Macedonia,The Second to the Corinthians, and that to Titus. From Corinth, To the Romans. 57 From Rome, To the Philippians, to Philemon, the Ephesians, and Colossians. 53 From Italy, To the Hebrews. 66 From Rome, The Second to Timothy. As to the general epistles, it seems, St. James wrote a little before his death, which was A. D. 63. St. Peter, who was martyred in the year 67, wrote his latter epistle a little before his death, and not long after his former. St. Jude wrote after him, when the mystery of iniquity was gaining ground swiftly. St. John is believed to have wrote all his epistles a little before his departure. The Revelation he wrote A. D. 96. That St. Paul wrote this epistle from Corinth we may learn from his commending to the Roman Phebe, a servant of the church of Cenchrea, chap. xvi, 1, a port of Corinth; and from his mentioning the salutations of Caius and Erastus, chap. xvi, 23, who were both Corinthians. Those to whom he wrote seem to have been chiefly foreigners, both Jews and gentiles, whom business drew from other provinces; as appears, both by his writing in Greek, and by his salutations of several former acquaintance. His chief design herein is to show,

1, That neither the gentiles by the law of nature, nor the Jews by the law of Moses, could obtain justification before God; and that therefore it was necessary for both to seek it from the free mercy of God by faith.

2, That God has an absolute right to show mercy on what terms he pleases, and to withhold it from those who will not accept it on his own terms. This Epistle consists of five parts: -

I. The introduction, C.i.1-15

II. The proposition briefly proved,

1. Concerning faith and justification,
2. Concerning salvation,
3. Concerning the equality of believers, Jews or gentiles, 16-17 To these three parts, whereof The first is treated of, C.i.18-iv. The second, C.v-viii. The third, C.ix.-xi not only the treatise itself, but also the exhortation, answers in the same order.

III. The treatise,

1. Concerning justification, which is, (1.) Not by works, for C.i.18 The gentiles, C.ii.1-10 ` The Jews, and 11-29 Both together are under sin, C.iii.1-20 (2.) But by faith, 21-31 as appears by the example of Abraham, and the testimony of David, C.iv.1-25
2. Concerning salvation, C.v.-viii.
3. Concerning the equal privileges of Jewish and gentile believers, C.ix.-xi.

IV. The exhortation, C.xii.1-2

1. Concerning faith and its fruits, love and practical holiness, 3-21 C.xiii.1-10
2. Concerning salvation, 11-14
3. Of the conjunction of Jews and gentiles,. C.xiv.1-xv.13

V. The conclusion, 14-xvi.25 To express the design and contents of this epistle a little more at large: The apostle labours throughout to fix in those to whom he writes a deep sense of the excellency of the gospel, and to engage them to act suitably to it. For this purpose, after a general salutation, chap. i, 1-7, and profession of his affection for them, chap. i, 8-15, he declares he shall not be ashamed openly to maintain the gospel at Rome, seeing

it is the powerful instrument of salvation, both to Jews and gentiles, by means of faith, chap. i, 16, 17. And, in order to demonstrate this, he shows,

1. That the world greatly needed such a dispensation, the gentiles being in a most abandoned state, chap. i, 18-32, and the Jews, though condemning others, being themselves no better, chap. ii, 1- 29; as, not withstanding some cavils, which he obviates, chap. iii, 1-8, their own scriptures testify, chap. iii, 9-19. So that all were under a necessity of seeking justification by this method, chap. iii, 20-31.
2. That Abraham and David themselves sought justification by faith, and not by works, chap. iv, 1-25.
3. That all who believe are brought into so happy a state, as turns the greatest afflictions into a matter of joy, chap. v, 1-11.
4. That the evils brought on mankind by Adam are abundantly recompensed to all that believe in Christ, chap. v, 12-21.
5. That, far from dissolving the obligations to practical holiness, the gospel increases them by peculiar obligations, chap. vi, 1-23. In order to convince them of these things the more deeply, and to remove their fondness for the Mosaic law, now they were married to Christ by faith in him, chap. vii, 1-6, he shows how unable the motives of the law were to produce that holiness which believers obtain by a living faith in the gospel, chap. vii, 7-25, viii, 1, 2, and then gives a more particular view of those things which rendered the gospel effectual to this great end, chap. viii, 3-39. That even the gentiles, if they believed, should have a share in these blessings, and that the Jews, if they believed not, should be excluded from them, being a point of great importance, the apostle bestows the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters in settling it. He begins the ninth chapter by expressing his tender love and high esteem for the Jewish nation, chap. ix, 1-5, and then shows,
   1. That God's rejecting great part of the seed of Abraham, yea, and of Isaac too, was undeniable fact, chap. ix, 6-13.
   2. That God had not chosen them to such peculiar privileges for any kind of goodness either in them or their fathers, chap. ix, 14- 24.
   3. That his accepting the gentiles, and rejecting many of the Jews, had been foretold both by Hosea and Isaiah, chap. ix, 25-33.
   4. That God had offered salvation to Jews and gentiles on the same terms, though the Jews had rejected it, chap. x, 1-21.
   5. That though the rejection of Israel for their obstinacy was general, yet it was not total; there being still a remnant among them who did embrace the gospel, chap. xi, 1-10.
6. That the rejection of the rest was not final, but in the end all Israel should be saved, chap. xi, 11-31.
7. That, meantime, even their obstinacy and rejection served to display the unsearchable wisdom and love of God, chap. xi, 32- 36. The rest of the epistle contains practical instructions and exhortations. He particularly urges,
   1. An entire consecration of themselves to God, and a care to glorify Him by a faithful improvement of their several talents, chap. vii, 1-11.

2. Devotion, patience, hospitality, mutual sympathy, humility, peace, and meekness, chap. vii, 12-21.
3. Obedience to magistrates, justice in all its branches, love the fulfilling of the law, and universal holiness, chap. viii, 1-14.
4. Mutual candour between those who differed in judgment, touching the observance of the Mosaic law, chap. xiv, 1-23, xv, 1- 17; in enforcing which he is led to mention the extent of his own labours, and his purpose of visiting the Romans; in the mean time recommending himself to their prayers, chap. xv, 18-33. And, after many salutations, chap. xvi, 1-16, and a caution against those who caused divisions, he concludes with a suitable blessing and doxology, chap. xvi, 17-27.

# ROMANS

## I

1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ -To this introduction the conclusion answers, chap. xv, 15, &c. Called to be an apostle - And made an apostle by that calling. While God calls, he makes what he calls. As the Judaizing teachers disputed his claim to the apostolical office, it is with great propriety that he asserts it in the very entrance of an epistle wherein their principles are entirely overthrown. And various other proper and important thoughts are suggested in this short introduction; particularly the prophecies concerning the gospel, the descent of Jesus from David, the great doctrines of his Godhead and resurrection, the sending the gospel to the gentiles, the privileges of Christians, and the obedience and holiness to which they were obliged in virtue of their profession. Separated - By God, not only from the bulk of other men, from other Jews, from other disciples, but even from other Christian teachers, to be a peculiar instrument of God in spreading the gospel.

2. Which he promised before - Of old time, frequently, solemnly. And the promise and accomplishment confirm each other. Deut. xviii, 18; Isa. ix, 6, 7; Chapter liii; lxi; Jer. xxiii, 5.

3. Who was of the seed of David according to the flesh - That is, with regard to his human nature. Both the natures of our saviour are here mentioned; but the human is mentioned first, because the divine was not manifested in its full evidence till after his resurrection.

4. But powerfully declared to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of Holiness - That is, according to his divine nature. By the resurrection from the dead - For this is both the fountain and the object of our faith; and the preaching of the apostles was the consequence of Christ's resurrection.

5. By whom we have received - I and the other apostles. Grace and apostleship - The favour to be an apostle, and qualifications for it. For obedience to the faith in all nations - That is, that all nations may embrace the faith of Christ. For his name - For his sake; out of regard to him.

6. Among whom - The nations brought to the obedience of faith. Are ye also - But St. Paul gives them no preeminence above others.

7. To all that are in Rome - Most of these were heathens by birth, ver. 13, though with Jews mixed among them. They were scattered up and down in that large city, and not yet reduced into the form of a church. Only some had begun to meet in the house of Aquila and Priscilla. Beloved

of God - And from his free love, not from any merit of yours, called by his word and his Spirit to believe in him, and now through faith holy as he is holy. Grace - The peculiar favour of God. And peace - All manner of blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. This is both a Christian salutation and an apostolic benediction. From God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ - This is the usual way wherein the apostles speak, "God the Father," "God our Father." Nor do they often, in speaking of him, use the word Lord, as it implies the proper name of God, Jehovah. In the Old Testament, indeed, the holy men generally said, "The Lord our God;" for they were then, as it were, servants; whereas now they are sons: and sons so well know their father, that they need not frequently mention his proper name. It is one and the same peace, and one and the same grace, which is from God and from Jesus Christ. Our trust and prayer fix on God, as he is the Father of Christ; and on Christ, as he presents us to the Father.

8. I thank - In the very entrance of this one epistle are the traces of all spiritual affections; but of thankfulness above all, with the expression of which almost all St. Paul's epistles begin. He here particularly thanks God, that what otherwise himself should have done, was done at Rome already. My God - This very word expresses faith, hope, love, and consequently all true religion. Through Jesus Christ - The gifts of God all pass through Christ to us; and all our petitions and thanksgivings pass through Christ to God. That your faith is spoken of - In this kind of congratulations St. Paul describes either the whole of Christianity, as Colossians i, 3, &c.; or some part of it, as 1 Cor. i, 5. Accordingly here he mentions the faith of the Romans, suitably to his design, ver. 12, 17. Through the whole world - This joyful news spreading everywhere, that there were Christians also in the imperial city. And the goodness and wisdom of God established faith in the chief cities; in Jerusalem and Rome particularly; that from thence it might be diffused to all nations.

9. God, whom I serve - As an apostle. In my spirit - Not only with my body, but with my inmost soul. In the gospel - By preaching it.

10. Always - In all my solemn addresses to God. If by any means now at length - This accumulation of particles declares the strength of his desire.

11. That I may impart to you - Face to face, by laying on of hands, prayer, preaching the gospel, private conversation. Some spiritual gift - With such gifts the Corinthians, who had enjoyed the presence of St. Paul, abounded, 1 Cor. i, 7; xii, 1; xiv, 1. So did the Galatians likewise, Gal. iii, 5; and, indeed, all those churches which had had the presence of any of the apostles had peculiar advantages in this kind, from the laying on of their hands, Acts xix, 6; viii, 17, &c., 2 Tim. i, 6. But as yet the Roman were greatly inferior to them in this respect; for which reason the apostle, in the twelfth chapter also, says little, if any thing, of their spiritual gifts. He therefore desires to impart some, that they might be established; for by these was the testimony of Christ confirmed among them. That St. Peter had no more been at Rome than St. Paul, at the time when this epistle was wrote, appears from the general tenor thereof, and from this place in particular: for, otherwise, what St. Paul wishes to impart to the Roman would have been imparted already by St. Peter.

12. That is, I long to be comforted by the mutual faith both of you and me - He not only associates the Roman with, but even prefers them before, himself. How different is this style of the apostle from that of the modern court of Rome!

13. Brethren - A frequent, holy, simple, sweet, and yet grand, appellation. The apostles but rarely address persons by their names; 'O ye Corinthians," "O Timotheus." St. Paul generally uses this appellation, " Brethren;" sometimes in exhortation, " My beloved," or, " My beloved brethren;" St. James, "Brethren," "My brethren," My beloved brethren;" St. Peter and Jude always, " Beloved;"

St. John frequently, " Beloved;" once, " Brethren;" oftener than once, My little children." Though I have been hindered hitherto - Either by business, see chap. xv, 22; or persecution, 1 Thess. ii, 2; or the Spirit, Acts xvi, 7. That I might have some fruit - Of my ministerial labours. Even as I have already had from the many churches I have planted and watered among the other gentiles.

14. To the Greeks and the barbarians - He includes the Roman under the Greeks; so that this division comprises all nations. Both to the wise, and the unwise - For there were unwise even among the Greeks, and wise even among the barbarians. I am a debtor to all - I am bound by my divine mission to preach the gospel to them.

16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel - To the world, indeed, it is folly and weakness, 1 Cor. i, 18; therefore, in the judgment of the world, he ought to be ashamed of it; especially at Rome, the head and theatre of the world. But Paul is not ashamed, knowing it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth - The great and gloriously powerful means of saving all who accept salvation in God's own way. As St. Paul comprises the sum of the gospel in this epistle, so he does the sum of the epistle in this and the following verse. Both to the Jew, and to the gentile - There is a noble frankness, as well as a comprehensive sense, in these words, by which he, on the one hand, shows the Jews their absolute need of the gospel; and, on the other, tells the politest and greatest nation in the world both that their salvation depended on receiving it, and that the first offers of it were in every place to be made to the despised Jews.

17. The righteousness of God - This expression sometimes means God's eternal, essential righteousness, which includes both justice and mercy, and is eminently shown in condemning sin, and yet justifying the sinner. Sometimes it means that righteousness by which a man, through the gift of God, is made and is righteous; and that, both by receiving Christ through faith, and by a conformity to the essential righteousness of God. St. Paul, when treating of justification, means hereby the righteousness of faith; therefore called the righteousness of God, because God found out and prepared, reveals and gives, approves and crowns it. In this verse the expression means, the whole benefit of God through Christ for the salvation of a sinner. Is revealed - Mention is made here, and ver. 18, of a twofold Revelation, - of wrath and of righteousness: the former, little known to nature, is revealed by the law; the latter, wholly unknown to nature, by the gospel. That goes before, and prepares the way; this follows. Each, the apostle says, is revealed at the present time, in opposition to the times of ignorance. From faith to faith - By a gradual series of still clearer and clearer promises. As it is written - St. Paul had just laid down three propositions:

1. Righteousness is by faith, ver. xvii,
2. Salvation is by righteousness, ver. xvi,
3. Both to the Jews and to the gentiles, ver. 16. Now all these are confirmed by that single sentence, The just shall live by faith - Which was primarily spoken of those who preserved their lives, when the Chaldeans besieged Jerusalem, by believing the declarations of God, and acting according to them. Here it means, He shall obtain the favour of God, and continue therein by believing. Hab. ii, 4

18. For - There is no other way of obtaining life and salvation. Having laid down his proposition, the apostle now enters upon the proof of it. His first argument is, The law condemns all men, as being under sin. None therefore is justified by the works of the law. This is treated of chap. iii, 20. And hence he infers, Therefore justification is by faith. The wrath of God is revealed - Not only by frequent and signal interpositions of divine providence, but likewise in the sacred oracles, and by us, his messengers. From heaven - This speaks the majesty of Him whose wrath is revealed, his

all-seeing eye, and the extent of his wrath: whatever is under heaven is under the effects of his wrath, believers in Christ excepted. Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness - These two are treated of, ver. 23, &c. Of men - He is speaking here of the gentiles, and chiefly the wisest of them. Who detain the truth - For it struggles against their wickedness. In unrighteousness - The word here includes ungodliness also.

19. For what is to be known of God - Those great principles which are indispensably necessary to be known. Is manifest in them; for God hath showed it to them - By the light which enlightens every man that cometh into the world.

20. For those things of him which are invisible, are seen - By the eye of the mind. Being understood - They are seen by them, and them only, who use their understanding

21. Because, knowing God - For the wiser heathens did know that there was one supreme God; yet from low and base considerations they conformed to the idolatry of the vulgar. They did not glorify him as God, neither were thankful - They neither thanked him for his benefits, nor glorified him for his divine perfection. But became vain - Like the idols they worshipped. In their reasonings - Various, uncertain, foolish. What a terrible instance have we of this in the writings of Lucretius! What vain reasonings, and how dark a heart, amidst so pompous professions of wisdom!

23. And changed - With the utmost folly. Here are three degrees of ungodliness and of punishment: the first is described, ver. 21- 24; the second, ver. 25-27; the third, in ver. 28, and following verses. The punishment in each case is expressed by God gave them up. If a man will not worship God as God, he is so left to himself that he throws away his very manhood. Reptiles - Or creeping things; as beetles, and various kinds of serpents.

24. Wherefore - One punishment of sin is from the very nature of it, as ver. 27; another, as here, is from vindictive justice. Uncleanness - Ungodliness and uncleanness are frequently joined, 1 Thess. iv, 5 as are the knowledge of God and purity. God gave them up - By withdrawing his restraining grace.

25. Who changed the truth - The true worship of God. Into a lie - False, abominable idolatries. And worshipped - Inwardly. And served - Outwardly.

26. Therefore God gave them up to vile affections - To which the heathen Roman were then abandoned to the last degree; and none more than the emperors themselves.

27. Receiving the just recompense of their error - Their idolatry being punished with that unnatural lust, which was as horrible a dishonour to the body, as their idolatry was to God.

28. God gave them up to an undiscerning mind - Treated of, ver. 32. To do things not expedient - Even the vilest abominations, treated of verses ver. 29-31.

29. Filled with all injustice - This stands in the first place; unmercifulness, in the last. Fornication - Includes here every species of uncleanness. Maliciousness - The Greek word properly implies a temper which delights in hurting another, even without any advantage to itself.

30. Whisperers - Such as secretly defame others. Backbiters - Such as speak against others behind their back. Haters of God - That is, rebels against him, deniers of his providence, or accusers of his justice in their adversities; yea, having an inward heart- enmity to his justice and holiness. Inventors of evil things - Of new pleasures, new ways of gain, new arts of hurting, particularly in war.

31. Covenant-breakers - It is well known, the Romans, as a nation, from the very beginning of their commonwealth, never made any scruple of vacating altogether the most solemn engagement, if they did not like it, though made by their supreme magistrate, in the name of the whole people.

They only gave up the general who had made it, and then supposed themselves to be at full liberty. Without natural affection - The custom of exposing their own new - born children to perish by cold, hunger, or wild beasts, which so generally prevailed in the heathen world, particularly among the Greeks and Romans, was an amazing instance of this; as is also that of killing their aged and helpless parents, now common among the American heathens.

32. Not only do the same, but have pleasure in those that practice them - This is the highest degree of wickedness. A man may be hurried by his passions to do the thing he hates; but he that has pleasure in those that do evil, loves wickedness for wickedness' sake. And hereby he encourages them in sin, and heaps the guilt of others upon his own head.

## II

1. Therefore - The apostle now makes a transition from the gentiles to the Jews, till, at ver. 6, he comprises both. Thou art inexcusable - Seeing knowledge without practice only increases guilt. O man - Having before spoken of the gentile in the third person, he addresses the Jew in the second person. But he calls him by a common appellation, as not acknowledging him to be a Jew. See verses 17, 28. Whosoever thou art that Judgest - Censurest, condemnest. For in that thou Judgest the other - The heathen. Thou condemnest thyself; for thou doest the same things - In effect; in many instances.

2. For we know - Without thy teaching That the judgment of God - Not thine, who exceptest thyself from its sentence. Is according to truth - Is just, making no exception, ver. 5, 6, 11; and reaches the heart as well as the life, ver. 16.

3. That thou shalt escape - Rather than the gentile.

4. Or despisest thou - Dost thou go farther still, - from hoping to escape his wrath, to the abuse of his love?. The riches - The abundance. Of his goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering - Seeing thou both hast sinned, dost sin, and wilt sin. All these are afterwards comprised in the single word goodness. Leadeth thee - That is, is designed of God to lead or encourage thee to it.

5. Treasurest up wrath - Although thou thinkest thou art treasuring up all good things. O what a treasure may a man lay up either way, in this short day of life! To thyself - Not to him whom thou Judgest. In the day of wrath, and Revelation, and righteous judgment of God - Just opposite to "the goodness and forbearance and longsuffering" of God. When God shall be revealed, then shall also be "revealed" the secrets of men's hearts, ver. 16. Forbearance and Revelation respect God, and are opposed to each other; longsuffering and righteous judgment respect the sinner; goodness and wrath are words of a more general import.

6. Prov. xxiv, 12

7. To them that seek for glory - For pure love does not exclude faith, hope, desire, 1 Cor. xv, 58.

8. But to them that are contentious - Like thee, O Jew, who thus fightest against God. The character of a false Jew is disobedience, stubbornness, impatience. Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish - Alluding to Psalm lxxviii, xlix, "He cast upon them," the Egyptians. "the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble;" and finely intimating, that the Jews would in the

day of vengeance be more severely punished than even the Egyptians were when God made their plagues so wonderful.

9. Of the Jew first - Here we have the first express mention of the Jews in this chapter. And it is introduced with great propriety. Their having been trained up in the true religion, and having had Christ and his apostles first sent to them, will place them in the foremost rank of the criminals that obey not the truth.

10. But glory - Just opposite to "wrath," from the divine approbation. honour - Opposite to "indignation," by the divine appointment; and peace now and for ever, opposed to tribulation and anguish.

11. For there is no respect of persons with God - He will reward every one according to his works. But this is well consistent with his distributing advantages and opportunities of improvement, according to his own good pleasure.

12. For as many as have sinned - He speaks as of the time past, for all time will be past at the day of judgment. Without the law - Without having any written law. Shall also perish without the law - Without regard had to any outward law; being condemned by the law written in their hearts. The word also shows the agreement of the manner of sinning, with the manner of suffering. Perish - He could not so properly say, Shall be judged without the law.

13. For not the hearers of the law are, even now, just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified - Finally acquitted and rewarded a most sure and important truth, which respects the gentiles also, though principally the Jews. St. Paul speaks of the former, ver. 14, &c.; of the latter, ver. 17, &c. Here is therefore no parenthesis; for the sixteenth verse also depends on the fifteenth, not on the twelfth. Rom. ii, 16, 15, 12.

14. For when the gentiles - That is, any of them. St. Paul, having refuted the perverse judgment of the Jews concerning the heathens, proceeds to show the just judgment of God against them. He now speaks directly of the heathens, in order to convince the heathens. Yet the concession he makes to these serves more strongly to convince the Jews. Do by nature - That is, without an outward rule; though this also, strictly speaking, is by preventing grace. The things contained in the law - The ten commandments being only the substance of the law of nature. These, not having the written law, are a law unto themselves - That is, what the law is to the Jews, they are, by the grace of God, to themselves; namely, a rule of life.

15. Who show - To themselves, to other men, and, in a sense, to God himself. The work of the law - The substance, though not the letter, of it. Written on their hearts - By the same hand which wrote the commandments on the tables of stone. Their conscience - There is none of all its faculties which the soul has less in its power than this. Bearing witness - In a trial there are the plaintiff, the defendant, and the witnesses. Conscience and sin itself are witnesses against the heathens. Their thoughts sometimes excuse, sometimes condemn, them. Among themselves - Alternately, like plaintiff and defendant. Accusing or even defending them - The very manner of speaking shows that they have far more room to accuse than to defend.

16. In the day - That is, who show this in the day. Everything will then be shown to be what it really is. In that day will appear the law written in their hearts as it often does in the present life. When God shall judge the secrets of men - On secret circumstances depends the real quality of actions, frequently unknown to the actors themselves, ver. 29. Men generally form their judgments, even of themselves merely from what is apparent. According to my gospel - According to the tenor of that gospel which is committed to my care. Hence it appears that the gospel also is a law.

17. But if thou art called a Jew - This highest point of Jewish glorying, after a farther description of it interposed, ver. 17-20, and refuted, ver. 21-24, is itself refuted, ver. 25, &c. The description consists of twice five articles; of which the former five, ver. 17, 18, show what he boasts of in himself; the other five, ver. 19, 20, what he glories in with respect to others. The first particular of the former five answers to the first of the latter; the second, to the second, and so on. And restest in the law - Dependest on it, though it can only condemn thee. And gloriest in God - As thy God; and that, too, to the exclusion of others.

19. Blind, in darkness, ignorant, babes - These were the titles which the Jews generally gave the gentiles.

20. Having the form of knowledge and truth - That is, the most accurate knowledge of the truth.

21. Thou dost not teach thyself - He does not teach himself who does not practice what he teaches. Dost thou steal, commit adultery, commit sacrilege - Sin grievously against thy neighbour, thyself, God. St. Paul had shown the gentiles, first their sins against God, then against themselves, then against their neighbours. He now inverts the order: for sins against God are the most glaring in an heathen, but not in a Jew. Thou that abhorrest idols - Which all the Jews did, from the time of the Babylonish captivity. Thou committest sacrilege - Doest what is worse, robbing Him "who is God over all" of the glory which is due to him. None of these charges were rashly advanced against the Jews of that age; for, as their own historian relates, some even of the priests lived by rapine, and others in gross uncleanness. And as for sacrilegiously robbing God and his altar, it had been complained of ever since Malachi; so that the instances are given with great propriety and judgment.

24. Isaiah lii, 5

25. Circumcision indeed profiteth - He does not say, justifies. How far it profited is shown in the third and fourth chapters. Thy circumcision is become uncircumcision - is so already in effect. Thou wilt have no more benefit by it than if thou hadst never received it. The very same observation holds with regard to baptism.

26. If the uncircumcision - That is, a person uncircumcised. Keep the law - Walk agreeably to it. Shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision - In the sight of God?

27. Yea, the uncircumcision that is by nature - Those who are, literally speaking, uncircumcised. Fulfilling the law - As to the substance of it. Shall judge thee - Shall condemn thee in that day. Who by the letter and circumcision - Who having the bare, literal, external circumcision, transgressest the law.

28. For he is not a Jew - In the most important sense, that is, one of God's beloved people. Who is one in outward show only; neither is that the true, acceptable circumcision, which is apparent in the flesh.

29. But he is a Jew - That is, one of God's people. Who is one inwardly - In the secret recesses of his soul. And the acceptable circumcision is that of the heart - Referring to Deut. xxx, 6; the putting away all inward impurity. This is seated in the spirit, the inmost soul, renewed by the Spirit of God. And not in the letter - Not in the external ceremony. Whose praise is not from men, but from God - The only searcher of the heart.

## III

1. What then, may some say, is the advantage of the Jew, or of the circumcision - That is, those that are circumcised, above the gentiles?

2. Chiefly in that they were intrusted with the oracles of God - The scriptures, in which are so great and precious promises. Other prerogatives will follow, chap. ix, 4-5. St. Paul here singles out this by which, after removing the objection, he will convict them so much the more.

3. Shall their unbelief disannul the faithfulness of God - Will he not still make good his promises to them that do believe?

4. Psalm ii, 4.

5. But, it may be farther objected, if our unrighteousness be subservient to God's glory, is it not unjust in him to punish us for it? I speak as a man - As human weakness would be apt to speak.

6. God forbid - By no means. If it were unjust in God to punish that unrighteousness which is subservient to his own glory, how should God judge the world - Since all the unrighteousness in the world will then commend the righteousness of God.

7. But, may the objector reply, if the truth of God hath abounded - Has been more abundantly shown. Through my lie - If my lie, that is, practice contrary to truth, conduces to the glory of God, by making his truth shine with superior advantage. Why am I still judged as a sinner - Can this be said to be any sin at all? Ought I not to do what would otherwise be evil, that so much "good may come?" To this the apostle does not deign to give a direct answer, but cuts the objector short with a severe reproof.

8. Whose condemnation is just - The condemnation of all who either speak or act in this manner. So the apostle absolutely denies the lawfulness of " doing evil," any evil, "that good may come."

9. What then - Here he resumes what he said, verse 1. Rom. iii, 1. Under sin - Under the guilt and power of it: the Jews, by transgressing the written law; the gentiles, by transgressing the law of nature.

10. As it is written - That all men are under sin appears from the vices which have raged in all ages. St. Paul therefore rightly cites David and Isaiah, though they spoke primarily of their own age, and expressed what manner of men God sees, when he "looks down from heaven;" not what he makes them by his grace. There is none righteous - This is the general proposition. The particulars follow: their dispositions and designs, ver. 11, 12; their discourse, ver. 13, 14; their actions, ver. 16-18. Psalm xiv, 1, &c.

11. There is none that understandeth - The things of God.

12. They have all turned aside - From the good way. They are become unprofitable - Helpless impotent, unable to profit either themselves or others.

13. Their throat - Is noisome and dangerous as an open sepulchre. Observe the progress of evil discourse, proceeding out of the heart, through the throat, tongue, lips, till the whole mouth is filled therewith. The poison of asps - Infectious, deadly backbiting, tale-bearing, evil-speaking, is under (for honey is on) their lips. An asp is a venomous kind of serpent. Psalm v, 9; Psalm cxl, 3.

14. Cursing - Against God. Bitterness - Against their neighbour. Psalm x, 7.

15. Isaiah lix, 7, 8

17. Of peace - Which can only spring from righteousness.

18. The fear of God is not before their eyes - Much less is the love of God in their heart. Psalm xxxvi, 1.

19. Whatsoever the law - The Old Testament. Saith, it saith to them that are under the law - That is, to those who own its authority; to the Jews, and not the gentiles. St. Paul quoted no scripture against them, but pleaded with them only from the light of nature. Every mouth - Full of bitterness, ver. 14, and yet of boasting, ver. 27. May become guilty - May be fully convicted, and apparently liable to most just condemnation. These things were written of old, and were quoted by St. Paul, not to make men criminal, but to prove them so.

20. No flesh shall be justified - None shall be forgiven and accepted of God. By the works of the law - On this ground, that he hath kept the law. St. Paul means chiefly the moral part of it, ver. 9, 19 chap. ii, 21,

26; &c. which alone is not abolished, ver. 31. And it is not without reason, that he so often mentions the works of the law, whether ceremonial or moral; for it was on these only the Jews relied, being wholly ignorant of those that spring from faith. For by the law is only the knowledge of sin - But no deliverance either from the guilt or power of it.

21. But now the righteousness of God - That is, the manner of becoming righteous which God hath appointed. Without the law - Without that previous obedience which the law requires; without reference to the law, or dependence on it. Is manifested - In the gospel. Being attested by the Law itself, and by the Prophets - By all the promises in the Old Testament.

22. To all - The Jews. And upon all - The gentiles That believe: for there is no difference - Either as to the need of justification, or the manner of it.

23. For all have sinned - In Adam, and in their own persons; by a sinful nature, sinful tempers, and sinful actions. And are fallen short of the glory of God - The supreme end of man; short of his image on earth, and the enjoyment of him in heaven.

24. And are justified - Pardoned and accepted. Freely - Without any merit of their own. By his grace - Not their own righteousness or works. Through the redemption - The price Christ has paid. Freely by his grace - One of these expressions might have served to convey the apostle's meaning; but he doubles his assertion, in order to give us the fullest conviction of the truth, and to impress us with a sense of its peculiar importance. It is not possible to find words that should more absolutely exclude all consideration of our own works and obedience, or more emphatically ascribe the whole of our justification to free, unmerited goodness.

25. Whom God hath set forth - Before angels and men. A propitiation - To appease an offended God. But if, as some teach, God never was offended, there was no need of this propitiation. And, if so, Christ died in vain. To declare his righteousness - To demonstrate not only his clemency, but his justice; even that vindictive justice whose essential character and principal office is, to punish sin. By the remission of past sins - All the sins antecedent to their believing.

26. For a demonstration of his righteousness - Both of his justice and mercy. That he might be just - Showing his justice on his own Son. And yet the merciful justifier of every one that believeth in Jesus. That he might be just - Might evidence himself to be strictly and inviolably righteous in the administration of his government, even while he is the merciful justifier of the sinner that believeth in Jesus. The attribute of justice must be preserved inviolate; and inviolate it is preserved, if there was a real infliction of punishment on our saviour. On this plan all the attributes harmonize; every attribute is glorified, and not one superseded no, nor so much as clouded.

27. Where is the boasting then of the Jew against the gentile? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay - This would have left room for boasting. But by the law of faith - Since this requires

all, without distinction, to apply as guilty and helpless sinners, to the free mercy of God in Christ. The law of faith is that divine constitution which makes faith, not works, the condition of acceptance.

28. We conclude then that a man is justified by faith - And even by this, not as it is a work, but as it receives Christ; and, consequently, has something essentially different from all our works whatsoever.

29. Surely of the gentiles also - As both nature and the scriptures show.

30. Seeing it is one God who - Shows mercy to both, and by the very same means.

31. We establish the law - Both the authority, purity, and the end of it; by defending that which the law attests; by pointing out Christ, the end of it; and by showing how it may be fulfilled in its purity.

## IV

Having proved it by argument, he now proves by example, and such example as must have greater weight with the Jews than any other.

1. That justification is by faith:
2. That it is free for the gentiles.

1. That our father Abraham hath found - Acceptance with God. According to the flesh - That is, by works.

2. The meaning is, If Abraham had been justified by works, he would have had room to glory. But he had not room to glory. Therefore he was not justified by works.

3. Abraham believed God - That promise of God concerning the numerousness of his seed, Gen. xv, 5, 7; but especially the promise concerning Christ, Gen. xii, 3, through whom all nations should be blessed. And it was imputed to him for righteousness - God accepted him as if he had been altogether righteous. Gen. xv, 6.

4. Now to him that worketh - All that the law requires, the reward is no favour, but an absolute debt. These two examples are selected and applied with the utmost judgment and propriety. Abraham was the most illustrious pattern of piety among the Jewish patriarchs. David was the most eminent of their kings. If then neither of these was justified by his own obedience, if they both obtained acceptance with God, not as upright beings who might claim it, but as sinful creatures who must implore it, the consequence is glaring It is such as must strike every attentive understanding, and must affect every individual person.

5. But to him that worketh not - It being impossible he should without faith. But believeth, his faith is imputed to him for righteousness - Therefore God's affirming of Abraham, that faith was imputed to him for righteousness, plainly shows that he worked not; or, in other words, that he was not justified by works, but by faith only. Hence we see plainly how groundless that opinion is, that holiness or sanctification is previous to our justification. For the sinner, being first convinced of his sin and danger by the Spirit of God, stands trembling before the awful tribunal of divine justice; and has nothing to plead, but his own guilt, and the merits of a Mediator. Christ here interposes; justice is satisfied; the sin is remitted, and pardon is applied to the soul, by a divine faith wrought by the Holy Ghost, who then begins the great work of inward sanctification. Thus God justifies the ungodly, and yet remains just, and true to all his attributes! But let none hence presume to "continue

in sin;" for to the impenitent, God "is a consuming fire." On him that justifieth the ungodly - If a man could possibly be made holy before he was justified, it would entirely set his justification aside; seeing he could not, in the very nature of the thing, be justified if he were not, at that very time, ungodly.

6. So David also - David is fitly introduced after Abraham, because be also received and delivered down the promise. Affirmeth - A man is justified by faith alone, and not by works. Without works-That is, without regard to any former good works supposed to have been done by him.

7. Happy are they whose sins are covered - With the veil of divine mercy. If there be indeed such a thing as happiness on earth, it is the portion of that man whose iniquities are forgiven, and who enjoys the manifestation of that pardon. Well may he endure all the afflictions of life with cheerfulness, and look upon death with comfort. O let us not contend against it, but earnestly pray that this happiness may be ours! Psalm xxxii, 1, 2.

9. This happiness - Mentioned by Abraham and David. On the circumcision - Those that are circumcised only. Faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness - This is fully consistent with our being justified, that is, pardoned and accepted by God upon our believing, for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered. For though this, and this alone, be the meritorious cause of our acceptance with God, yet faith may be said to be "imputed to us for righteousness," as it is the sole condition of our acceptance. We may observe here, forgiveness, not imputing sin, and imputing righteousness, are all one.

10. Not in circumcision - Not after he was circumcised; for he was justified before Ishmael was born, Gen. xv, 1-21; but he was not circumcised till Ishmael was thirteen years old, Gen. xvii, 25.

11. And - After he was justified. He received the sign of circumcision - Circumcision, which was a sign or token of his being in covenant with God. A seal - An assurance on God's part, that he accounted him righteous, upon his believing, before he was circumcised. Who believe in uncircumcision - That is, though they are not circumcised.

12. And the father of the circumcision - Of those who are circumcised, and believe as Abraham did. To those who believe not, Abraham is not a father, neither are they his seed.

13. The promise, that he should be the heir of the world - Is the same as that he should be "the father of all nations," namely, of those in all nations who receive the blessing. The whole world was promised to him and them conjointly. Christ is the heir of the world, and of all things; and so are all Abraham's seed, all that believe in him with the faith of Abraham

14. If they only who are of the law - Who have kept the whole law. Are heirs, faith is made void - No blessing being to be obtained by it; and so the promise is of no effect.

15. Because the law - Considered apart from that grace, which though it was in fact mingled with it, yet is no part of the legal dispensation, is so difficult, and we so weak and sinful, that, instead of bringing us a blessing, it only worketh wrath; it becomes to us an occasion of wrath, and exposes us to punishment as transgressors. Where there is no law in force, there can be no transgression of it.

16. Therefore it - The blessing. Is of faith, that it might be of grace - That it might appear to flow from the free love of God, and that the promise might be firm, sure, and effectual, to all the spiritual seed of Abraham; not only Jews, but gentiles also, if they follow his faith.

17. Before God - Though before men nothing of this appeared, those nations being then unborn. As quickening the dead - The dead are not dead to him and even the things that are not, are before God. And calling the things that are not - Summoning them to rise into being, and appear before

him. The seed of Abraham did not then exist; yet God said, "So shall thy seed be." A man can say to his servant actually existing, Do this; and he doeth it: but God saith to the light, while it does not exist, Go forth; and it goeth. Gen. xvii, 5. 18-21. The Apostle shows the power and excellence of that faith to which he ascribes justification. Who against hope - Against all probability, believed and hoped in the promise. The same thing is apprehended both by faith and hope; by faith, as a thing which God has spoken; by hope, as a good thing which God has promised to us. So shall thy seed be - Both natural and spiritual, as the stars of heaven for multitude. Gen. xv, 5.

23. On his account only - To do personal honour to him.

24. But on ours also - To establish us in seeking justification by faith, and not by works; and to afford a full answer to those who say that, " to be justified by works means only, by Judaism; to be justified by faith means, by embracing Christianity, that is, the system of doctrines so called." Sure it is that Abraham could not in this sense be justified either by faith or by works; and equally sure that David (taking the words thus) was justified by works, and not by faith. Who raised up Jesus from the dead - As he did in a manner both Abraham and Sarah. If we believe on him who raised up Jesus - God the Father therefore is the proper object of justifying faith. It is observable, that St. Paul here, in speaking both of our faith and of the faith of Abraham, puts a part for the whole. And he mentions that part, with regard to Abraham, which would naturally affect the Jews most.

25. Who was delivered - To death. For our offenses - As an atonement for them. And raised for our justification - To empower us to receive that atonement by faith.

## V

1. Being justified by faith - This is the sum of the preceding chapters. We have peace with God - Being enemies to God no longer, ver. 10; neither fearing his wrath, ver. 9. We have peace, hope, love, and power over sin, the sum of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters. These are the fruits of justifying faith: where these are not, that faith is not.

2. Into this grace - This state of favour.

3. We glory in tribulations also - Which we are so far from esteeming a mark of God's displeasure, that we receive them as tokens of his fatherly love, whereby we are prepared for a more exalted happiness. The Jews objected to the persecuted state of the Christians as inconsistent with the people of the Messiah. It is therefore with great propriety that the apostle so often mentions the blessings arising from this very thing.

4. And patience works more experience of the sincerity of our grace, and of God's power and faithfulness.

5. Hope shameth us not - That is, gives us the highest glorying. We glory in this our hope, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts - The divine conviction of God's love to us, and that love to God which is both the earnest and the beginning of heaven. By the Holy Ghost - The efficient cause of all these present blessings, and the earnest of those to come.

6. How can we now doubt of God's love? For when we were without strength - Either to think, will, or do anything good. In due time - Neither too soon nor too late; but in that very point of time which the wisdom of God knew to be more proper than any other. Christ died for the ungodly -

Not only to set them a pattern, or to procure them power to follow it. It does not appear that this expression, of dying for any one, has any other signification than that of rescuing the life of another by laying down our own.

7. A just man - One who gives to all what is strictly their due The good man - One who is eminently holy; full of love, of compassion, kindness, mildness, of every heavenly and amiable temper. Perhaps-one-would-even-dare to die - Every word increases the strangeness of the thing, and declares even this to be something great and unusual.

8. But God recommendeth - A most elegant expression. Those are wont to be recommended to us, who were before either unknown to, or alienated from, us. While we were sinners - So far from being good, that we were not even just.

9. By his blood - By his bloodshedding. We shall be saved from wrath through him - That is, from all the effects of the wrath of God. But is there then wrath in God? Is not wrath a human passion? And how can this human passion be in God? We may answer this by another question: Is not love a human passion? And how can this human passion be in God? But to answer directly: wrath in man, and so love in man, is a human passion. But wrath in God is not a human passion; nor is love, as it is in God. Therefore the inspired writers ascribe both the one and the other to God only in an analogical sense.

10. If - As sure as; so the word frequently signifies; particularly in this and the eighth chapter. We shalt be saved - Sanctified and glorified. Through his life - Who "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

11. And not only so, but we also glory - The whole sentence, from the third to the eleventh verse, may be taken together thus: We not only "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," but also in the midst of tribulations we glory in God himself through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation.

12. Therefore - This refers to all the preceding discourse; from which the apostle infers what follows. He does not therefore properly make a digression, but returns to speak again of sin and of righteousness. As by one man - Adam; who is mentioned, and not Eve, as being the representative of mankind. Sin entered into the world - Actual sin, and its consequence, a sinful nature. And death - With all its attendants. It entered into the world when it entered into being; for till then it did not exist. By sin - Therefore it could not enter before sin. Even so - Namely, by one man. In that - So the word is used also, 2 Cor. v, 4. All sinned - In Adam. These words assign the reason why death came upon all men; infants themselves not excepted, in that all sinned.

13. For until the law sin was in the world - All, I say, had sinned, for sin was in the world long before the written law; but, I grant, sin is not so much imputed, nor so severely punished by God, where there is no express law to convince men of it. Yet that all had sinned, even then, appears in that all died.

14. Death reigned - And how vast is his kingdom! Scarce can we find any king who has as many subjects, as are the kings whom he hath conquered. Even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression - Even over infants who had never sinned, as Adam did, in their own persons; and over others who had not, like him, sinned against an express law. Who is the figure of him that was to come - Each of them being a public person, and a federal head of mankind. The one, the fountain of sin and death to mankind by his offense; the other, of righteousness and life by his free gift. Thus far the apostle shows the agreement between the first and second Adam: afterward he shows the differences between them. The agreement may be summed up thus:

As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so by one man righteousness entered into the world, and life by righteousness. As death passed upon all men, in that all had sinned; so life passed upon all men, (who are in the second Adam by faith,) in that all are justified. And as death through the sin of the first Adam reigned even over them who had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression; so through the righteousness of Christ, even those who have not obeyed, after the likeness of his obedience, shall reign in life. We may add, As the sin of Adam, without the sins which we afterwards committed, brought us death; so the righteousness of Christ, without the good works which we afterwards perform, brings us life: although still every good, as well as evil, work, will receive its due reward.

15. Yet not - St. Paul now describes the difference between Adam and Christ; and that much more directly and expressly than the agreement between them. Now the fall and the free gift differ,

1. In amplitude, ver. 15.
2. He from whom sin came, and He from whom the free gift came, termed also "the gift of righteousness," differ in power, ver. 16.
3. The reason of both is subjoined, ver. 17.
4. This premised, the offense and the free gift are compared, with regard to their effect, ver. 18, and with regard to their cause, ver. 19.

16. The sentence was by one offense to Adam's condemnation - Occasioning the sentence of death to pass upon him, which, by consequence, overwhelmed his posterity. But the free gift is of many offenses unto justification - Unto the purchasing it for all men, notwithstanding many offenses.

17. There is a difference between grace and the gift. Grace is opposed to the offense; the gift, to death, being the gift of life.

18. Justification of life - Is that sentence of God, by which a sinner under sentence of death is adjudged to life.

19. As by the disobedience of one man many (that is, all men) were constituted sinners - Being then in the loins of their first parent, the common head and representative of them all. So by the obedience of one - By his obedience unto death; by his dying for us. Many - All that believe. Shall be constituted righteous - Justified, pardoned.

20. The law came in between - The offense and the free gift. That the offense might abound - That is, the consequence (not the design) of the law's coming in was, not the taking away of sin, but the increase of it. Yet where sin abounded, grace did much more abound - Not only in the remission of that sin which Adam brought on us, but of all our own; not only in remission of sins, but infusion of holiness; not only in deliverance from death, but admission to everlasting life, a far more noble and excellent life than that which we lost by Adam's fall.

21. That as sin had reigned - so grace also might reign - Which could not reign before the fall; before man had sinned. Through righteousness to eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord - Here is pointed out the source of all our blessings, the rich and free grace of God. The meritorious cause; not any works of righteousness of man, but the alone merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. The effect or end of all; not only pardon, but life; divine life, leading to glory.

## VI

1. The apostle here sets himself more fully to vindicate his doctrine from the consequence above suggested, chap. iii, 7, 8. He had then only in strong terms denied and renounced it: here he removes the very foundation thereof.

2. Dead to sin - Freed both from the guilt and from the power of it.

3. As many as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have been baptized into his death - In baptism we, through faith, are ingrafted into Christ; and we draw new spiritual life from this new root, through his Spirit, who fashions us like unto him, and particularly with regard to his death and resurrection.

4. We are buried with him - Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion. That as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory - Glorious power. Of the Father, so we also, by the same power, should rise again; and as he lives a new life in heaven, so we should walk in newness of life. This, says the apostle, our very baptism represents to us.

5. For - Surely these two must go together; so that if we are indeed made conformable to his death, we shall also know the power of his resurrection.

6. Our old man - Coeval with our being, and as old as the fall; our evil nature; a strong and beautiful expression for that entire depravity and corruption which by nature spreads itself over the whole man, leaving no part uninfected. This in a believer is crucified with Christ, mortified, gradually killed, by virtue of our union with him. That the body of sin - All evil tempers, words, and actions, which are the "members" of the "old man," Colossians iii, 5, might be destroyed.

7. For he that is dead - With Christ. Is freed from the guilt of past, and from the power of present, sin, as dead men from the commands of their former masters.

8. Dead with Christ - Conformed to his death, by dying to sin.

10. He died to sin - To atone for and abolish it. He liveth unto God - A glorious eternal life, such as we shall live also.

12. Let not sin reign even in your mortal body - It must be subject to death, but it need not be subject to sin.

13. Neither present your members to sin - To corrupt nature, a mere tyrant. But to God - Your lawful King.

14. Sin shall not have dominion over you - It has neither right nor power. For ye are not under the law - A dispensation of terror and bondage, which only shows sin, without enabling you to conquer it. But under grace - Under the merciful dispensation of the gospel, which brings complete victory over it to every one who is under the powerful influences of the Spirit of Christ.

17. The form of doctrine into which ye have been delivered - Literally it is, The mould into which ye have been delivered; which, as it contains a beautiful allusion, conveys also a very instructive admonition; intimating that our minds, all pliant and ductile, should be conformed to the gospel precepts, as liquid metal, take the figure of the mould into which they are cast.

18. Being then set free from sin - We may see the apostles method thus far at one view: - Chap. Ver.

1. Bondage to sin chap. iii, 9
2. The knowledge of sin by the law; a sense of God's wrath; inward death chap. iii, 20
3. The Revelation of the righteousness of God in Christ through the gospel chap. iii, 21
4. The center of all, faith, embracing that righteousness chap. iii, 22

5. Justification, whereby God forgives all past sin, and freely accepts the sinner chap. iii, 24
6. The gift of the Holy Ghost; a sense of chap. v, 5, God's love new inward life ver. 4
7. The free service of righteousness ver. 12

19. I speak after the manner of men - Thus it is necessary that the scripture should let itself down to the language of men. Because of the weakness of your flesh - Slowness of understanding flows from the weakness of the flesh, that is, of human nature. As ye have presented your members servants to uncleanness and iniquity unto iniquity, so now present your members servants of righteousness unto holiness - Iniquity (whereof uncleanness is an eminent part) is here opposed to righteousness; and unto iniquity is the opposite of unto holiness. Righteousness here is a conformity to the divine will; holiness, to the whole divine nature. Observe, they who are servants of righteousness go on to holiness; but they who are servants to iniquity get no farther. Righteousness is service, because we live according to the will of another; but liberty, because of our inclination to it, and delight in it.

20. When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness - In all reason, therefore, ye ought now to be free from unrighteousness; to be as uniform and zealous in serving God as ye were in serving the devil.

21. Those things - He speaks of them as afar off.

23. Death - Temporal, spiritual, and eternal. Is the due wages of sin; but eternal life is the gift of God - The difference is remarkable. Evil works merit the reward they receive: good works do not. The former demand wages: the latter accept a free gift.

## VII

1. The apostle continues the comparison between the former and the present state of a believer, and at the same time endeavours to wean the Jewish believers from their fondness for the Mosaic law. I speak to them that know the law - To the Jews chiefly here. As long - So long, and no longer. As it liveth - The law is here spoken of, by a common figure, as a person, to which, as to an husband, life and death are ascribed. But he speaks indifferently of the law being dead to us, or we to it, the sense being the same.

2. She is freed from the law of her husband - From that law which gave him a peculiar property in her.

4. Thus ye also - Are now as free from the Mosaic law as an husband is, when his wife is dead. By the body of Christ - Offered up; that is, by the merits of his death, that law expiring with him.

5. When ye were in the flesh - Carnally minded, in a state of nature; before we believed in Christ. Our sins which were by the law - Accidentally occasioned, or irritated thereby. Wrought in our members - Spread themselves all over the whole man.

6. Being dead to that whereby we were held - To our old husband, the law. That we might serve in newness of spirit - In a new, spiritual manner. And not in the oldness of the letter - Not in a bare literal, external way, as we did before.

7. What shall we say then - This is a kind of a digression, to the beginning of the next chapter, wherein the apostle, in order to show in the most lively manner the weakness and inefficacy of the law, changes the person and speaks as of himself, concerning the misery of one under the law. This St. Paul frequently does, when he is not speaking of his own person, but only assuming another character, chap. iii, 5, 1 Cor. x, 30, 1 Cor. iv, 6. The character here assumed is that of a man, first ignorant of the law, then under it and sincerely, but ineffectually, striving to serve God. To have spoken this of himself, or any true believer, would have been foreign to the whole scope of his discourse; nay, utterly contrary thereto, as well as to what is expressly asserted, chap. viii, 2. Is the law sin - Sinful in itself, or a promoter of sin. I had not known lust - That is, evil desire. I had not known it to be a sin; nay, perhaps I should not have known that any such desire was in me: it did not appear, till it was stirred up by the prohibition.

8. But sin - My inbred corruption. Taking occasion by the commandment - Forbidding, but not subduing it, was only fretted, and wrought in me so much the more all manner of evil desire. For while I was without the knowledge of the law, sin was dead - Neither so apparent, nor so active; nor was I under the least apprehensions of any danger from it.

9. And I was once alive without the law - Without the close application of it. I had much life, wisdom, virtue, strength: so I thought. But when the commandment - That is, the law, a part put for the whole; but this expression particularly intimates its compulsive force, which restrains, enjoins, urges, forbids, threatens. Came - In its spiritual meaning, to my heart, with the power of God. Sin revived, and I died - My inbred sin took fire, and all my virtue and strength died away; and I then saw myself to be dead in sin, and liable to death eternal.

10. The commandment which was intended for life - Doubtless it was originally intended by God as a grand means of preserving and increasing spiritual life, and leading to life everlasting.

11. Deceived me - While I expected life by the law, sin came upon me unawares and slew all my hopes.

12. The commandment - That is, every branch of the law. Is holy, and just, and good - It springs from, and partakes of, the holy nature of God; it is every way just and right in itself; it is designed wholly for the good of man.

13. Was then that which is good made the cause of evil to me; yea, of death, which is the greatest of evil? Not so. But it was sin, which was made death to me, inasmuch as it wrought death in me even by that which is good - By the good law. So that sin by the commandment became exceeding sinful - The consequence of which was, that inbred sin, thus driving furiously in spite of the commandment, became exceeding sinful; the guilt thereof being greatly aggravated.

14. I am carnal - St. Paul, having compared together the past and present state of believers, that "in the flesh," ver. 5, and that "in the spirit," ver. 6, in answering two objections, (Is then the law sin? ver. 7, and, Is the law death? ver. 13,) interweaves the whole process of a man reasoning, groaning, striving, and escaping from the legal to the evangelical state. This he does from ver. 7, to the end of this chapter. Sold under sin - Totally enslaved; slaves bought with money were absolutely at their master's disposal.

16. It is good - This single word implies all the three that were used before, ver. 12, "holy, just, and good."

17. It is no more I that can properly be said to do it, but rather sin that dwelleth in me - That makes, as it were, another person, and tyrannizes over me.

18. In my flesh - The flesh here signifies the whole man as he is by nature.

21. I find then a law - An inward constraining power, flowing from the dictate of corrupt nature.

22. For I delight in the law of God - This is more than "I consent to," ver. 16. The day of liberty draws near. The inward man - Called the mind, ver. 23, 25.

23. But I see another law in my members - Another inward constraining power of evil inclinations and bodily appetites. Warring against the law of my mind - The dictate of my mind, which delights in the law of God. And captivating me - In spite of all my resistance

24. Wretched man that I am - The struggle is now come to the height; and the man, finding there is no help in himself, begins almost unawares to pray, Who shall deliver me? He then seeks and looks for deliverance, till God in Christ appears to answer his question. The word which we translate deliver, implies force. And indeed without this there can be no deliverance. The body of this death - That is, this body of death; this mass of sin, leading to death eternal, and cleaving as close to me as my body to my soul. We may observe, the deliverance is not wrought yet.

25. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord - That is, God will deliver me through Christ. But the apostle, as his frequent manner is, beautifully interweaves his assertion with thanksgiving;' the hymn of praise answering in a manner to the voice of sorrow, "Wretched man that I am!" So then - He here sums up the whole, and concludes what he began, ver. 7. I myself - Or rather that I, the person whom I am personating, till this deliverance is wrought. Serve the law of God with my mind - My reason and conscience declare for God. But with my flesh the law of sin - But my corrupt passions and appetites still rebel. The man is now utterly weary of his bondage, and upon the brink of liberty.

## VIII

1. There is therefore now no condemnation - Either for things present or past. Now he comes to deliverance and liberty. The apostle here resumes the thread of his discourse, which was interrupted, chap. vii, 7.

2. The law of the Spirit - That is, the gospel. Hath freed me from the law of sin and death - That is, the Mosaic dispensation.

3. For what the law - Of Moses. Could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh - Incapable of conquering our evil nature. If it could, God needed not to have sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh - We with our sinful flesh were devoted to death. But God sending his own Son, in the likeness of that flesh, though pure from sin, condemned that sin which was in our flesh; gave sentence, that sin should be destroyed, and the believer wholly delivered from it.

4. That the righteousness of the law - The holiness it required, described, ver. 11. Might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit - Who are guided in all our thoughts, words, and actions, not by corrupt nature, but by the Spirit of God. From this place St. Paul describes primarily the state of believers, and that of unbelievers only to illustrate this.

5. They that are after the flesh - Who remain under the guidance of corrupt nature. Mind the things of the flesh - Have their thoughts and affections fixed on such things as gratify corrupt nature; namely, on things visible and temporal; on things of the earth, on pleasure, (of sense or imagination,) praise, or riches. But they who are after the Spirit - Who are under his guidance. Mind the things

of the Spirit - Think of, relish, love things invisible, eternal; the things which the Spirit hath revealed, which he works in us, moves us to, and promises to give us.

6. For to be carnally minded - That is, to mind the things of the flesh. Is death - The sure mark of spiritual death, and the way to death everlasting. But to be spiritually minded - That is, to mind the things of the Spirit. Is life - A sure mark of spiritual life, and the way to life everlasting. And attended with peace - The peace of God, which is the foretaste of life everlasting; and peace with God, opposite to the enmity mentioned in the next verse.

7. Enmity against God - His existence, power, and providence.

8. They who are in the flesh - Under the government of it.

9. In the Spirit - Under his government. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ - Dwelling and governing in him. He is none of his - He is not a member of Christ; not a Christian; not in a state of salvation. A plain, express declaration, which admits of no exception. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!

10. Now if Christ be in you - Where the Spirit of Christ is, there is Christ. The body indeed is dead - Devoted to death. Because of sin - Heretofore committed. But the Spirit is life - Already truly alive. Because of righteousness - Now attained. From ver. 13, St. Paul, having finished what he had begun, chap. vi, 1, describes purely the state of believers.

12. We are not debtors to the flesh - We ought not to follow it.

13. The deeds of the flesh - Not only evil actions, but evil desires, tempers, thoughts. If ye mortify - Kill, destroy these. Ye shall live - The life of faith more abundantly here, and hereafter the life of glory.

14. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God - In all the ways of righteousness. They are the sons of God - Here St. Paul enters upon the description of those blessings which he comprises, ver. 30, in the word glorified; though, indeed, he does not describe mere glory, but that which is still mingled with the cross. The sum is, through sufferings to glory.

15. For ye - Who are real Christians. Have not received the spirit of bondage - The Holy Ghost was not properly a spirit of bondage, even in the time of the Old Testament. Yet there was something of bondage remaining even in those who then had received the Spirit. Again - As the Jews did before. We - All and every believer. Cry - The word denotes a vehement speaking, with desire, confidence, constancy. Abba, Father - The latter word explains the former. By using both the Syriac and the Greek word, St. Paul seems to point out the joint cry both of the Jewish and gentile believers. The spirit of bondage here seems directly to mean, those operations of the Holy Spirit by which the soul, on its first conviction, feels itself in bondage to sin, to the world, to Satan, and obnoxious to the wrath of God. This, therefore, and the Spirit of adoption, are one and the same Spirit, only manifesting itself in various operations, according to the various circumstances of the persons.

16. The same Spirit beareth witness with our spirit - With the spirit of every true believer, by a testimony distinct from that of his own spirit, or the testimony of a good conscience. Happy they who enjoy this clear and constant.

17. Joint heirs - That we may know it is a great inheritance which God will give us for he hath given a great one to his Son. If we suffer with him - Willingly and cheerfully, for righteousness' sake. This is a new proposition, referring to what follows.

18. For I reckon - This verse gives the reason why he but now mentioned sufferings and glory. When that glory "shall be revealed in us," then the sons of God will be revealed also.

19. For the earnest expectation - The word denotes a lively hope of something drawing near, and a vehement longing after it. Of the creation - Of all visible creatures, believers excepted, who are spoken of apart; each kind, according as it is capable. All these have been sufferers through sin; and to all these (the finally impenitent excepted) shall refreshment redound from the glory of the children of God. Upright heathens are by no means to be excluded from this earnest expectation: nay, perhaps something of it may at some times be found even in the vainest of men; who (although in the hurry of life they mistake vanity for liberty, and partly stifle. partly dissemble, their groans, yet) in their sober, quiet, sleepless, afflicted hours, pour forth many sighs in the ear of God.

20. The creation was made subject to vanity - Abuse, misery, and corruption. By him who subjected it - Namely, God, Gen. iii, 17, v, 29. Adam only made it liable to the sentence which God pronounced; yet not without hope.

21. The creation itself shall be delivered - Destruction is not deliverance: therefore whatsoever is destroyed, or ceases to be, is not delivered at all. Will, then, any part of the creation be destroyed? Into the glorious liberty - The excellent state wherein they were created.

22. For the whole creation groaneth together - With joint groans, as it were with one voice. And travaileth - Literally, is in the pains of childbirth, to be delivered of the burden of the curse. Until now - To this very hour; and so on till the time of deliverance.

23. And even we, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit - That is, the Spirit, who is the first-fruits of our inheritance. The adoption - Persons who had been privately adopted among the Roman were often brought forth into the forum, and there publicly owned as their sons by those who adopted them. So at the general resurrection, when the body itself is redeemed from death, the sons of God shall be publicly owned by him in the great assembly of men and angels. The redemption of our body - From corruption to glory and immortality.

24. For we are saved by hope - Our salvation is now only in hope. We do not yet possess this full salvation.

26. Likewise the Spirit - Nay, not only the universe, not only the children of God, but the Spirit of God also himself, as it were, groaneth, while he helpeth our infirmities, or weaknesses. Our understandings are weak, particularly in the things of God our desires are weak; our prayers are weak. We know not - Many times. What we should pray for - Much less are we able to pray for it as we ought: but the Spirit maketh intercession for us - In our hearts, even as Christ does in heaven. With groanings - The matter of which is from ourselves, but the Spirit forms them; and they are frequently inexpressible, even by the faithful themselves.

27. But he who searcheth the hearts - Wherein the Spirit dwells and intercedes. Knoweth - Though man cannot utter it. What is the mind of the Spirit, for he maketh intercession for the saints - Who are near to God. According to God - According to his will, as is worthy of God. and acceptable to him.

28. And we know - This in general; though we do not always know particularly what to pray for. That all things - Ease or pain, poverty or riches, and the ten thousand changes of life. Work together for good - Strongly and sweetly for spiritual and eternal good. To them that are called according to his purpose - His gracious design of saving a lost world by the death of his Son. This is a new proposition. St. Paul, being about to recapitulate the whole blessing contained in justification, (termed "glorification," ver. 30,) first goes back to the purpose or decree of God, which is frequently mentioned in holy writ. To explain this (nearly in the words of an eminent writer) a little more at large:-When a man has a work of time and importance before him, he pauses, consults,

and contrives; and when he has laid a plan, resolves or decrees to proceed accordingly. Having observed this in ourselves, we are ready to apply it to God also; and he, in condescension to us has applied it to himself. The works of providence and redemption are vast and stupendous, and therefore we are apt to conceive of God as deliberating and consulting on them, and then decreeing to act according to "the counsel of his own will;" as if, long before the world was made, he had been concerting measures both as to the making and governing of it, and had then writ down his decrees, which altered not, any more than the laws of the Medes and Persians. Whereas, to take this consulting and decreeing in a literal sense, would be the same absurdity as to ascribe a real human body and human passions to the ever-blessed God. This is only a popular representation of his infallible knowledge and unchangeable wisdom; that is, he does all things as wisely as a man can possibly do, after the deepest consultation, and as steadily pursues the most proper method as one can do who has laid a scheme beforehand. But then, though the effects be such as would argue consultation and consequent decrees in man, yet what need of a moment's consultation in Him who sees all things at one view? Nor had God any more occasion to pause and deliberate, and lay down rules for his own conduct from all eternity, than he has now. What was there any fear of his mistaking afterwards, if he had not beforehand prepared decrees, to direct him what he was to do? Will any man say, he was wiser before the creation than since? or had he then more leisure, that he should take that opportunity to settle his affairs, and make rules (or himself, from which he was never to vary? He has doubtless the same wisdom and all other perfections at this day which he had from eternity; and is now as capable of making decrees, or rather has no more occasion for them now than formerly: his understanding being always equally clear and bright, his wisdom equally infallible.

29. Whom he foreknew, he also predestinated conformable to the image of his Son - Here the apostle declares who those are whom he foreknew and predestinated to glory; namely, those who are conformable to the image of his Son. This is the mark of those who are foreknown and will be glorified,

2 Tim. ii, 19. Phil. iii, 10, 21.

30. Them he - In due time. Called - By his gospel and his Spirit. And whom he called - When obedient to the heavenly calling, Acts xxvi, 19. He also justified - Forgave and accepted. And whom he justified - Provided they "continued in his goodness," chap. xi, 22, he in the end glorified - St. Paul does not affirm, either here or in any other part of his writings, that precisely the same number of men are called, justified, and glorified. He does not deny that a believer may fall away and be cut off between his special calling and his glorification, chap. xi, 22. Neither does he deny that many are called who never are justified. He only affirms that this is the method whereby God leads us step by step toward heaven. He glorified - He speaks as one looking back from the goal, upon the race of faith. Indeed grace, as it is glory begun, is both an earnest and a foretaste of eternal glory.

31. What shall we say then to these things - Related in the third, fifth, and eighth chapters? As if he had said, We cannot go, think, or wish anything farther. If God be for us - Here follow four periods, one general and three particular. Each begins with glorying in the grace of God, which is followed by a question suitable to it, challenging all opponents to all which, "I am persuaded," &c., is a general answer. The general period is, If God be for us, who can be against us? The first particular period, relating to the past time, is, He that spared not his own Son, how shall he not freely give us all things? The second, relating to the present, is, It is God that justifieth. Who is he

that condemneth? The third, relating to the future, is, It is Christ that died - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

32. He that - This period contains four sentences: He spared not his own Son; therefore he will freely give us all things. He delivered him up for us all; therefore, none can lay anything to our charge. Freely - For all that follows justification is a free gift also. All things - Needful or profitable for us.

33. God's elect - The above-cited author observes, that long before the coming of Christ the heathen world revolted from the true God, and were therefore reprobated, or rejected. But the nation of the Jews were chosen to be the people of God, and were therefore styled, "the children" or "sons of God," Deut. xiv, 1; "holy people," Deut. vii, 6; xiv, 2; "a chosen seed," Deut. iv, 37; "the elect," Isaiah xli, 8, 9; xliii, 10; "the called of God," Isaiah xlviii, 12. And these titles were given to all the nation of Israel, including both good and bad. Now the gospel having the most strict connection with the Books of the Old Testament, where these phrases frequently occur; and our Lord and his apostles being native Jews, and beginning to preach in the land of Israel, the language in which they preached would of course abound with the phrases of the Jewish nation. And hence it is easy to see why such of them as would not receive him were styled reprobated. For they no longer continued to be the people of God; whereas this and those other honourable titles were continued to all such Jews as embraced Christianity. And the same appellations which once belonged to the Jewish nation were now given to the gentile Christians also together with which they were invested with all the privileges of "the chosen people of God;" and nothing could cut them off from these but their own wilful apostasy. It does not appear that even good men were ever termed God's elect till above two thousand years from the creation. God's electing or choosing the nation of Israel, and separating them from the other nations, who were sunk in idolatry and all wickedness, gave the first occasion to this sort of language. And as the separating the Christians from the Jews was a like event, no wonder it was expressed in like words and phrases only with this difference, the term elect was of old applied to all the members of the visible church; whereas in the New Testament it is applied only to the members of the invisible.

34. Yea rather, that is risen - Our faith should not stop at his death, but be exercised farther on his resurrection, kingdom, second coming. Who maketh intercession for us - Presenting there his obedience, his sufferings, his prayers, and our prayers sanctified through him.

35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ - Toward us? Shall affliction or distress - He proceeds in order, from less troubles to greater: can any of these separate us from his protection in it; and, if he sees good, deliverance from it?

36. All the day - That is, every day, continually. We are accounted - By our enemies; by ourselves. Psalm xliv, 22.

37. We more than conquer - We are not only no losers, but abundant gainers, by all these trials. This period seems to describe the full assurance of hope.

38. I am persuaded - This is inferred from the thirty-fourth verse, in an admirable order: - Neither death" shall hurt us; For "Christ is dead:" "Nor life;" 'is risen" Nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers; nor things pre- sent, nor things to come;" "is at the right hand of God:" "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature;" "maketh intercession for us." Neither death - Terrible as it is to natural men; a violent death in particular, ver. 36. Nor life - With all the affliction and distress it can bring, ver. 35; or a long, easy life; or all living men. Nor angels - Whether good (if it were possible they should attempt it) or bad, with all their wisdom and strength. Nor principalities, nor

powers - Not even those of the highest rank, or the most eminent power. Nor things present - Which may befall us during our pilgrimage; or the whole world, till it passeth away. Nor things to come - Which may occur either when our time on earth is past, or when time itself is at an end, as the final judgment, the general conflagration, the everlasting fire. Nor height, nor depth - The former sentence respected the differences of times; this, the differences of places. How many great and various things are contained in these words, we do not, need not, cannot know yet. The height - In St. Paul's sublime style, is put for heaven. The depth - For the great abyss: that is, neither the heights, I will not say of walls, mountains, seas, but, of heaven itself, can move us; nor the abyss itself, the very thought of which might astonish the boldest creature. Nor any creature - Nothing beneath the Almighty; visible enemies he does not even deign to name. Shall be able - Either by force, ver. 35; or by any legal claim, ver. 33, &c. To separate us from the love of God in Christ - Which will surely save, protect, deliver us who believe in, and through, and from, them all.

## IX

In this chapter St. Paul, after strongly declaring his love and esteem for them, sets himself to answer the grand objection of his countrymen; namely, that the rejection of the Jews and reception of the gentiles was contrary to the word of God. That he had not here the least thought of personal election or reprobation is manifest,

1. Because it lay quite wide of his design, which was this, to show that God's rejecting the Jews and receiving the gentiles was consistent with his word
2. Because such a doctrine would not only have had no tendency to convince, but would have evidently tended to harden, the Jews;
3. Because when he sums up his argument in the close of the chapter, he has not one word, or the least intimation, about it.

1. In Christ - This seems to imply an appeal to him. In the Holy Ghost - Through his grace.

2. I have great sorrow - A high degree of spiritual sorrow and of spiritual Joy may consist together, chap. viii, 39. By declaring his sorrow for the unbelieving Jews, who excluded themselves from all the blessings he had enumerated, he shows that what he was now about to speak, he did not speak from any prejudice to them.

3. I could wish - Human words cannot fully describe the motions of souls that are full of God. As if he had said, I could wish to suffer in their stead; yea, to be an anathema from Christ in their place. In how high a sense he wished this, who can tell, unless himself had been asked and had resolved the question? Certainly he did not then consider himself at all, but only others and the glory of God. The thing could not be; yet the wish was pious and solid; though with a tacit condition, if it were right and possible.

4. Whose is the adoption, &c. - He enumerates six prerogatives, of which the first pair respect God the Father, the second Christ, the third the Holy Ghost. The adoption and the glory - That is, Israel is the first-born child of God, and the God of glory is their God, Deut. iv, 7; Psalm cvi, 20. These are relative to each other. At once God is the Father of Israel, and Israel are the people of God. He speaks not here of the ark, or any corporeal thing. God himself is "the glory of his people Israel." And the covenants, and the giving of the law - The covenant was given long before the law.

It is termed covenants, in the plural, because it was so often and so variously repeated, and because there were two dispositions of it, Gal. iv, 24, frequently called two covenants; the one promising, the other exhibiting the promise. And the worship, and the promises - The true way of worshipping God; and all the promises made to the fathers.

5. To the preceding, St. Paul now adds two more prerogatives. Theirs are the fathers - The patriarchs and holy men of old, yea, the Messiah himself. Who is over all, God blessed for ever - The original words imply the self-existent, independent Being, who was, is, and is to come. Over all - The supreme; as being God, and consequently blessed for ever. No words can more dearly express his divine, supreme majesty, and his gracious sovereignty both over Jews and, gentiles.

6. Not as if - The Jews imagined that the word of God must fail if all their nation were not saved. This St. Paul now refutes, and proves that the word itself had foretold their falling away. The word of God - The promises of God to Israel. Had fallen to the ground - This could not be. Even now, says the apostle, some enjoy the promises; and hereafter "all Israel shall be saved." This is the sum of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters. For - Here he enters upon the proof of it. All are not Israel, who are of Israel - The Jews vehemently maintained the contrary; namely, that all who were born Israelites, and they only, were the people of God. The former part of this assertion is refuted here, the latter, ver. 24, &c. The sum is, God accepts all believers, and them only; and this is no way contrary to his word. Nay, he hath declared in his word, both by types and by express testimonies, that believers are accepted as the "children of the promise," while unbelievers are rejected, though they are "children after the flesh." All are not Israel - Not in the favour of God. Who are lineally descended of Israel.

7. Neither because they are lineally the seed of Abraham, will it follow that they are all children of God - This did not hold even in Abraham's own family; and much less in his remote descendants. But God then said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called - That is, Isaac, not Ishmael, shall be called thy seed; that seed to which the promise is made.

8. That is, Not the children, &c. - As if he had said, This is a clear type of things to come; showing us, that in all succeeding generations, not the children of the flesh, the lineal descendants of Abraham, but the children of the promise, they to whom the promise is made, that is, believers, are the children of God. Gen. xxi, 12

9. For this is the word of the promise - By the power of which Isaac was conceived, and not by the power of nature. Not, Whosoever is born of thee shall be blessed, but, At this time - Which I now appoint. I will come, and Sarah shall have a son - And he shall inherit the blessing. Gen. xviii, 10.

10. And that God's blessing does not belong to all the descendants of Abraham, appears not only by this instance, but by that of Esau and Jacob, who was chosen to inherit the blessing, before either of them had done good or evil. The apostle mentions this to show, that neither were their ancestors accepted through any merit of their own. That the purpose of God according to election might stand - Whose purpose was, to elect or choose the promised seed. Not of works - Not for any preceding merit in him he chose. But of him that called - Of his own good pleasure who called to that privilege whom he saw good.

12. The elder - Esau. Shall serve the younger - Not in person, for he never did; but in his posterity. Accordingly the Edomites were often brought into subjection by the Israelites. Gen. xxv, 23.

13. As it is written - With which word in Genesis, spoken so long before, that of Malachi agrees. I have loved Jacob - With a peculiar love; that is, the Israelites, the posterity of Jacob. And I have, comparatively, hated Esau - That is, the Edomites, the posterity of Esau. But observe,

1. This does not relate to the person of Jacob or Esau
2. Nor does it relate to the eternal state either of them or their posterity. Thus far the apostle has been proving his proposition, namely, that the exclusion of a great part of the seed of Abraham, yea, and of Isaac, from the special promises of God, was so far from being impossible, that, according to the scriptures themselves, it had actually happened. He now introduces and refutes an objection. Mal. i, 2, 3.

14. Is there injustice with God - Is it unjust in God to give Jacob the blessing rather than Esau? or to accept believers, and them only. God forbid - In no wise. This is well consistent with justice; for he has a right to fix the terms on which he will show mercy, according to his declaration to Moses, petitioning for all the people, after they had committed idolatry with the golden calf. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy - According to the terms I myself have fixed. And I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion - Namely, on those only who submit to my terms, who accept of it in the way that I have appointed.

15. Exod. xxxiii, 19.

16. It - The blessing. Therefore is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth - It is not the effect either of the will or the works of man, but of the grace and power of God. The will of man is here opposed to the grace of God, and man's running, to the divine operation. And this general declaration respects not only Isaac and Jacob, and the Israelites in the time of Moses, but likewise all the spiritual children of Abraham, even to the end of the world.

17. Moreover - God has an indisputable right to reject those who will not accept the blessings on his own terms. And this he exercised in the case of Pharaoh; to whom, after many instances of stubbornness and rebellion, he said, as it is recorded in scripture, For this very thing have I raised thee up - That is, Unless thou repent, this will surely be the consequence of my raising thee up, making thee a great and glorious king, that my power will be shown upon thee, (as indeed it was, by overwhelming him and his army in the sea,) and my name declared through all the earth - As it is at this day. Perhaps this may have a still farther meaning. It seems that God was resolved to show his power over the river, the insects, other animals, (with the natural causes of their health, diseases, life, and death,) over the meteors, the air, the sun, (all of which were worshipped by the Egyptians, from whom other nations learned their idolatry,) and at once over all their gods, by that terrible stroke of slaying all their priests, and their choicest victims, the firstborn of man and beast; and all this with a design, not only to deliver his people Israel, (for which a single act of omnipotence would have sufficed,) but to convince the Egyptians, that the objects of their worship were but the creatures of Jehovah, and entirely in his power, and to draw them and the neighbouring nations, who should hear of all these wonders, from their idolatry, to worship the one God. For the execution of this design, (in order to the display of the divine power over the various objects of their worship, in variety of wonderful acts, which were at the same time just punishments for their cruel oppression of the Israelites,) God was pleased to raise to the throne of an absolute monarchy, a man, not whom he had made wicked on purpose, but whom he found so, the proudest, the most daring and obstinate of all the Egyptian princes; and who, being incorrigible, well deserved to be set up in that situation, where the divine judgments fell the heaviest. Exod. ix, 16.

18. So then - That is, accordingly he does show mercy on his own terms, namely, on them that believe. And whom he willeth - Namely, them that believe not. He hardeneth - Leaves to the hardness of their hearts.

19. Why doth he still find fault - The particle still is strongly expressive of the objector's sour, morose murmuring. For who hath resisted his will - The word his likewise expresses his surliness and aversion to God, whom he does not even deign to name.

20. Nay, but who art thou, O man - Little, impotent, ignorant man. That repliest against God - That accusest God of injustice, for himself fixing the terms on which he will show mercy? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus - Why hast thou made me capable of honour and immortality, only by believing?

21. Hath not the potter power over the clay - And much more hath not God power over his creatures, to appoint one vessel, namely, the believer, to honour, and another, the unbeliever, to dishonour? If we survey the right which God has over us, in a more general way, with regard to his intelligent creatures, God may be considered in two different views, as Creator, Proprietor, and Lord of all; or, as their moral Governor, and Judge. God, as sovereign Lord and Proprietor of all, dispenses his gifts or favours to his creatures with perfect wisdom, but by no rules or methods of proceeding that we are acquainted with. The time when we shall exist, the country where we shall live, our parents, our constitution of body and turn of mind; these, and numberless other circumstances, are doubtless ordered with perfect wisdom, but by rules that lie quite out of our sight. But God's methods of dealing with us, as our Governor and Judge, are dearly revealed and perfectly known; namely, that he will finally reward every man according to his works: "He that believeth shalt be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Therefore, though "He hath mercy on whom he willeth, and whom he willeth he hardeneth," that is, suffers to be hardened in consequence of their obstinate wickedness; yet his is not the will of an arbitrary, capricious, or tyrannical being. He wills nothing but what is infinitely wise and good; and therefore his will is a most proper rule of judgment. He will show mercy, as he hath assured us, to none but true believers, nor harden any but such as obstinately refuse his mercy. Jer. xviii, 6, 7

22. What if God, being willing - Referring to ver. 18, 19. That is, although it was now his will, because of their obstinate unbelief, To show his wrath - Which necessarily presupposes sin. And to make his power known - This is repeated from the seventeenth verse. Yet endured - As he did Pharaoh. With much longsuffering - Which should have led them to repentance. The vessels of wrath - Those who had moved his wrath by still rejecting his mercy. Fitted for destruction - By their own wilful and final impenitence. Is there any injustice in this?

23. That he might make known - What if by showing such longsuffering even to "the vessels of wrath," he did the more abundantly show the greatness of his glorious goodness, wisdom, and power, on the vessels of mercy; on those whom he had himself, by his grace, prepared for glory. Is this any injustice?

24. Even us - Here the apostle comes to the other proposition, of grace free for all, whether Jew or gentile. Of the Jews - This he treats of, ver. 25. Of the gentiles - Treated of in the same verse.

25. Beloved - As a spouse. Who once was not beloved - Consequently, not unconditionally elected. This relates directly to the final restoration of the Jews. Hosea ii, 23

26. There shall they be called the sons of God - So that they need not leave their own country and come to Judea. Hosea i, 10

27. But Isaiah testifies, that (as many gentiles will be accepted, so) many Jews will be rejected; that out of all the thousands of Israel, a remnant only shall be saved. This was spoken originally of the few that were saved from the ravage of Sennacherib's army. Isaiah x, 22, 23

28. For he is finishing or cutting short his account - In rigorous justice, will leave but a small remnant. There will be so general a destruction, that but a small number will escape.

29. As Isaiah had said before - Namely, Isaiah i, 9, concerning those who were besieged in Jerusalem by Rezin and Pekah. Unless the Lord had left us a seed - Which denotes,

1. The present paucity:
2. The future abundance. We had been as Sodom - So that it is no unexampled thing for the main body of the Jewish nation to revolt from God, and perish in their sin.

30. What shall we say then - What is to be concluded from all that has been said but this, That the gentiles, who followed not after righteousness - Who a while ago had no knowledge of, no care or thought about, it. Have attained to righteousness - Or justification. Even the righteousness which is by faith. This is the first conclusion we may draw from the preceding observations. The second is, that Israel - The Jews Although following after the law of righteousness - That law which, duly used, would have led them to faith, and thereby to righteousness. Have not attained to the law of righteousness - To that righteousness or justification which is one great end of the law

32. And wherefore have they not? Is it because God eternally decreed they should not? There is nothing like this to be met with but agreeable to his argument the apostle gives us this good reason for it, Because they sought it not by faith - Whereby alone it could be attained. But as it were - In effect, if not professsedly, by works. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone - Christ crucified.

33. As it is written - Foretold by their own prophet. Behold, I lay in Sion - I exhibit in my church, what, though it is in truth the only sure foundation of happiness, yet will be in fact a stumblingstone and rock of offense - An occasion of ruin to many, through their obstinate unbelief. Isaiah viii, 14; Isaiah xxviii, 16

## X

1. My prayer to God is, that they may be saved - He would not have prayed for this, had they been absolutely reprobated.

2. They have a zeal, but not according to knowledge - They had zeal without knowledge; we have knowledge without zeal.

3. For they being ignorant of the righteousness of God - Of the method God has established for the justification of a sinner. And seeking to establish their own righteousness - Their own method of acceptance with God. Have not submitted to the righteousness of God - The way of justification which he hath fixed.

4. For Christ is the end of the law - The scope and aim of it. It is the very design of the law, to bring men to believe in Christ for justification and salvation. And he alone gives that pardon and life which the law shows the want of, but cannot give. To every one - Whether Jew or gentile, treated of, ver. 11, &c. That believeth - Treated of, ver. 5.

5. For Moses describeth the only righteousness which is attainable by the law, when he saith, The man who doeth these things shall live by them - that is, he that perfectly keeps all these precepts in every point, he alone may claim life and salvation by them. But this way of justification is impossible to any who have ever transgressed any one law in any point. Lev. xviii, 5

6. But the righteousness which is by faith - The method of becoming righteous by believing. Speaketh a very different language, and may be considered as expressing itself thus: (to accommodate to our present subject the words which Moses spake, touching the plainness of his law:) Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven, as if it were to bring Christ down: or, Who shall descend into the grave, as if it were to bring him again from the dead - Do not imagine that these things are to be done now, in order to procure thy pardon and salvation. Deut. xxx, 14.

8. But what saith he - Moses. Even these words, so remarkably applicable to the subject before us. All is done ready to thy hand. The word is nigh thee - Within thy reach; easy to be understood, remembered, practiced. This is eminently true of the word of faith - The gospel. Which we preach - The sum of which is, If thy heart believe in Christ, and thy life confess him, thou shalt be saved.

9. If thou confess with thy mouth - Even in time of persecution, when such a confession may send thee to the lions.

10. For with the heart - Not the understanding only. Man believeth to righteousness - So as to obtain justification. And with the mouth confession is made - So as to obtain final salvation. Confession here implies the whole of outward, as believing does the root of all inward, religion.

11. Isaiah xxviii, 16.

12. The same Lord of all is rich - So that his blessings are never to be exhausted, nor is he ever constrained to hold his hand. The great truth proposed in ver. 11 is so repeated here, and in ver. 13, and farther confirmed, ver. 14, 15, as not only to imply, that "whosoever calleth upon him shall be saved;" but also that the will of God is, that all should savingly call upon him.

13. Joel ii, 32.

15. But how shall they preach, unless they be sent - Thus by a chain of reasoning, from God's will that the gentiles also should "call upon him," St. Paul infers that the apostles were sent by God to preach to the gentiles also. The feet - Their very footsteps; their coming. Isaiah lii, 7.

16. Isaiah liii, 1.

17. Faith, indeed, ordinarily cometh by hearing; even by hearing the word of God.

18. But their unbelief was not owing to the want of hearing For they have heard. Yes verily - So many nations have already heard the preachers of the gospel, that I may in some sense say of them as David did of the lights of heaven. Psalm xxix, 4

19. But hath not Israel known - They might have known, even from Moses and Isaiah, that many of the gentiles would be received, and many of the Jews rejected. I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are not a nation - As they followed gods that were not gods, so he accepted in their stead a nation that was not a nation; that is, a nation that was not in covenant with God. A foolish nation - Such are all which know not God. Deut. xxxii, 21

20. But Isaiah is very bold - And speaks plainly what Moses but intimated. Isaiah lxv, 1, 2.

21. An unbelieving and gainsaying people - Just opposite to those who believed with their hearts, and made confession with their mouths.

## XI

1. Hath God rejected his whole people - All Israel? In no wise. Now there is "a remnant" who believe, ver. 5; and hereafter "all Israel will be saved," ver. 26.

2. God hath not rejected that part of his people whom he foreknew - Speaking after the manner of men. For, in fact, knowing and foreknowing are the same thing with God, who knows or sees all things at once, from everlasting to everlasting. Know ye not - That in a parallel case, amidst a general apostasy, when Elijah thought the whole nation was fallen into idolatry, God "knew" there was "a remnant" of true worshippers.

3. 1 Kings xix, 10.

4. To Baal - Nor to the golden calves.

5. According to the election of grace - According to that gracious purpose of God, "He that believeth shall be saved."

6. And if by grace, then it is no more of works - Whether ceremonial or moral. Else grace is no longer grace - The very nature of grace is lost. And if it be of works, then it is no more grace: else work is no longer work - But the very nature of it is destroyed. There is something so absolutely inconsistent between the being justified by grace, and the being justified by works, that, if you suppose either, you of necessity exclude the other. For what is given to works is the payment of a debt; whereas grace implies an unmerited favour. So that the same benefit cannot, in the very nature of things, be derived from both.

7. What then - What is the conclusion from the whole? It is this: that Israel in general hath not obtained justification; but those of them only who believe. And the rest were blinded - By their own wilful prejudice.

8. God hath at length withdrawn his Spirit, and so given them up to a spirit of slumber; which is fulfilled unto this day. Isaiah xxix, 10

9. And David saith - In that prophetic imprecation, which is applicable to them, as well as to Judas. A recompence - Of their preceding wickedness. So sin is punished by sin; and thus the gospel, which should have fed and strengthened their souls, is become a means of destroying them. Psalm lxix, 22, 23

11. Have they stumbled so as to fall - Totally and finally? No But by their fall - Or slip: it is a very soft word in the original. Salvation is come to the gentiles - See an instance of this, Acts xiii, 46. To provoke them - The Jews themselves, to jealousy.

12. The first part of this verse is treated of, ver. 13, &c.; the latter, How much more their fulness, (that is, their full conversion,) ver. 23, &c. So many prophecies refer to this grand event, that it is surprising any Christian can doubt of it. And these are greatly confirmed by the wonderful preservation of the Jews as a distinct people to this day. When it is accomplished, it will be so strong a demonstration, both of the Old and New Testament Revelation, as will doubtless convince many thousand Deists, in countries nominally Christian; of whom there will, of course, be increasing multitudes among merely nominal Christians. And this will be a means of swiftly propagating the gospel among Mahometans and Pagans; who would probably have received it long ago, had they conversed only with real Christians.

13. I magnify my office - Far from being ashamed of ministering to the gentiles, I glory therein; the rather, as it may be a means of provoking my brethren to jealousy.

14. My flesh - My kinsmen.

15. Life from the dead - Overflowing life to the world, which was dead.

16. And this will surely come to pass. For if the first fruits be holy, so is the lump - The consecration of them was esteemed the consecration of all and so the conversion of a few Jews is an earnest of the conversion of all the rest. And if the root be holy - The patriarchs from whom they spring, surely God will at length make their descendants also holy.

17. Thou - O gentile. Being a wild olive tree - Had the graft been nobler than the stock, yet its dependance on it for life and nourishment would leave it no room to boast against it. How much less, when, contrary to what is practiced among men, the wild olive tree is engrafted on the good!

18. Boast not against the branches - Do not they do this who despise the Jews? or deny their future conversion?

20. They were broken off for unbelief, and thou standest by faith - Both conditionally, not absolutely: if absolutely, there might have been room to boast. By faith - The free gift of God, which therefore ought to humble thee.

21. Be not highminded, but fear - We may observe, this fear is not opposed to trust, but to pride and security.

22. Else shalt thou - Also, who now "standest by faith," be both totally and finally cut off.

24. Contrary to nature - For according to nature, we graft the fruitful branch into the wild stock; but here the wild branch is grafted into the fruitful stock.

25. St. Paul calls any truth known but to a few, a mystery. Such had been the calling of the gentiles: such was now the conversion of the Jews. Lest ye should be wise in your own conceits - Puffed up with your present advantages; dreaming that ye are the only church; or that the church of Rome cannot fail. Hardness in part is happened to Israel, till - Israel therefore is neither totally nor finally rejected. The fulness of the gentiles be come in - Till there be a vast harvest amongst the heathens.

26. And so all Israel shall be saved - Being convinced by the coming of the gentiles. But there will be a still larger harvest among the gentiles, when all Israel is come in. The deliverer shall come - Yea, the deliverer is come; but not the full fruit of his coming. Isaiah lix, 20

28. They are now enemies - To the gospel, to God, and to themselves, which God permits. For your sake: but as for the election - That part of them who believe, they are beloved.

29. For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance - God does not repent of his gifts to the Jews, or his calling of the gentiles.

32. For God hath shut up all together in disobedience - Suffering each in their turn to revolt from him. First, God suffered the gentiles in the early age to revolt, and took the family of Abraham as a peculiar seed to himself. Afterwards he permitted them to fall through unbelief, and took in the believing gentiles. And he did even this to provoke the Jews to jealousy, and so bring them also in the end to faith. This was truly a mystery in the divine conduct, which the apostle adores with such holy astonishment.

33. O the depth of the riches, and wisdom, and knowledge of God - In the ninth chapter, St. Paul had sailed but in a narrow sea: now he is in the ocean. The depth of the riches is described, ver. 35; the depth of wisdom, ver. 34; the depth of knowledge, in the latter part of this verse. Wisdom directs all things to the best end; knowledge sees that end. How unsearchable are his judgments - With regard to unbelievers. His ways - With regard to believers. His ways are more upon a level; His judgments "a great deep." But even his ways we cannot trace.

34. Who hath known the mind of the Lord - Before or any farther than he has revealed it. Isaiah xl, 13.

35. Given to him - Either wisdom or power?

36. Of him - As the Creator. Through him - As the Preserver. To him - As the ultimate end, are all things. To him be the glory of his riches, wisdom, knowledge. Amen - A concluding word, in which the affection of the apostle, when it is come to the height, shuts up all.

## XII

1. I exhort you - St. Paul uses to suit his exhortations to the doctrines he has been delivering. So here the general use from the whole is contained in the first and second verses. The particular uses follow, from the third verse to the end of the Epistle. By the tender mercies of God - The whole sentiment is derived from Romans. The expression itself is particularly opposed to "the wrath of God," chap. i, 18. It has a reference here to the entire gospel, to the whole economy of grace or mercy, delivering us from "the wrath of God," and exciting us to all duty. To present - So chap. vi, 13; xvi, 19; now actually to exhibit before God. Your bodies - That is, yourselves; a part is put for the whole; the rather, as in the ancient sacrifices of beasts, the body was the whole. These also are particularly named in opposition to that vile abuse of their bodies mentioned, chap. i, 24. Several expressions follow, which have likewise a direct reference to other expressions in the same chapter. A sacrifice - Dead to sin and living - By that life which is mentioned, chap. i, 17; vi, 4, &c. Holy - Such as the holy law requires, chap. vii, 12. Acceptable - chap. viii, 8. Which is your reasonable service - The worship of the heathens was utterly unreasonable, chap. i, 18, &c.; so was the glorying of the Jews, chap. ii, 3, &c. But a Christian acts in all things by the highest reason, from the mercy of God inferring his own duty.

2. And be not conformed - Neither in judgment, spirit, nor behaviour. To this world - Which, neglecting the will of God, entirely follows its own. That ye may prove - Know by sure trial; which is easily done by him who has thus presented himself to God. What is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God - The will of God is here to be understood of all the preceptive part of Christianity, which is in itself so excellently good, so acceptable to God, and so perfective of our natures.

3. And I say - He now proceeds to show what that will of God is. Through the grace which is given to me - He modestly adds this, lest he should seem to forget his own direction. To every one that is among you - Believers at Rome. Happy, had they always remembered this! The measure of faith - Treated of in the first and following chapters, from which all other gifts and graces flow.

5. So we - All believers. Are one body - Closely connected together in Christ, and consequently ought to be helpful to each other.

6. Having then gifts differing according to the grace which is given us - Gifts are various: grace is one. Whether it be prophecy - This, considered as an extraordinary gift, is that whereby heavenly mysteries are declared to men, or things to come foretold. But it seems here to mean the ordinary gift of expounding scripture. Let us prophesy according to the analogy of faith - St. Peter expresses it, "as the oracles of God;" according to the general tenor of them; according to that grand scheme of doctrine which is delivered therein, touching original sin, justification by faith, and present,

inward salvation. There is a wonderful analogy between all these; and a close and intimate connection between the chief heads of that faith "which was once delivered to the saints." Every article therefore concerning which there is any question should be determined by this rule; every doubtful scripture interpreted according to the grand truths which run through the whole.

7. Ministering - As deacons. He that teacheth - Catechumens; for whom particular instructers were appointed. He that exhorteth - Whose peculiar business it was to urge Christians to duty, and to comfort them in trials.

8. He that presideth - That hath the care of a flock. He that showeth mercy - In any instance. With cheerfulness - Rejoicing that he hath such an opportunity.

9. Having spoken of faith and its fruit, ver. 3, &c., he comes now to love. The ninth, tenth, and eleventh verses refer to chapter the seventh; the twelfth verse to chapter the eighth; the thirteenth verse, of communicating to the saints, whether Jews or gentiles, to chapter the ninth, &c. Part of the sixteenth verse is repeated from chap. xi, 25. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good - Both inwardly and outwardly, whatever ill-will or danger may follow.

10. In honour preferring one another - Which you will do, if you habitually consider what is good in others, and what is evil in yourselves.

11. Whatsoever ye do, do it with your might. In every business diligently and fervently serving the Lord - Doing all to God, not to man.

12. Rejoicing in hope - Of perfect holiness and everlasting happiness. Hitherto of faith and love; now of hope also, see the fifth and eighth chapters; afterwards of duties toward others; saints, ver. 13 persecutors, ver. 14 friends, strangers, enemies, ver. 15, &c.

13. Communicate to the necessities of the saints - Relieve all Christians that are in want. It is remarkable, that the apostle, treating expressly of the duties flowing from the communion of saints, yet never says one word about the dead. Pursue hospitality - Not only embracing those that offer, but seeking opportunities to exercise it.

14. Curse not - No, not in your heart.

15. Rejoice - The direct opposite to weeping is laughter; but this does not so well suit a Christian.

16. Mind not high things - Desire not riches, honour, or the company of the great.

17. Provide - Think beforehand; contrive to give as little offense as may be to any.

19. Dearly beloved - So he softens the rugged spirit. Revenge not yourselves, but leave that to God. Perhaps it might more properly be rendered, leave room for wrath; that is, the wrath of God, to whom vengeance properly belongs. Deut. xxxii, 35

20. Feed him - With your own hand: if it be needful, even put bread into his mouth. Heap coals of fire upon his head - That part which is most sensible. "So artists melt the sullen ore of lead, By heaping coals of fire upon its head; In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow, And pure from dross the silver runs below." Prov. xxv, 21, &c.

21. And if you see no present fruit, yet persevere. Be not overcome with evil - As all are who avenge themselves. But overcome evil with good. Conquer your enemies by kindness and patience.

## XIII

1. St. Paul, writing to the Romans, whose city was the seat of the empire, speaks largely of obedience to magistrates: and this was also, in effect, a public apology for the Christian religion. Let every soul be subject to the supreme powers - An admonition peculiarly needful for the Jews. Power, in the singular number, is the supreme authority; powers are they who are invested with it. That is more readily acknowledged to be from God than these. The apostle affirms it of both. They are all from God, who constituted all in general, and permits each in particular by his providence. The powers that be are appointed by God - It might be rendered, are subordinate to, or, orderly disposed under, God; implying, that they are God's deputies or vicegerents and consequently, their authority being, in effect, his, demands our conscientious obedience.

2. Whosoever resisteth the power - In any other manner than the laws of the community direct. Shall receive condemnation - Not only from the magistrate, but from God also.

3. For rulers are - In the general, notwithstanding some particular exceptions. A terror to evil works - Only. Wouldest thou then not be afraid - There is one fear which precedes evil actions, and deters from them: this should always remain. There is another fear which follows evil actions: they who do well are free from this.

4. The sword - The instrument of capital punishment, which God authorizes him to inflict.

5. Not only for fear of wrath - That is, punishment from man. But for conscience' sake - Out of obedience to God.

6. For this cause - Because they are the ministers (officers) of God for the public good. This very thing - The public good.

7. To all - Magistrates. Tribute - Taxes on your persons or estates. Custom - For goods exported or imported. Fear - Obedience. honour - Reverence. All these are due to the supreme power.

8. From our duty to magistrates he passes on to general duties. To love one another - An eternal debt, which can never be sufficiently discharged; but yet if this be rightly performed, it discharges all the rest. For he that loveth another - As he ought. Hath fulfilled the whole law - Toward his neighbour.

9. If there be any other - More particular. Commandment - Toward our neighbour; as there are many in the law. It is summed up in this - So that if you was not thinking of it, yet if your heart was full of love, you would fulfil it.

10. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law - For the same love which restrains from all evil, incites us to all good.

11. And do this - Fulfil the law of love in all the instances above mentioned. Knowing the season - Full of grace, but hasting away. That it is high time to awake out of sleep - How beautifully is the metaphor carried on! This life, a night; the resurrection, the day; the gospel shining on the heart, the dawn of this day; we are to awake out of sleep; to rise up and throw away our night-clothes, fit only for darkness, and put on new; and, being soldiers, we are to arm, and prepare for fight, who are encompassed with so many enemies. The day dawns when we receive faith, and then sleep gives place. Then it is time to rise, to arm, to walk, to work, lest sleep steal upon us again. Final salvation, glory, is nearer to us now, than when we first believed - It is continually advancing, flying forward upon the swiftest wings of time. And that which remains between the present hour and eternity is comparatively but a moment.

13. Banqueting - Luxurious, elegant feasts.

14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ - Herein is contained the whole of our salvation. It is a strong and beautiful expression for the most intimate union with him, and being clothed with all

the graces which were in him. The apostle does not say, Put on purity and sobriety, peacefulness and benevolence; but he says all this and a thousand times more at once, in saying, Put on Christ. And make not provision - To raise foolish desires, or, when they are raised already, to satisfy them.

## XIV

1. Him that is weak - Through needless scruples. Receive - With all love and courtesy into Christian fellowship. But not to doubtful disputations - About questionable points.

2. All things - All sorts of food, though forbidden by the law.

3. Despise him that eateth not - As over-scrupulous or superstitious. Judge him that eateth - As profane, or taking undue liberties. For God hath received him - Into the number of his children, notwithstanding this.

5. One day above another - As new moons, and other Jewish festivals. Let every man be fully persuaded - That a thing is lawful, before he does it.

6. Regardeth it to the Lord - That is, out of a principle of conscience toward God. To the Lord he doth not regard it - He also acts from a principle of conscience. He that eateth not - Flesh. Giveth God thanks - For his herbs.

7. None of us - Christians, in the things we do. Liveth to himself - Is at his own disposal; doeth his own will.

10. Or why dost thou despise thy brother - Hitherto the apostle as addressed the weak brother: now he speaks to the stronger.

11. As I live - An oath proper to him, because he only possesseth life infinite and independent. It is Christ who is here termed both Lord and God; as it is he to whom we live, and to whom we die. Every tongue shall confess to God - Shall own him as their rightful Lord; which shall then only be accomplished in its full extent. The Lord grant we may find mercy in that day; and may it also be imparted to those who have differed from us! yea, to those who have censured and condemned us for things which we have done from a desire to please him, or refused to do from a fear of offending him. Isaiah xlv, 23

13. But judge this rather - Concerning ourselves. Not to lay a stumblingblock - By moving him to do as thou doest, though against his conscience. Or a scandal - Moving him to hate or judge thee.

14. I am assured by the Lord Jesus - Perhaps by a particular Revelation. That there is nothing - Neither flesh nor herbs. Unclean of itself - Unlawful under the gospel.

15. If thy brother is grieved - That is, wounded, led into sin. Destroy not him for whom Christ died - So we see, he for whom Christ died may be destroyed. With thy meat - Do not value thy meat more than Christ valued his life.

16. Let not then your good and lawful liberty be evil spoken of - By being offensive to others.

17. For the kingdom of God - That is, true religion, does not consist in external observances. But in righteousness - The image of God stamped on the heart; the love of God and man, accompanied with the peace that passeth all understanding, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18. In these - Righteousness, peace, and joy. Men - Wise and good men.

19. Peace and edification are closely joined. Practical divinity tends equally to peace and to edification. Controversial divinity less directly tends to edification, although sometimes, as they of old, we cannot build without it, Neh. iv, 17.

20. The work of God - Which he builds in the soul by faith, and in the church by concord. It is evil to that man who eateth with offense - So as to offend another thereby.

21. Thy brother stumbleth - By imitating thee against his conscience, contrary to righteousness. Or is offended - At what thou doest to the loss of his peace. Or made weak - Hesitating between imitation and abhorrence, to the loss of that joy in the Lord which was his strength.

22. Hast thou faith - That all things are pure? Have it to thyself before God - In circumstances like these, keep it to thyself, and do not offend others by it. Happy is he that condemneth not himself - By an improper use of even innocent things! and happy he who is free from a doubting conscience! He that has this may allow the thing, yet condemn himself for it.

23. Because it is not of faith - He does not believe it lawful and, in all these cases, whatsoever is not of faith is sin - Whatever a man does without a full persuasion of its lawfulness, it is sin to him.

## XV

1. We who are strong - Of a clearer judgment, and free from these scruples. And not to please ourselves - Without any regard to others.

2. For his good - This is a general word: edification is one species of good.

3. But bore not only the infirmities, but reproaches, of his brethren; and so fulfilled that scripture. Psalm lxix, 9

4. Aforetime - In the Old Testament. That we through patience and consolation of the scriptures may have hope - That through the consolation which God gives us by these, we may have patience and a joyful hope.

5. According to the power of Christ Jesus.

6. That ye - Both Jews and gentiles, believing with one mind, and confessing with one mouth.

7. Receive ye one another - Weak and strong, with mutual love.

8. Now I say - The apostle here shows how Christ received us. Christ Jesus-Jesus is the name, Christ the surname. The latter was first known to the Jews; the former, to the gentiles. Therefore he is styled Jesus Christ, when the words stand in the common, natural order. When the order is inverted, as here, the office of Christ is more solemnly considered. Was a servant - Of his Father. Of the circumcision - For the salvation of the circumcised, the Jews. For the truth of God - To manifest the truth and fidelity of God.

9. As it is written - In the eighteenth psalm, here the gentiles and Jews are spoken of as joining in the worship of the God of Israel. Psalm xviii, 49

10. Deut. xxxii, 43.

11. Psalm cxvii, 1.

12. There shall be the root of Jesse - That kings and the Messiah should spring from his house, was promised to Jesse before it was to David. In him shall the gentiles hope - Who before had been "without hope," Eph. ii, 12. Isaiah xi, 10

13. Now the God of hope - A glorious title of God, but till now unknown to the heathens; for their goddess Hope, like their other idols, was nothing; whose temple at Rome was burned by lightning. It was, indeed, built again not long after, but was again burned to the ground.

14. There are several conclusions of this Epistle. The first begins at this verse; the second, chap. xvi, 1; the third, chap. xvi, 17; the fourth, chap. xvi, 21; and the fifth, chap. xvi, 25; Ye are full of goodness - By being created anew. And filled with all knowledge - By long experience of the things of God. To admonish - To instruct and confirm.

15. Because of the grace - That is, because I am an apostle of the gentiles.

16. The offering up of the gentiles - As living sacrifices.

17. I have whereof to glory through Jesus Christ - All my glorying is in and through him.

18. By word - By the power of the Spirit. By deed - Namely, through "mighty signs and wonders."

20. Not where Christ had been named - These places he generally declined, though not altogether, having an holy ambition (so the Greek word means) to make the first proclamation of the gospel in places where it was quite unheard of, in spite of all the difficulty and dangers that attended it. Lest I should only build upon another man's foundation - The providence of God seemed in a special manner, generally, to prevent this, though not entirely, lest the enemies of the apostle, who sought every occasion to set light by him, should have had room to say that he was behind other apostles, not being sufficient for planting of churches himself, but only for preaching where others had been already; or that he declined the more difficult part of the ministry

21. Isaiah lii, 15.

22. Therefore I have been long hindered from coming to you - Among whom Christ had been named.

23. Having no longer place in these parts - Where Christ has now been preached in every city.

24. Into Spain - Where the gospel had not yet been preached. If first I may be somewhat satisfied with your company - How remarkable is the modesty with which he speaks! They might rather desire to be satisfied with his. Somewhat satisfied - Intimating the shortness of his stay; or, perhaps, that Christ alone can throughly satisfy the soul.

26. The poor of the saints that are in Jerusalem - It can by no means be inferred from this expression, that the community of goods among the Christians was then ceased. All that can be gathered from it is, that in this time of extreme dearth, Acts xi, 28, 29, some of the church in Jerusalem were in want; the rest being barely able to subsist themselves, but not to supply the necessities of their brethren.

27. It hath pleased them; and they are their debtors - That is, they are bound to it, in justice as well as mercy. Spiritual things - By the preaching of the gospel. Carnal things - Things needful for the body.

28. When I have sealed to them this fruit - When I have safely delivered to them, as under seal, this fruit of their brethren's love. I will go by you into Spain - Such was his design; but it does not appear that Paul went into Spain. There are often holy purposes in the minds of good men, which are overruled by the providence of God so as never to take effect. And yet they are precious in the sight of God.

30. I beseech you by the love of the Spirit - That is, by the love which is the genuine fruit of the Spirit. To strive together with me in your prayers - He must pray himself, who would have others strive together with him in prayer. Of all the apostles, St. Paul alone is recorded to desire

the prayers of the faithful for himself. And this he generally does in the conclusions of his Epistles; yet not without making a difference. For he speaks in one manner to them whom he treats as his children, with the gravity or even severity of a father, such as Timothy, Titus, the Corinthians, and Galatians; in another, to them whom he treats rather like equals, such as the Romans, Ephesians, Thessalonians, Colossians, Hebrews.

31. That I may be delivered - He is thus urgent from a sense of the importance of his life to the church. Otherwise he would have rejoiced "to depart, and to be with Christ." And that my service may be acceptable - In spite of all their prejudices; to the end the Jewish and gentile believers may be knit together in tender love.

32. That I may come to you - This refers to the former, With joy - To the latter, part of the preceding verse.

## XVI

1. I commend unto you Phebe - The bearer of this letter. A servant - The Greek word is a deaconness. Of the church in Cenchrea - In the apostolic age, some grave and pious women were appointed deaconnesses in every church. It was their office, not to teach publicly, but to visit the sick, the women in particular, and to minister to them both in their temporal and spiritual necessities.

2. In the Lord - That is, for the Lord's sake, and in a Christian manner. St. Paul seems fond of this expression.

4. Who have for my life, as it were, laid down their own necks - That is, exposed themselves to the utmost danger. But likewise all the churches of the gentiles - Even that at Rome, for preserving so valuable a life.

5. Salute the church that is in their house - Aquila had been driven from Rome in the reign of Claudius, but was now returned, and performed the same part there which Caius did at Corinth, ver. 23. Where any Christian had a large house, there they all assembled together though as yet the Christians at Rome had neither bishops nor deacons. So far were they from any shadow of papal power. Nay, there does not appear to have been then in the whole city any more than one of these domestic churches. Otherwise there can be no doubt but St. Paul would have saluted them also. Epenetus - Although the apostle had never been at Rome, yet had he many acquaintance there. But here is no mention of Linus or Cemens; whence it appears, they did not come to Rome till after this. The firstfruits of Asia - The first convert in the proconsular Asia.

7. Who are of note among the apostles - They seem to have been some of the most early converts. Fellowprisoners - For the gospel's sake.

9. Our fellowlabourer - Mine and Timothy's, verse 21.

11. Those of the family of Aristobulus and Narcissus, who are in the Lord - It seems only part of their families were converted. Probably, some of them were not known to St. Paul by face, but only by character. Faith does not create moroseness, but courtesy, which even the gravity of an apostle did not hinder.

12. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa - Probably they were two sisters.

13. Salute Rufus - Perhaps the same that is mentioned, Mark xv, 21. And his mother and mine - This expression may only denote the tender care which Rufus's mother had taken of him.

14. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, &c. - He seems to join those together, who were joined by kindred, nearness of habitation, or any other circumstance. It could not but encourage the poor especially, to be saluted by name, who perhaps did not know that the apostle bad ever heard of them. It is observable, that whilst the apostle forgets none who are worthy, yet he adjusts the nature of his salutation to the degrees of worth in those whom he salutes.

15. Salute all the saints - Had St. Peter been then at Rome, St. Paul would doubtless have saluted him by name; since no one in this numerous catalogue was of an eminence comparable to his. But if he was not then at Rome, the whole Roman tradition, with regard to the succession of their bishops, fails in the most fundamental article.

16. Salute one another with an holy kiss - Termed by St. Peter, "the kiss of love," 1 Pet. v, 14. So the ancient Christians concluded all their solemn offices; the men saluting the men, and the women the women. And this apostolical custom seems to have continued for some ages in all Christian churches.

17. Mark them who cause divisions - Such there were, therefore, at Rome also. Avoid them - Avoid all unnecessary intercourse with them.

18. By good words - Concerning themselves, making great promises. And fair speeches - Concerning you, praising and flattering you. The harmless - Who, doing no ill themselves, are not upon their guard against them that do.

19. But I would have you - Not only obedient, but discreet also. Wise with regard to that which is good - As knowing in this as possible. And simple with regard to that which is evil - As ignorant of this as possible.

20. And the God of peace - The Author and Lover of it, giving a blessing to your discretion. Shall bruise Satan under your feet - Shall defeat all the artifices of that sower of tares, and unite you more and more together in love.

21. Timotheus my fellowlabourer - Here he is named even before St. Paul's kinsmen. But as he had never been at Rome, he is not named in the beginning of the epistle.

22. I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you - Tertius, who wrote what the apostle dictated, inserted this, either by St. Paul's exhortation or ready permission. Caius - The Corinthian, 1 Cor. i, 14. My host, and of the whole church - Who probably met for some time in his house.

23. The chamberlain of the city - Of Corinth.

25. Now to him who is able - The last words of this epistle exactly answer the first, chapter i, 1-v, chap. i, 1-v, in particular, concerning the power of God, the gospel, Jesus Christ, the scriptures, the obedience of faith, all nations. To establish you - Both Jews and gentiles. According to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ - That is, according to the tenor of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which I preach. According to the Revelation of the mystery - Of the calling of the gentiles, which, as plainly as it was foretold in the Prophets, was still hid from many even of the believing Jews.

26. According to the commandment - The foundation of the apostolical office. Of the eternal God - A more proper epithet could not be. A new dispensation infers no change in God. Known unto him are all his works, and every variation of them, from eternity. Made known to all nations - Not barely that they might know, but enjoy it also, through obeying the faith.

27. To the only wise God - Whose manifold wisdom is known in the church through the gospel, Eph. iii, 10. "To him who is able," and, to the wise God," are joined, as 1 Cor. i, 24, where Christ

is styled "the wisdom of God," and "the power of God." To him be glory through Christ Jesus for ever - And let every believer say, Amen!

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

CORINTH was a city of Achaia, situate on the isthmus which joins Peloponnesus, now called the Morea, to the rest of Greece. Being so advantageously situated for trade, the inhabitants of it abounded in riches, which, by too natural a consequence, led them into luxury, lewdness, and all manner of vice. Yet even here St. Paul planted a numerous church, chiefly of heathen converts; to whom, about three years after he had left Corinth, he wrote this epistle from Ephesus; as well to correct various disorders of which they were guilty, as to answer some questions which they bad proposed to him. The Epistle consists of: The inscription Chap. i. 1-3

I. The treatise itself, in which is,
  1. An exhortation to concord, beating down all glorying in the flesh, 4- iv.21
  2. A reproof,
    1. For not excommunicating the incestuous person, v. 1-13
    2. For going to law before heathen Judges, vi. 1-11
    3. A dissuasive from fornication, 12-20
    4. An answer to the questions they had proposed concerning marriage, vii. 1, 10, 25, 36, 39
    5. Concerning things sacrificed to idols, viii. 1- ix. 1
    6. Concerning the veiling of women, 2-16
    7. Concerning the Lord's supper, 17-34
    8. Concerning spiritual gifts, xii. xiii. xiv
    9. Concerning the resurrection, xv. 1-58
    10. Concerning the collection for the poor, the coming of himself, of Timothy, of Apollos, the sum of all, xvi, 1, 5, 10, 12, 13, 14

II. The conclusion, 15, 17, 19-24

## 1st CORINTHIANS

### I

1. Paul, called to be an apostle - There is great propriety in every clause of the salutation, particularly in this, as there were some in the church of Corinth who called the authority of his mission in question. Through the will of God - Called "the commandment of God," 1 Tim. i, 1 This was to the churches the ground of his authority; to Paul himself, of an humble and ready mind. By the mention of God, the authority of man is excluded, Gal. i, 1; by the mention of the will of God, the merit of Paul, chap. xv, 8, &c. And Sosthenes - A Corinthian, St. Paul's companion in travel.

It was both humility and prudence in the apostle, thus to join his name with his own, in an epistle wherein he was to reprove so many irregularities. Sosthenes the brother - Probably this word is emphatical; as if he had said, Who, from a Jewish opposer of the gospel, became a faithful brother.

2. To the church of God which is in Corinth - St. Paul, writing in a familiar manner to the Corinthians, as also to the Thessalonians and Galatians, uses this plain appellation. To the other churches he uses a more solemn address. Sanctified through Jesus Christ - And so undoubtedly they were in general, notwithstanding some exceptions. Called - Of Jesus Christ, Rom. i, 6 And - As the fruit of that calling made holy. With all that in every place - Nothing could better suit that catholic love which St. Paul labours to promote in this epistle, than such a declaration of his good wishes for every true Christian upon earth. Call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ - This plainly implies that all Christians pray to Christ, as well as to the Father through him.

4. Always - Whenever I mention you to God in prayer.

5. In all utterance and knowledge - Of divine things. These gifts the Corinthians particularly admired. Therefore this congratulation naturally tended to soften their spirits, and I make way for the reproofs which follow.

6. The testimony of Christ - The gospel. Was confirmed among you - By these gifts attending it. They knew they had received these by the hand of Paul: and this consideration was highly proper, to revive in them their former reverence and affection for their spiritual father.

7. Waiting - With earnest desire. For the glorious Revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ - A sure mark of a true or false Christian, to long for, or dread, this Revelation.

8. Who will also - if you faithfully apply to him. Confirm you to the end. In the day of Christ - Now it is our day, wherein we are to work out our salvation; then it will be eminently the day of Christ, and of his glory in the saints.

9. God is faithful - To all his promises; and therefore "to him that hath shall be given." By whom ye are called - A pledge of his willingness to save you unto the uttermost.

10. Now I exhort you - Ye have faith and hope; secure love also. By the endearing name of our Lord Jesus Christ - lnfinitely preferable to all the human names in which ye glory. That ye all speak the same thing - They now spoke different things, ver. 12 And that there be no schisms among you - No alienation of affection from each other. Is this word ever taken in any other sense in scripture? But that ye be joined in the same mind - Affections, desires. And judgment - Touching all the grand truths of the gospel.

11. It hath been declared to me by them of the family of Chloe - Whom some suppose to have been the wife of Stephanas, and the mother of Fortunatus and Achaicus. By these three the Corinthians had sent their letter to St. Paul, chap. xvi, 17. That there are contentions - A word equivalent with schisms in the preceding verse.

12. Now this I say - That is, what I mean is this: there are various parties among you, who set themselves, one against an other, in behalf of the several teachers they admire. And I of Christ - They spoke well, if they had not on this pretense despised their teachers, chap. iv, 8 Perhaps they valued themselves on having heard Christ preach in his own person.

13. Is Christ divided - Are not all the members still under one head? Was not he alone crucified for you all; and were ye not all baptized in his name? The glory of Christ then is not to be divided between him and his servants; neither is the unity of the body to be torn asunder, seeing Christ is one still.

14. I thank God - (A pious phrase for the common one, "I rejoice,") that, in the course of his providence, I baptized none of you, but Crispus, once the ruler of the synagogue, and Caius.

15. Lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name - In order to attach them to myself.

16. I know not - That is, it does not at present occur to my memory, that I baptized any other.

17. For God did not send me to baptize - That was not my chief errand: those of inferior rank and abilities could do it: though all the apostles were sent to baptize also, Matt. xxviii, 19 But to preach the gospel - So the apostle slides into his general proposition: but not with wisdom of speech - With the artificial ornaments of discourse, invented by human wisdom. Lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect - The whole effect of St. Paul's preaching was owing to the power of God accompanying the plain declaration of that great truth, "Christ bore our sins upon the cross." But this effect might have been imputed to another cause, had he come with that wisdom of speech which they admired.

18. To them that perish - By obstinately rejecting the only name whereby they can be saved. But to us who are saved - Now saved from our sins, and in the way to everlasting salvation, it is the great instrument of the power of God.

19. For it is written - And the words are remarkably applicable to this great event. Isaiah xxix, 14

20. Where is the wise? &c. - The deliverance of Judea from Sennacherib is what Isaiah refers to in these words; in a bold and beautiful allusion to which, the apostle in the clause that follows triumphs over all the opposition of human wisdom to the victorious gospel of Christ. What could the wise men of the gentiles do against this? or the Jewish scribes? or the disputers of this world? - Those among both, who, proud of their acuteness, were fond of controversy, and thought they could confute all opponents. Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world - That is, shown it to be very foolishness. Isaiah xxxiii, 18

21. For since in the wisdom of God - According to his wise disposals, leaving them to make the trial. The world - Whether Jewish or gentile, by all its boasted wisdom knew not God - Though the whole creation declared its Creator, and though he declared himself by all the prophets; it pleased God, by a way which those who perish count mere foolishness, to save them that believe.

22. For whereas the Jews demand of the apostles, as they did of their Lord, more signs still, after all they have seen already; and the Greeks, or gentiles, seek wisdom - The depths of philosophy, and the charms of eloquence.

23. We go on to preach, in a plain and historical, not rhetorical or philosophical, manner, Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumblingblock - Just opposite to the "signs" they demand. And to the Greeks foolishness - A silly tale, just opposite to the wisdom they seek.

24. But to them that are called - And obey the heavenly calling. Christ - With his cross, his death, his life, his kingdom. And they experience, first, that he is the power, then, that he is the wisdom, of God.

25. Because the foolishness of God - The gospel scheme, which the world judge to be mere foolishness, is wiser than the wisdom of men; and, weak as they account it, stronger than all the strength of men.

26. Behold your calling - What manner of men they are whom God calls. That not many wise men after the flesh - In the account of the world. Not many mighty - Men of power and authority.

28. Things that are not - The Jews frequently called the gentiles, "Them that are not," 2 Esdras vi. 56, 57. In so supreme contempt did they hold them. The things that are - In high esteem.

29. That no flesh - A fit appellation. Flesh is fair, but withering as grass. May glory before God - In God we ought to glory.

30. Of him - Out of his free grace and mercy. Are ye Engrafted into Christ Jesus, who is made unto us that believe wisdom, who were before utterly foolish and ignorant. Righteousness - The sole ground of our justification, who were before under the wrath and curse of God. Sanctification - A principle of universal holiness, whereas before we were altogether dead in sin. And redemption - That is, complete deliverance from all evil, and eternal bliss both of soul and body.

31. Let him glory in the Lord - Not in himself, not in the flesh, not in the world. Jer. ix, 23, 24

## II

1. And I accordingly came to you, not with loftiness of speech or of wisdom - I did not affect either deep wisdom or eloquence. Declaring the testimony of God - What God gave me to testify concerning his Son.

2. I determined not to know anything - To wave all my other knowledge, and not to preach anything, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified - That is, what he did, suffered, taught. A part is put for the whole.

3. And I was with you - At my first entrance. In weakness - Of body, 2 Cor. xii, 7 And in fear - Lest I should offend any. And in much trembling - The emotion of my mind affecting my very body.

4. And my speech in private, as well as my public preaching, was not with the persuasive words of human wisdom, such as the wise men of the world use; but with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power - With that powerful kind of demonstration, which flows from the Holy Spirit; which works on the conscience with the most convincing light, and the most persuasive evidence.

5. That your faith might not be built on the wisdom or power of man, but on the wisdom and power of God.

6. Yet we speak wisdom - Yea, the truest and most excellent wisdom. Among the perfect - Adult, experienced Christians. By wisdom here he seems to mean, not the whole Christian doctrine, but the most sublime and abstruse parts of it. But not the wisdom admired and taught by the men of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, Jewish or heathen, that come to nought - Both they and their wisdom, and the world itself.

7. But we speak the mysterious wisdom of God, which was hidden for many ages from all the world, and is still hidden even from "babes in Christ;" much more from all unbelievers. Which God ordained before the world - So far is this from coming to nought, like worldly wisdom. For our glory - Arising from the glory of our Lord, and then to be revealed when all worldly glory vanishes.

8. Had they known it - That wisdom. They would not have crucified - Punished as a slave. The Lord of glory - The giving Christ this august title, peculiar to the great Jehovah, plainly shows him to be the supreme God. In like manner the Father is styled, "the Father of glory," Eph. i, 17; and the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of glory," 1 Pet. iv, 14. The application of this title to all the three, shows that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are "the God of glory;" as the only true God is called, Psalm xxix, 3, and Acts vii, 2.

9. But this ignorance of theirs fulfils what is written concerning the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom. No natural man hath either seen, heard, or known, the things which God hath prepared, saith the prophet, for them that love him. Isaiah lxiv, 4

10. But God hath revealed - Yea, and "freely given," ver. 12. Them to us - Even inconceivable peace, and joy unspeakable. By his Spirit - Who intimately and fully knows them. For the Spirit searcheth even the deep things of God - Be they ever so hidden and mysterious; the depths both of his nature and his kingdom.

11. For what man knoweth the things of a man - All the inmost recesses of his mind; although men are all of one nature, and so may the more easily know one another. So the things of God knoweth no one but the Spirit - Who, consequently, is God.

12. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world - This spirit is not properly received; for the men of the world always had it. But Christians receive the Spirit of God, which before they had not.

13. Which also we speak - As well as know. In words taught by the Holy Spirit - Such are all the words of scripture. How high a regard ought we, then, to retain for them! Explaining spiritual things by spiritual words; or, adapting spiritual words to spiritual things - Being taught of the Spirit to express the things of the Spirit.

14. But the natural man - That is, every man who hath not the Spirit; who has no other way of obtaining knowledge, but by his senses and natural understanding. Receiveth not - Does not understand or conceive. The things of the Spirit - The things revealed by the Spirit of God, whether relating to his nature or his kingdom. For they are foolishness to him - He is so far from understanding, that he utterly despises, them Neither can he know them - As he has not the will, so neither has he the power. Because they are spiritually discerned - They can only be discerned by the aid of that Spirit, and by those spiritual senses, which he has not.

15. But the spiritual man - He that hath the Spirit. Discerneth all the things of God whereof we have been speaking. Yet he himself is discerned by no man - No natural men. They neither understand what he is, nor what he says.

16. Who - What natural man. We - Spiritual men; apostles in particular. Have - Know, understand. The mind of Christ - Concerning the whole plan of gospel salvation. Isaiah xl, 13

## III

1. And I, brethren - He spoke before, ver. 1, of his entrance, now of his progress, among them. Could not speak to you as unto spiritual - Adult, experienced Christians. But as unto men who were still in great measure carnal, as unto babes in Christ - Still weak in grace, though eminent in gifts, chap. i, 5.

2. I fed you, as babes, with milk - The first and plainest truths of the gospel. So should every preacher suit his doctrine to his hearers.

3. For while there is among you emulation in your hearts, strife in your words, and actual divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk according to men - As mere men; not as Christians, according to God.

4. I am of Apollos - St. Paul named himself and Apollos, to show that he would condemn any division among them, even though it were in favour of himself, or the dearest friend he had in the world. Are ye not carnal - For the Spirit of God allows no party zeal.

5. Ministers - Or servants. By whom ye believed, as the Lord, the Master of those servants, gave to every man.

7. God that giveth the increase - Is all in all: without him neither planting nor watering avails.

8. But he that planteth and he that watereth are one - Which is another argument against division. Though their labours are different. they are all employed in one general work, - the saving souls. Hence he takes occasion to speak of the reward of them that labour faithfully, and the awful account to be given by all. Every man shall receive his own peculiar reward according to his own peculiar labour - Not according to his success; but he who labours much, though with small success, shall have a great reward. Has not all this reasoning the same force still? The ministers are still surely instruments in God's hand, and depend as entirely as ever on his blessing, to give the increase to their labours. Without this, they are nothing: with it, their part is so small, that they hardly deserve to be mentioned. May their hearts and hands be more united; and, retaining a due sense of the honour God doeth them in employing them, may they faithfully labour, not as for themselves, but for the great Proprietor of all, till the day come when he will reward them in full proportion to their fidelity and diligence!

9. For we are all fellowlabourers - God's labourers, and fellowlabourers with each other. Ye are God's husbandry - This is the sum of what went before: it is a comprehensive word, taking in both a field, a garden, and a vineyard. Ye are God's building - This is the sum of what follows.

10. According to the grace of God given to me - This he premises, lest he should seem to ascribe it to himself. Let every one take heed how he buildeth thereon - That all his doctrines may be consistent with the foundation.

11. For other foundation - On which the whole church: and all its doctrines, duties, and blessings may be built. Can no man lay than what is laid - In the counsels of divine wisdom, in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, in the preaching of the apostles, St. Paul in particular. Which is Jesus Christ - Who, in his person and offices, is the firm, immovable Rock of Ages, every way sufficient to bear all the weight that God himself, or the sinner, when he believes, can lay upon him.

12. If any one build gold, silver, costly stones - Three sorts of materials which will bear the fire; true and solid doctrines. Wood, hay, stubble - Three which will not bear the fire. Such are all doctrines, ceremonies, and forms of human invention; all but the substantial, vital truths of Christianity.

13. The time is coming when every one's work shall be made manifest: for the day of the Lord, that great and final day, shall declare it - To all the world. For it is revealed - What faith beholds as so certain and so near is spoken of as already present. By fire; yea, the fire shall try every one's work, of what sort it is - The strict process of that day will try every man's doctrines, whether they come up to the scripture standard or not. Here is a plain allusion to the flaming light and consuming heat of the general conflagration. But the expression, when applied to the trying of doctrines, and consuming those that are wrong, is evidently figurative; because no material fire can have such an effect on what is of a moral nature. And therefore it is added, he who builds wood, hay, or stubble, shall be saved as through the fire - Or, as narrowly as a man escapes through the fire, when his house is all in flames about him. This text, then, is so far from establishing the Romanish purgatory,

that it utterly overthrows it. For the fire here mentioned does not exist till the day of judgment: therefore, if this be the fire of purgatory, it follows that purgatory does not exist before the day of judgment.

14. He shall receive a reward - A peculiar degree of glory. Some degree even the other will receive, seeing he held the foundation; though through ignorance he built thereon what would not abide the fire.

15. He shall suffer loss - The loss of that peculiar degree of glory.

16. Ye - All Christians. Are the temple of God - The most noble kind of building, ver. 9.

17. If any man destroy the temple of God - Destroy a real Christian, by schisms, or doctrines fundamentally wrong. Him shall God destroy - He shall not be saved at all; not even as through the fire."

18. Let him become a fool in this world - Such as the world accounts so. That he may become wise - In God's account.

19. For all the boasted wisdom of the world is mere foolishness in the sight of God. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness - Not only while they think they are acting wisely, but by their very wisdom, which itself is their snare, and the occasion of their destruction. Job v, 13.

20. That they are but vain - Empty, foolish; they and all their thoughts. Psalm xciv, 11.

21. Therefore - Upon the whole. Let none glory in men - So as to divide into parties on their account. For all things are yours - and we in particular. We are not your lords, but rather your servants.

22. Whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas - We are all equally yours, to serve you for Christ's sake. Or the world - This leap from Peter to the world greatly enlarges the thought, and argues a kind of impatience of enumerating the rest. Peter and every one in the whole world, however excellent in gifts, or grace, or office, are also your servants for Christ's sake. Or life, or death - These, with all their various circumstances, are disposed as will be most for your advantage. Or things present - On earth. Or things to come - In heaven. Contend, therefore, no more about these little things; but be ye united in love, as ye are in blessings.

23. And ye are Christ's - His property, his subjects. his members. And Christ is God's - As Mediator, he refers all his services to his Father's glory.

## IV

1. Let a man account us, as servants of Christ - The original word properly signifies such servants as laboured at the oar in rowing vessels; and, accordingly, intimates the pains which every faithful minister takes in his Lord's work. O God, where are these ministers to be found? Lord, thou knowest. And stewards of the mysteries of God - Dispenseth of the mysterious truths of the gospel.

3. Yea, I judge not myself - My final state is not to be determined by my own judgment.

4. I am not conscious to myself of anything evil; yet am I not hereby justified - I depend not on this, as a sufficient justification of myself in God's account. But he that judgeth me is the Lord - By his sentence I am to stand or fall.

5. Therefore judge nothing before the time - Appointed for judging all men. Until the Lord come, who, in order to pass a righteous judgment, which otherwise would be impossible, will both

bring to light the things which are now covered with impenetrable darkness, and manifest the most secret springs of action, the principles and intentions of every heart. And then shall every one - Every faithful steward, have praise of God.

6. These things - Mentioned, chap. i, 10, &c. I have by a very obvious figure transferred to myself and Apollos - And Cephas, instead of naming those particular preachers at Corinth, to whom ye are so fondly attached. That ye may learn by us - From what has been said concerning us, who, however eminent we are, are mere instruments in God's hand. Not to think of any man above what is here written - Or above what scripture warrants. chap. iii, 7

7. Who maketh thee to differ - Either in gifts or graces. As if thou hadst not received it - As if thou hadst it originally from thyself.

8. Now ye are full - The Corinthians abounded with spiritual gifts; and so did the apostles: but the apostles, by continual want and sufferings, were kept from self- complacency. The Corinthians suffering nothing, and having plenty of all things, were pleased with and applauded themselves; and they were like children who, being raised in the world, disregard their poor parents. Now ye are full, says the apostle, in a beautiful gradation, ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings - A proverbial expression, denoting the most splendid and plentiful circumstances. Without any thought of us. And I would ye did reign - In the best sense: I would ye had attained the height of holiness. That we might reign with you - Having no more sorrow on your account, but sharing in your happiness.

9. God hath set forth us last, as appointed to death - Alluding to the Roman custom of bringing forth those persons last on the stage, either to fight with each other, or with wild beasts, who were devoted to death; so that, if they escaped one day, they were brought out again and again, till they were killed.

10. We are fools, in the account of the world, for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ - Though ye are Christians, ye think yourselves wise; and ye have found means to make the world think you so too. We are weak - In presence, in infirmities, in sufferings. But ye are strong - In just opposite circumstances.

11. And are naked - Who can imagine a more glorious triumph of the truth, than that which is gained in these circumstances when St. Paul, with an impediment in his speech, and a person rather contemptible than graceful, appeared in a mean, perhaps tattered, dress before persons of the highest distinction, and yet commanded such attention. and made such deep impressions upon them!

12. We bless-suffer it-intreat - We do not return revilings, persecution, defamation; nothing but blessing.

13. We are made as the filth of the world, and offscouring of all things - Such were those poor wretches among the heathens, who were taken from the dregs of the people, to be offered as expiatory sacrifices to the infernal gods. They were loaded with curses, affronts, and injuries, all the way they went to the altars; and when the ashes of those unhappy men were thrown into the sea, these very names were given them in the ceremony.

14. I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you - It is with admirable prudence and sweetness the apostle adds this, to prevent any unkind construction of his words.

15. I have begotten you - This excludes not only Apollos, his successor, but also Silas and Timothy, his companions; and the relation between a spiritual father and his children brings with it an inexpressible nearness and affection.

16. Be ye followers of me - In that spirit and behaviour which I have so largely declared.

17. My beloved son - Elsewhere he styles him "brother," 2 Cor. i, 1; but here paternal affection takes place. As I teach - No less by example than precept.

18. Now some are puffed up - St. Paul saw, by a divine light, the thoughts which would arise in their hearts. As if I would not come - Because I send Timothy.

19. I will know - He here shows his fatherly authority Not the big, empty speech of these vain boasters, but how much of the power of God attends them.

20. For the kingdom of God - Real religion, does not consist in words, but in the power of God ruling the heart.

21. With a rod - That is, with severity.

## V

1. Fornication - The original word implies criminal conversation of any kind whatever. His father's wife - While his father was alive.

2. Are ye puffed up? Should ye not rather have mourned - Have solemnly humbled yourselves, and at that time of solemn mourning have expelled that notorious sinner from your communion?

3. I verily, as present in spirit - Having a full (it seems, a miraculous) view of the whole fact. Have already, as if I were actually present, judged him who hath so scandalously done this.

4. And my spirit - Present with you. With the power of the Lord Jesus Christ - To confirm my sentence.

5. To deliver such an one - This was the highest degree of punishment in the Christian church; and we may observe, the passing this sentence was the act of the apostle, not of the Corinthians. To Satan - Who was usually permitted, in such cases, to inflict pain or sickness on the offender. For the destruction - Though slowly and gradually. Of the flesh - Unless prevented by speedy repentance.

6. Your glorying - Either in your gifts or prosperity, at such a time as this, is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven - One sin, or one sinner. Leaveneth the whole lump - Diffuses guilt and infection through the whole congregation.

7. Purge out therefore the old leaven - Both of sinners and of sin. That ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened - That is, that being unleavened ye may be a new lump, holy unto the Lord. For our passover is slain for us - The Jewish passover, about the time of which this epistle was wrote, ver. 11, was only a type of this. What exquisite skill both here and everywhere conducts the zeal of the inspired writer! How surprising a transition is here, and yet how perfectly natural! The apostle, speaking of the incestuous criminal, slides into his darling topic, - crucified saviour. Who would have expected it on such an occasion. Yet, when it is thus brought in, who does not see and admire both the propriety of the subject, and the delicacy of its introduction?

8. Therefore let us keep the feast - Let us feed on him by faith. Here is a plain allusion to the Lord's supper, which was instituted in the room of the passover. Not with the old leaven - Of heathenism or Judaism. Malignity is stubbornness in evil. Sincerity and truth seem to be put here for the whole of true, inward religion.

9. I wrote to you in a former epistle - And, doubtless, both St. Paul and the other apostles wrote many things which are not extant now. Not to converse - Familiarly; not to contract any intimacy or acquaintance with them, more than is absolutely necessary.

10. But I did not mean that you should altogether refrain from conversing with heathens, though they are guilty in some of these respects. Covetous, rapacious, idolaters - Sinners against themselves, their neighbour, God. For then ye must go out of the world - Then all civil commerce must cease. So that going out of the world, which some account a perfection, St. Paul accounts an utter absurdity.

11. Who is named a brother - That is, a Christian; especially if a member of the same congregation. Rapacious - Guilty of oppression, extortion, or any open injustice. No, not to eat with him - Which is the lowest degree of familiarity.

12. I speak of Christians only. For what have I to do to judge heathens? But ye, as well as I, judge those of your own community.

13. Them that are without God will judge - The passing sentence on these he hath reserved to himself. And ye will take away that wicked person - This properly belongs to you.

## VI

1. The unjust - The heathens. A Christian could expect no justice from these. The saints - Who might easily decide these smaller differences in a private and friendly manner.

2. Know ye not - This expression occurs six times in this single chapter, and that with a peculiar force; for the Corinthians knew and gloried in it, but they did not practice. That the saints - After having been judged themselves. Shall judge the world - Shall be assessors with Christ in the judgment wherein he shall condemn all the wicked, as well angels as men, Matt. xix, 28 Rev. xx, 4.

4. Them who are of no esteem in the church - That is, heathens, who, as such, could be in no esteem with the Christians.

5. Is there not one among you, who are such admirers of wisdom, that is wise enough to decide such causes?

7. Indeed there is a fault, that ye quarrel with each other at all, whether ye go to law or no. Why do ye not rather suffer wrong - All men cannot or will not receive this saying. Many aim only at this, "I will neither do wrong, nor suffer it." These are honest heathens, but no Christians.

8. Nay, ye do wrong - Openly. And defraud - Privately. O how powerfully did the mystery of iniquity already work!

9. Idolatry is here placed between fornication and adultery, because they generally accompanied it. Nor the effeminate - Who live in an easy, indolent way; taking up no cross, enduring no hardship. But how is this? These good-natured, harmless people are ranked with idolaters and sodomites! We may learn hence, that we are never secure from the greatest sins, till we guard against those which are thought the least; nor, indeed, till we think no sin is little, since every one is a step toward hell.

11. And such were some of you: but ye are washed - From those gross abominations; nay, and ye are inwardly sanctified; not before, but in consequence of, your being justified in the name - That is, by the merits, of the Lord Jesus, through which your sins are forgiven. And by the Spirit of our God - By whom ye are thus washed and sanctified.

12. All things - Which are lawful for you. Are lawful for me, but all things are not always expedient - Particularly when anything would offend my weak brother; or when it would enslave my own soul. For though all things are lawful for me, yet I will not be brought under the power of any - So as to be uneasy when I abstain from it; for, if so, then I am under the power of it.

13. As if he had said, I speak this chiefly with regard to meats; (and would to God all Christians would consider it!) particularly with regard to those offered to idols, and those forbidden in the Mosaic law. These, I grant, are all indifferent, and have their use, though it is only for a time: then meats, and the organs which receive them, will together moulder into dust. But the case is quite otherwise with fornication. This is not indifferent, but at all times evil. For the body is for the Lord - Designed only for his service. And the Lord, in an important sense, for the body - Being the saviour of this, as well as of the soul; in proof of which God hath already raised him from the dead.

16. Gen. ii, 24.

17. But he that is joined to the Lord - By faith. Is one spirit with him - And shall he make himself one flesh with an harlot?

18. Flee fornication - All unlawful commerce with women, with speed, with abhorrence, with all your might. Every sin that a man commits against his neighbour terminates upon an object out of himself, and does not so immediately pollute his body, though it does his soul. But he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body - Pollutes, dishonours, and degrades it to a level with brute beasts.

19. And even your body is not, strictly speaking, your own even this is the temple of the Holy Ghost - Dedicated to him, and inhabited by him. What the apostle calls elsewhere "the temple of God," chap. iii, 16, 17, and "the temple of the living God," 2 Cor. vi, 16, he here styles the temple of the Holy Ghost; plainly showing that the Holy Ghost is the living God.

20. Glorify God with your body, and your spirit - Yield your bodies and all their members, as well as your souls and all their faculties, as instruments of righteousness to God. Devote and employ all ye have, and all ye are, entirely, unreservedly, and for ever, to his glory.

## VII

1. It is good for a man - Who is master of himself. Not to touch a women - That is, not to marry. So great and many are the advantages of a single life.

2. Yet, when it is needful, in order to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife. His own - For Christianity allows no polygamy.

3. Let not married persons fancy that there is any perfection in living with each other, as if they were unmarried. The debt - This ancient reading seems far more natural than the common one.

4. The wife-the husband - Let no one forget this, on pretense of greater purity.

5. Unless it be by consent for a time - That on those special and solemn occasions ye may entirely give yourselves up to the exercises of devotion. Lest - If ye should long remain separate. Satan tempt you - To unclean thoughts, if not actions too.

6. But I say this - Concerning your separating for a time and coming together again. Perhaps he refers also to ver. 2.

7. For I would that all men were herein even as I - I would that all believers who are now unmarried would remain "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake" St. Paul, having tasted the sweetness of this liberty, wished others to enjoy it, as well as himself. But every one hath his proper gift from God - According to our Lord's declaration, "All men cannot receive this saying, save they," the happy few, to whom it is given," Matt. xix, 11.

8. It is good for them if they remain even as I - That St. Paul was then single is certain and from Acts vii, 58, compared with the following parts of the history, it seems probable that he always was so. It does not appear that this declaration, any more than ver. 1, hath any reference at all to a state of persecution.

10. Not I - Only. But the Lord - Christ; by his express command, Matt. v, 32.

11. But if she depart - Contrary to this express prohibition. And let not the husband put away his wife - Except for the cause of adultery.

12. To the rest - Who are married to unbelievers. Speak I - By Revelation from God, though our Lord hath not left any commandment concerning it. Let him not put her away - The Jews, indeed, were obliged of old to put away their idolatrous wives, Ezra x, 3; but their case was quite different. They were absolutely forbid to marry idolatrous women; but the persons here spoken of were married while they were both in a state of heathenism.

14. For the unbelieving husband hath, in many instances, been sanctified by the wife - Else your children would have been brought up heathens; whereas now they are Christians. As if he had said, Ye see the proof of it before your eyes.

15. A brother or a sister - A Christian man or woman. Is not enslaved - is at full liberty. In such cases: but God hath called us to peace - To live peaceably with them, if it be possible.

17. But as God hath distributed - The various stations of life, and various relations, to every one, let him take care to discharge his duty therein. The gospel disannuls none of these. And thus I ordain in all the churches - As a point of the highest concern.

19. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing - Will neither promote nor obstruct our salvation. The one point is, keeping the commandments of God; "faith working by love."

20. In the calling - The outward state. Wherein he is - When God calls him. Let him not seek to change this, without a clear direction from Providence.

21. Care not for it - Do not anxiously seek liberty. But if thou canst be free, use it rather - Embrace the opportunity.

22. Is the Lord's freeman - Is free in this respect. The Greek word implies one that was a slave, but now is free. Is the bondman of Christ - Not free in this respect; not at liberty to do his own will.

23. Ye are bought with a price - Ye belong to God; therefore, where it can be avoided, do not become the bondslaves of men - Which may expose you to many temptations.

24. Therein abide with God - Doing all things as unto God, and as in his immediate presence. They who thus abide with God preserve an holy indifference with regard to outward things.

25. Now concerning virgins - Of either sex. I have no commandment from the Lord - By a particular Revelation. Nor was it necessary he should; for the apostles wrote nothing which was not divinely inspired: but with this difference, - sometimes they had a particular Revelation, and a special commandment; at other times they wrote from the divine light which abode with them, the standing treasure of the Spirit of God. And this, also, was not their private opinion, but a divine rule of faith and practice. As one whom God hath made faithful in my apostolic office; who therefore faithfully deliver what I receive from him.

26, 27. This is good for the present distress - While any church is under persecution. For a man to continue as he is - Whether married or unmarried. St. Paul does not here urge the present distress as a reason for celibacy, any more than for marriage; but for a man's not seeking to alter his state, whatever it be, but making the best of it.

28. Such will have trouble in the flesh - Many outward troubles. But I spare you - I speak as little and as tenderly as possible.

29. But this I say, brethren - With great confidence. The time of our abode here is short. It plainly follows, that even they who have wives be as serious, zealous, active, dead to the world, as devoted to God, as holy in all manner of conversation, as if they had none - By so easy a transition does the apostle slide from every thing else to the one thing needful; and, forgetting whatever is temporal, is swallowed up in eternity.

30. And they that weep, as if they wept not - "Though sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." They that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not - Tempering their joy with godly fear. They that buy, as if they possessed not - Knowing themselves to be only stewards, not proprietors.

31. And they that use this world, as not abusing it - Not seeking happiness in it, but in God: using every thing therein only in such a manner and degree as most tends to the knowledge and love of God. For the whole scheme and fashion of this world - This marrying, weeping, rejoicing, and all the rest, not only will pass, but now passeth away, is this moment flying off like a shadow.

32. Now I would have you - For this flying moment. Without carefulness - Without any incumbrance of your thoughts. The unmarried man - If he understand and use the advantage he enjoys-Careth only for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord.

33. But the married careth for the things of the world - And it in his duty so to do, so far as becomes a Christian. How he may please his wife - And provide all things needful for her and his family.

34. There is a difference also between a wife and a virgin - Whether the church be under persecution or not. The unmarried woman - If she know and use her privilege. Careth only for the things of the Lord - All her time, care, and thoughts center in this, how she may be holy both in body and spirit. This is the standing advantage of a single life, in all ages and nations. But who makes a suitable use of it?

35. Not that I may cast a snare upon you - Who are not able to receive this saying. But for your profit - Who are able. That ye may resolutely and perseveringly wait upon the Lord - The word translated wait signifies sitting close by a person, in a good posture to hear. So Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, Luke x, 39. Without distraction - Without having the mind drawn any way from its center; from its close attention to God; by any person, or thing, or care, or incumbrance whatsoever.

36. But if any parent think he should otherwise act indecently - Unbecoming his character. Toward his virgin daughter, if she be above age, (or of full age,) and need so require, ver. 9, let them marry - Her suitor and she.

37. Having no necessity - Where there is no such need. But having power over his own will - Which would incline him to desire the increase of his family, and the strengthening it by new relations.

38. Doeth better - If there be no necessity.

39. Only in the Lord - That is, only if Christians marry Christians: a standing direction, and one of the utmost importance.

40. I also - As well as any of you. Have the Spirit of God - Teaching me all things This does not imply any doubt; but the strongest certainty of it, together with a reproof of them for calling it in question. Whoever, therefore, would conclude from hence, that St. Paul was not certain he had the Spirit of Christ, neither understands the true import of the words, nor considers how expressly he lays claim to the Spirit, both in this epistle, chap. ii, 16, xiv, 37, and the other. 2 Cor. xiii, 3. Indeed, it may be doubted whether the word here and elsewhere translated think, does not always imply the fullest and strongest assurance. See chap. x, 12.

## VIII

1. Now concerning the next question you proposed. All of us have knowledge - A gentle reproof of their self-conceit. Knowledge without love always puffeth up. Love alone edifies - Builds us up in holiness.

2. If any man think he knoweth any thing - Aright, unless so far he is taught by God. He knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know - Seeing there is no true knowledge without divine love.

3. He is known - That is, approved, by him. Psalm i, 6.

4. We know that an idol is nothing - A mere nominal God, having no divinity, virtue, or power.

5. For though there be that are called gods - By the heathens both celestial, (as they style them,) terrestrial, and infernal deities.

6. Yet to us - Christians. There is but one God - This is exclusive, not of the One Lord, as if he were an inferior deity; but only of the idols to which the One God is opposed. From whom are all things - By creation, providence, and grace. And we for him - The end of all we are, have, and do. And one Lord - Equally the object of divine worship. By whom are all things - Created, sustained, and governed. And we by him - Have access to the Father, and all spiritual blessings.

7. Some eat, with consciousness of the idol - That is, fancying it is something, and that it makes the meat unlawful to be eaten. And their conscience, being weak - Not rightly informed. Is defiled - contracts guilt by doing it.

8. But meat commendeth us not to God - Neither by eating, nor by refraining from it. Eating and not eating are in themselves things merely indifferent.

10. For if any one see thee who hast knowledge - Whom he believes to have more knowledge than himself, and who really hast this knowledge, that an idol is nothing-sitting down to an entertainment in an idol temple. The heathens frequently made entertainments in their temples, on what hath been sacrificed to their idols. Will not the conscience of him that is weak - Scrupulous. Be encouraged - By thy example. To eat - Though with a doubting conscience.

11. And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? - And for whom thou wilt not lose a meal's meat, so far from dying for him! We see, Christ died even for them that perish.

12. Ye sin against Christ - Whose members they are.

13. If meat - Of any kind. Who will follow this example? What preacher or private Christian will abstain from any thing lawful in itself, when it offends a weak brother?

## IX

1. Am I not free? am I not an apostle? - That is, Have not I the liberty of a common Christian? yea, that of an apostle? He vindicates his apostleship, chap. ix, 1-iii, his apostolical liberty, chap. ix, 4-19. Have I not seen Jesus Christ? - Without this he could not have been one of those first grand witnesses. Are not ye my work in the Lord - A full evidence that God hath sent me? And yet some, it seems, objected to his being an apostle, because he had not asserted his privilege in demanding and receiving such maintenance from the churches as was due to that office.

2. Ye are the seal of my apostleship - Who have received not only faith by my mouth, but all the gifts of the Spirit by my hands.

3. My answer to them who examine me - Concerning my apostleship. Is this - Which I have now given.

4. Have we not power - I and my fellowlabourers. To eat and to drink - At the expense of those among whom we labour.

5. Have we not power to lead about with us a sister, a wife - And to demand sustenance for her also? As well as the other apostles - Who therefore, it is plain, did this. And Peter - Hence we learn,

1. That St. Peter continued to live with his wife after he became an apostle:
2. That he had no rights as an apostle which were not common to St. Paul.

6. To forbear working - With our hands.

8. Do I speak as a man - Barely on the authority of human reason? Does not God also say, in effect, the same thing? The ox that treadeth out the corn - This was the custom in Judea, and many eastern nations. In several of them it is retained still. And at this day, horses tread out the corn in some parts of Germany.

9. Doth God - In this direction. Take care for oxen - Only? Hath he not a farther meaning? And so undoubtedly he hath in all the other Mosaic laws of this kind.

10. He who ploweth ought to plow in hope - Of reaping. This seems to be a proverbial expression. And he that thresheth in hope - Ought not to be disappointed, ought to eat the fruit of his labours. And ought they who labour in God's husbandry. Deut. xxv, 4

11. Is it a great matter if we shall reap as much of your carnal things - As is needful for our sustenance? Do you give us things of greater value than those you receive from us?

12. If others - Whether true or false apostles. Partake of this power - Have a right to be maintained. Do not we rather - On account of our having laboured so much more? Lest we should give any hindrance to the gospel - By giving an occasion of cavil or reproach.

14. Matt. x, 10

15. It were better for me to die than - To give occasion to them that seek occasion against me, 2 Cor. xi, 12.

17. Willingly - He seems to mean, without receiving anything. St. Paul here speaks in a manner peculiar to himself. Another might have preached willingly, and yet have received a maintenance from the Corinthians. But if he had received anything from them, he would have termed it preaching unwillingly. And so, in the next verse, another might have used that power without abusing it. But his own using it at all, he would have termed abusing it. A dispensation is intrusted to me - Therefore I dare not refrain.

18. What then is my reward - That circumstance in my conduct for which I expect a peculiar reward from my great Master? That I abuse not - Make not an unseasonable use of my power which I have in preaching the gospel.

19. I made myself the servant of all - I acted with as self-denying a regard to their interest, and as much caution not to offend them, as if I had been literally their servant or slave. Where is the preacher of the gospel who treads in the same steps?

20. To the Jews I became as a Jew - Conforming myself in all things to their manner of thinking and living, so far as; I could with innocence. To them that are under the law - Who apprehend themselves to be still bound by the Mosaic law. As under the law - Observing it myself, while I am among them. Not that he declared this to be necessary, or refused to converse with those who did not observe it. This was the very thing which he condemned in St. Peter, Gal. ii, 14.

21. To them that are without the law - The heathens. As without the law - Neglecting its ceremonies. Being not without the law to God - But as much as ever under its moral precepts. Under the law to Christ - And in this sense all Christians will be under the law for ever.

22. I became as weak - As if I had been scrupulous too. I became all things to all men - Accommodating myself to all, so far as I could consistent with truth and sincerity.

24. Know ye not that - In those famous games which are kept at the isthmus, near your city. They who run in the foot race all run, though but one receiveth the prize - How much greater encouragement have you to run; since ye may all receive the prize of your high calling!

25. And every one that there contendeth is temperate in all things - To an almost incredible degree; using the most rigorous self denial in food, sleep, and every other sensual indulgence. A corruptible crown - A garland of leaves, which must soon wither. The moderns only have discovered that it is "legal" to do all this and more for an eternal crown than they did for a corruptible!

26. I so run, not as uncertainly - I look straight to the goal; I run straight toward it. I cast away every weight, regard not any that stand by. I fight not as one that beateth the air - This is a proverbial expression for a man's missing his blow, and spending his strength, not on his enemy, but on empty air.

27. But I keep under my body - By all kinds of self denial. And bring it into subjection - To my spirit and to God. The words are strongly figurative, and signify the mortification of the body of sin, "by an allusion to the natural bodies of those who were bruised or subdued in combat. Lest by any means after having preached - The Greek word means, after having discharged the office of an herald, (still carrying on the allusion,) whose office it was to proclaim the conditions, and to display the prizes. I myself should become a reprobate - Disapproved by the Judge, and so falling short of the prize. This single text may give us a just notion of the scriptural doctrine of election and reprobation; and clearly shows us, that particular persons are not in holy writ represented as elected absolutely and unconditionally to eternal life, or predestinated absolutely and unconditionally to eternal death; but that believers in general are elected to enjoy the Christian privileges on earth; which if they abuse, those very elect persons will become reprobate. St. Paul was certainly an elect person, if ever there was one; and yet he declares it was possible he himself might become a reprobate. Nay, he actually would have become such, if he had not thus kept his body under, even though he had been so long an elect person, a Christian, and an apostle.

## X

1. Now - That ye may not become reprobates, consider how highly favoured your fathers were, who were God's elect and peculiar people, and nevertheless were rejected by him. They were all under the cloud - That eminent token of God's gracious presence, which screened them from the heat of the sun by day, and gave them light by night. And all passed through the sea - God opening a way through the midst of the waters. Exod. xiii, 21 Exod. xiv, 22

2. And were all, as it were, baptized unto Moses - initiated into the religion which he taught them. In the cloud and in the sea - Perhaps sprinkled here and there with drops of water from the sea or the cloud, by which baptism might be the more evidently signified.

3. And all ate the same manna, termed spiritual meat, as it was typical,

1. Of Christ and his spiritual benefits:
2. Of the sacred bread which we eat at his table. Exod. xvi, 15.

4. And all drank the same spiritual drink - Typical of Christ, and of that cup which we drink. For they drank out of the spiritual or mysterious rock, the wonderful streams of which followed them in their several journeyings, for many years, through the wilderness. And that rock was a manifest type of Christ - The Rock of Eternity, from whom his people derive those streams of blessings which follow them through all this wilderness. Exod. xvii, 6.

5. Yet - Although they had so many tokens of the divine presence. They were overthrown - With the most terrible marks of his displeasure.

6. Now these things were our examples - Showing what we are to expect if, enjoying the like benefits, we commit the like sins. The benefits are set down in the same order as by Moses in Exodus; the sins and punishments in a different order; evil desire first, as being the foundation of all; next, idolatry, ver. 7, 14; then fornication, which usually accompanied it, ver. 8; the tempting and murmuring against God, in the following verses. As they desired - Flesh, in contempt of manna. Num. xi, 4

7. Neither be ye idolaters - And so, "neither murmur ye," ver. 10. The other cautions are given in the first person; but these in the second. And with what exquisite propriety does he vary the person! It would have been improper to say, Neither let us be idolaters; for he was himself in no danger of idolatry; nor probably of murmuring against Christ, or the divine providence. To play - That is, to dance, in honour of their idol. Exod. xxxii, 6.

8. And fell in one day three and twenty thousand - Beside the princes who were afterwards hanged, and those whom the Judges slew so that there died in all four and twenty thousand. Num. xxv, 1, 9.

9. Neither let us tempt Christ - By our unbelief. St. Paul enumerates five benefits, ver. 1-4; of which the fourth and fifth were closely connected together; and five sins, the fourth and fifth of which were likewise closely connected. In speaking of the fifth benefit, he expressly mentions Christ; and in speaking of the fourth sin, he shows it was committed against Christ. As some of them tempted him - This sin of the people was peculiarly against Christ; for when they had so long drank of that rock, yet they murmured for want of water. Num. xxi, 4, &c.

10. The destroyer - The destroying angel. Num. xiv, 1, 36

11. On whom the ends of the ages are come - The expression has great force. All things meet together, and come to a crisis, under the last, the gospel, dispensation; both benefits and dangers,

punishments and rewards. It remains, that Christ come as an avenger and judge. And even these ends include various periods, succeeding each other.

12. The common translation runs, Let him that thinketh he standeth; but the word translated thinketh, most certainly strengthens, rather than weakens, the sense.

13. Common to man - Or, as the Greek word imports, proportioned to human strength. God is faithful - In giving the help which he hath promised. And he will with the temptation - Provide for your deliverance.

14. Flee from idolatry - And from all approaches to it.

16. The cup which we bless - By setting it apart to a sacred use, and solemnly invoking the blessing of God upon it. Is it not the communion of the blood of Christ - The means of our partaking of those invaluable benefits, which are the purchase of the blood of Christ. The communion of the body of Christ - The means of our partaking of those benefits which were purchased by the body of Christ - offered for us.

17. For it is this communion which makes us all one. We being many are yet, as it were, but different parts of one and the same broken bread, which we receive to unite us in one body.

18. Consider Israel after the flesh - Christians are the spiritual "Israel of God." Are not they who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar - Is not this an act of communion with that God to whom they are offered? And is not the case the same with those who eat of the sacrifices which have been offered to idols?

19. What say I then - Do I in saying this allow that an idol is anything divine? I aver, on the contrary, that what the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils. Such in reality are the gods of the heathens; and with such only can you hold communion in those sacrifices.

21. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils - You cannot have communion with both.

22. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy - By thus caressing his rivals? Are we stronger than he - Are we able to resist, or to bear his wrath?

23. Supposing this were lawful in itself, yet it is not expedient, it is not edifying to my neighbour.

24. His own only, but another's welfare also.

25. The apostle now applies this principle to the point in question. Asking no questions - Whether it has been sacrificed or not.

26. For God, who is the Creator, Proprietor, and Disposer of the earth and all that is therein, hath given the produce of it to the children of men, to be used without scruple. Psalm xxiv, 1

28. For his sake that showed thee, and for conscience' sake - That is, for the sake of his weak conscience, lest it should be wounded.

29. Conscience I say, not thy own - I speak of his conscience, not thine. For why is my liberty judged by another's conscience - Another's conscience is not the standard of mine, nor is another's persuasion the measure of my liberty.

30. If I by grace am a partaker - If I thankfully use the common blessings of God.

31. Therefore - To close the present point with a general rule, applicable not only in this, but in all cases, Whatsoever ye do - In all things whatsoever, whether of a religious or civil nature, in all the common, as well as sacred, actions of life, keep the glory of God in view, and steadily pursue in all this one end of your being, the planting or advancing the vital knowledge and love of God, first in your own soul, then in all mankind.

32. Give no offense - If, and as far as, it is possible.

33. Even as I, as much as lieth in me, please all men.

## XI

2. I praise you - The greater part of you.

3. I would have you know - He does not seem to have given them any order before concerning this. The head of every man - Particularly every believer. Is Christ, and the head of Christ is God - Christ, as he is Mediator, acts in all things subordinately to his Father. But we can no more infer that they are not of the same divine nature, because God is said to be the head of Christ, than that man and woman are not of the same human nature, because the man is said to be the head of the woman.

4. Every man praying or prophesying - Speaking by the immediate power of God. With his head - And face. Covered - Either with a veil or with long hair. Dishonoureth his head - St. Paul seems to mean, As in these eastern nations veiling the head is a badge of subjection, so a man who prays or prophesies with a veil on his head, reflects a dishonour on Christ, whose representative he is.

5. But every woman - Who, under an immediate impulse of the Spirit, (for then only was a woman suffered to speak in the church,) prays or prophesies without a veil on her face, as it were disclaims subjection, and reflects dishonour on man, her head. For it is the same, in effect, as if she cut her hair short, and wore it in the distinguishing form of the men. In those ages, men wore their hair exceeding short, as appears from the ancient statues and pictures.

6. Therefore if a woman is not covered - If she will throw off the badge of subjection, let her appear with her hair cut like a man's. But if it be shameful far a woman to appear thus in public, especially in a religious assembly, let her, for the same reason, keep on her veil.

7. A man indeed ought not to veil his head, because he is the image of God - In the dominion he bears over the creation, representing the supreme dominion of God, which is his glory. But the woman is only matter of glory to the man, who has a becoming dominion over her. Therefore she ought not to appear, but with her head veiled, as a tacit acknowledgment of it.

8. The man is not - In the first production of nature.

10. For this cause also a woman ought to be veiled in the public assemblies, because of the angels - Who attend there, and before whom they should be careful not to do anything indecent or irregular.

11. Nevertheless in the Lord Jesus, there is neither male nor female - Neither is excluded; neither is preferred before the other in his kingdom.

12. And as the woman was at first taken out of the man, so also the man is now, in the ordinary course of nature, by the woman; but all things are of God - The man, the woman, and their dependence on each other.

13. Judge of yourselves - For what need of more arguments if so plain a case? Is it decent for a woman to pray to God - The Most High, with that bold and undaunted air which she must have, when, contrary to universal custom, she appears in public with her head uncovered?

14. For a man to have long hair, carefully adjusted, is such a mark of effeminacy as is a disgrace to him.

15. Given her - Originally, before the arts of dress were in being.

16. We have no such custom here, nor any of the other churches of God - The several churches that were in the apostles' time had different customs in things that were not essential; and that under one and the same apostle, as circumstances, in different places, made it convenient. And in all things merely indifferent the custom of each place was of sufficient weight to determine prudent and peaceable men. Yet even this cannot overrule a scrupulous conscience, which really doubts whether the thing be indifferent or no. But those who are referred to here by the apostle were contentious, not conscientious, persons.

18. In the church - In the public assembly. I hear there are schisms among you; and I partly believe it - That is, I believe it of some of you. It is plain that by schisms is not meant any separation from the church, but uncharitable divisions in it; for the Corinthians continued to be one church; and, notwithstanding all their strife and contention, there was no separation of any one party from the rest, with regard to external communion. And it is in the same sense that the word is used, chap. i, 10; chap. xii, 25; which are the only places in the New Testament, beside this, where church schisms are mentioned. Therefore, the indulging any temper contrary to this tender care of each other is the true scriptural schism. This is, therefore, a quite different thing from that orderly separation from corrupt churches which later ages have stigmatized as schisms; and have made a pretense for the vilest cruelties, oppressions, and murders, that have troubled the Christian world. Both heresies and schisms are here mentioned in very near the same sense; unless by schisms be meant, rather, those inward animosities which occasion heresies; that is, outward divisions or parties: so that whilst one said, "I am of Paul," another, "I am of Apollos," this implied both schism and heresy. So wonderfully have later ages distorted the words heresy and schism from their scriptural meaning. Heresy is not, in all the Bible, taken for "an error in fundamentals," or in anything else; nor schism, for any separation made from the outward communion of others. Therefore, both heresy and schism, in the modern sense of the words, are sins that the scripture knows nothing of; but were invented merely to deprive mankind of the benefit of private judgment, and liberty of conscience.

19. There must be heresies - Divisions. Among you - In the ordinary course of things; and God permits them, that it may appear who among you are, and who are not, upright of heart.

20. Therefore - That is, in consequence of those schisms. It is not eating the Lord's supper - That solemn memorial of his death; but quite another thing.

21. For in eating what ye call the Lord's supper, instead of all partaking of one bread, each person brings his own supper, and eats it without staying for the rest. And hereby the poor, who cannot provide for themselves, have nothing; while the rich eat and drink to the full just as the heathens use to do at the feasts on their sacrifices.

22. Have ye not houses to eat and drink your common meals in? or do ye despise the church of God - Of which the poor are both the larger and the better part. Do ye act thus in designed contempt of them?

23. I received - By an immediate Revelation.

24. This is my body, which is broken for you - That is, this broken bread is the sign of my body, which is even now to be pierced and wounded for your iniquities. Take then, and eat of, this bread, in an humble, thankful, obediential remembrance of my dying love; of the extremity of my sufferings on your behalf, of the blessings I have thereby procured for you, and of the obligations to love and duty which I have by all this laid upon you.

25. After supper - Therefore ye ought not to confound this with a common meal. Do this in remembrance of me - The ancient sacrifices were in remembrance of sin: this sacrifice, once offered, is still represented in remembrance of the remission of sins.

26. Ye show forth the Lord's death - Ye proclaim, as it were, and openly avow it to God, and to all the world. Till he come - In glory.

27. Whosoever shall eat this bread unworthily - That is, in an unworthy, irreverent manner; without regarding either Him that appointed it, or the design of its appointment. Shall be guilty of profaning that which represents the body and blood of the Lord.

28. But let a man examine himself - Whether he know the nature and the design of the institution, and whether it be his own desire and purpose throughly to comply therewith.

29. For he that eateth and drinketh so unworthily as those Corinthians did, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself - Temporal judgments of various kinds, ver. 30. Not distinguishing the sacred tokens of the Lord's body - From his common food.

30. For this cause - Which they had not observed. Many sleep - In death.

31. If we would judge ourselves - As to our knowledge, and the design with which we approach the Lord's table. We should not be thus judged - That is, punished by God.

32. When we are thus judged, it is with this merciful design, that we may not be finally condemned with the world.

33. The rest - The other circumstances relating to the Lord's supper.

## XII

1. Now concerning spiritual gifts - The abundance of these in the churches of Greece strongly refuted the idle learning of the Greek philosophers. But the Corinthians did not use them wisely, which occasioned St. Paul's writing concerning them. He describes,

1. The unity of the body, ver. 1-xxvii,
2. The variety of members and offices, ver. 27-30,
3. The way of exercising gifts rightly, namely, by love, ver. 31, chap. xiii, 1. throughout: and adds,
4. A comparison of several gifts with each other, in the chap. xiv, 1. fourteenth chapter.

2. Ye were heathens - Therefore, whatever gifts ye have received, it is from the free grace of God. Carried away - By a blind credulity. After dumb idols - The blind to the dumb; idols of wood and stone, unable to speak themselves, and much more to open your mouths, as God has done. As ye were led - By the subtlety of your priests.

3. Therefore - Since the heathen idols cannot speak themselves, much less give spiritual gifts to others, these must necessarily be among Christians only. As no one speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed - That is, as none who does this, (which all the Jews and heathens did,) speaketh by the Spirit of God - Is actuated by that Spirit, so as to speak with tongues, heal diseases, or cast out devils. So no one can say, Jesus is the Lord - None can receive him as such; for, in the scripture language, to say, or to believe, implies an experimental assurance. But by the Holy Ghost - The sum is, None have the Holy Spirit but Christians: all Christians have this Spirit.

4. There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit - Divers streams, but all from one fountain. This verse speaks of the Holy Ghost, the next of Christ, the sixth of God the Father. The apostle treats of the Spirit, ver. 7, &c.; of Christ, ver. 12, &c.; of God, ver. 28, &c.

5. Administrations - Offices. But the same Lord appoints them all.

6. Operations - Effects produced. This word is of a larger extent than either of the former. But it is the same God who worketh all these effects in all the persons concerned.

7. The manifestation - The gift whereby the Spirit manifests itself. Is given to each - For the profit of the whole body.

8. The word of wisdom - A power of understanding and explaining the manifold wisdom of God in the grand scheme of gospel salvation. The word of knowledge - Perhaps an extraordinary ability to understand and explain the Old Testament types and prophecies.

9. Faith may here mean an extraordinary trust in God under the most difficult or dangerous circumstances. The gift of healing need not be wholly confined to the healing diseases with a word or a touch. It may exert itself also, though in a lower degree, where natural remedies are applied; and it may often be this, not superior skill, which makes some physicians more successful than others. And thus it may be with regard to other gifts likewise. As, after the golden shields were lost, the king of Judah put brazen in their place, so, after the pure gifts were lost, the power of God exerts itself in a more covert manner, under human studies and helps; and that the more plentifully, according as there is the more room given for it.

10. The working of other miracles. Prophecy - Foretelling things to come. The discerning - Whether men be of an upright spirit or no; whether they have natural or supernatural gifts for offices in the church; and whether they who profess to speak by inspiration speak from a divine, a natural, or a diabolical spirit.

11. As he willeth - The Greek word does not so much imply arbitrary pleasure, as a determination founded on wise counsel.

12. So is Christ - That is, the body of Christ, the church.

13. For by that one Spirit, which we received in baptism, we are all united in one body. Whether Jews or gentiles - Who are at the greatest distance from each other by nature. Whether slaves or freemen - Who are at the greatest distance by law and custom. We have all drank of one Spirit - In that cup, received by faith, we all imbibed one Spirit, who first inspired, and still preserves, the life of God in our souls.

15. The foot is elegantly introduced as speaking of the hand; the ear, of the eye; each, of a part that has some resemblance to it. So among men each is apt to compare himself with those whose gifts some way resemble his own, rather than with those who are at a distance, either above or beneath him. Is it therefore not of the body - Is the inference good? Perhaps the foot may represent private Christians; the hand, officers in the church; the eye, teachers; the ear, hearers.

16. The ear - A less noble part. The eye - The most noble.

18. As it hath pleased him - With the most exquisite wisdom and goodness.

20. But one body - And it is a necessary consequence of this unity, that the several members need one another.

21. Nor the head - The highest part of all. To the foot - The very lowest.

22. The members which appear to be weaker - Being of a more delicate and tender structure; perhaps the brains and bowels, or the veins, arteries, and other minute channels in the body.

23. We surround with more abundant honour - By so carefully covering them. More abundant comeliness - By the help of dress.

24. Giving more abundant honour to that which lacked - As being cared for and served by the noblest parts.

27. Now ye - Corinthians. Are the body and members of Christ - part of them, I mean, not the whole body.

28. First apostles - Who plant the gospel in the heathen nations. Secondly prophets - Who either foretel things to come, or speak by extra-ordinary inspiration, for the edification of the church. Thirdly teachers - Who precede even those that work miracles. Under prophets and teachers are comprised evangelists and pastors, Eph. iv, 11. Helps, governments - It does not appear that these mean distinct offices: rather, any persons might be called helps, from a peculiar dexterity in helping the distressed; and governments, from a peculiar talent for governing or presiding in assemblies.

31. Ye covet earnestly the best gifts - And they are worth your pursuit, though but few of you can attain them. But there is a far more excellent gift than all these; and one which all may, yea, must attain or perish.

## XIII

The necessity of love is shown, ver. 1-3. The nature and properties, ver. 4-7. The duration of it, ver. 8-13 Verse

1. Though I speak with all the tongues - Which are upon earth, and with the eloquence of an angel. And have not love - The love of God, and of all mankind for his sake, I am no better before God than the sounding instruments of brass, used in the worship of some of the heathen gods. Or a tinkling cymbal - This was made of two pieces of hollow brass, which, being struck together, made a tinkling, but very little variety of sound.

2. And though I have the gift of prophecy - Of foretelling future events. And understand all the mysteries - Both of God's word and providence. And all knowledge - Of things divine and human, that ever any mortal attained to. And though I have the highest degree of miracle working faith, and have not this love, I am nothing.

3. And though I - Deliberately, piece by piece. Give all my goods to feed the poor, yea, though I deliver up my body to be burned - Rather than I would renounce my religion. And have not the love - Hereafter described. It profiteth me nothing - Without this, whatever I speak, whatever I have, whatever I know, whatever I do, whatever I suffer, is nothing.

4. The love of God, and of our neighbour for God's sake, is patient toward, all men. It, suffers all the weakness, ignorance, errors, and infirmities of the children of God; all the malice and wickedness of the children of the world: and all this, not only for a time, but to the end. And in every step toward overcoming evil with good, it is kind, soft, mild, benign. It inspires the sufferer at once with the most amiable sweetness, and the most fervent and tender affection. Love acteth not rashly - Does not hastily condemn any one; never passes a severe sentence on a slight or sudden view of things. Nor does it ever act or behave in a violent, headstrong, or precipitate manner. Is not puffed up - Yea, humbles the soul to the dust.

5. It doth not behave indecently - Is not rude, or willingly offensive, to any. It renders to all their due - Suitable to time, person, and all other circumstances. Seeketh not her own - Ease, pleasure, honour, or temporal advantage. Nay, sometimes the lover of mankind seeketh not, in some sense, even his own spiritual advantage; does not think of himself, so long as a zeal for the glory of God and the souls of men swallows him up. But, though he is all on fire for these ends, yet he is not provoked to sharpness or unkindness toward any one. Outward provocations indeed will frequently occur; but he triumphs over all. Love thinketh no evil - Indeed it cannot but see and hear evil things, and know that they are so; but it does not willingly think evil of any; neither infer evil where it does not appear. It tears up, root and branch, all imagining of what we have not proof. It casts out all jealousies, all evil surmises, all readiness to believe evil.

6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity - Yea, weeps at either the sin or folly of even an enemy; takes no pleasure in hearing or in repeating it, but desires it may be forgotten for ever. But rejoiceth in the truth - Bringing forth its proper fruit, holiness of heart and life. Good in general is its glory and joy, wherever diffused in all the world.

7. Love covereth all things - Whatever evil the lover of mankind sees, hears, or knows of any one, he mentions it to none; it never goes out of his lips, unless where absolute duty constrains to speak. Believeth all things - Puts the most favourable construction on everything, and is ever ready to believe whatever may tend to the advantage of any one character. And when it can no longer believe well, it hopes whatever may excuse or extenuate the fault which cannot be denied. Where it cannot even excuse, it hopes God will at length give repentance unto life. Meantime it endureth all things - Whatever the injustice, the malice, the cruelty of men can inflict. He can not only do, but likewise suffer, all things, through Christ who strengtheneth him.

8. Love never faileth - It accompanies to, and adorns us in, eternity; it prepares us for, and constitutes, heaven. But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail - When all things are fulfilled, and God is all in all. Whether there be tongues, they shall cease - One language shall prevail among all the inhabitants of heaven, and the low and imperfect languages of earth be forgotten. The knowledge likewise which we now so eagerly pursue, shall then vanish away - As starlight is lost in that of the midday sun, so our present knowledge in the light of eternity.

9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part - The wisest of men have here but short, narrow, imperfect conceptions, even of the things round about them, and much more of the deep things of God. And even the prophecies which men deliver from God are far from taking in the whole of future events, or of that wisdom and knowledge of God which is treasured up in the scripture Revelation.

10. But when that which is perfect is come - At death and in the last day. That which is in part shall vanish away - Both that poor, low, imperfect, glimmering light, which is all the knowledge we now can attain to; and these slow and unsatisfactory methods of attaining, as well as of imparting it to others.

11. In our present state we are mere infants in point of knowledge, compared to what we shall be hereafter. I put away childish things - Of my own accord, willingly, without trouble.

12. Now we see - Even the things that surround us. But by means of a glass - Or mirror, which reflects only their imperfect forms, in a dim, faint, obscure manner; so that our thoughts about them are puzzling and intricate, and everything is a kind of riddle to us. But then - We shall see, not a faint reflection, but the objects themselves. Face to face - Distinctly. Now I know in part - Even when God himself reveals things to me, great part of them is still kept under the veil. But then I

shall know even as also I am known - In a clear, full, comprehensive manner; in some measure like God, who penetrates the center of every object, and sees at one glance through my soul and all things.

13. Faith, hope, love - Are the sum of perfection on earth; love alone is the sum of perfection in heaven.

## XIV

1. Follow after love - With zeal, vigour, courage, patience; else you can neither attain nor keep it. And - In their place, as subservient to this. Desire spiritual gifts; but especially that ye may prophesy - The word here does not mean foretelling things to come; but rather opening and applying the scripture.

2. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaks, in effect, not to men, but to God - Who alone understands him.

4. Edifieth himself - Only, on the most favourable supposition. The church - The whole congregation.

5. Greater - That is, more useful. By this alone are we to estimate all our gifts and talents.

6. Revelation - Of some gospel mystery. Knowledge - Explaining the ancient types and prophecies. Prophecy - Foretelling some future event. Doctrine - To regulate your tempers and lives. Perhaps this may be the sense of these obscure words.

7. How shall it be known what is piped or harped - What music can be made, or what end answered?

8. Who will prepare himself for the battle - Unless he understand what the trumpet sounds? suppose a retreat or a march.

9. Unless ye utter by the tongue - Which is miraculously given you. Words easy to be understood - By your hearers. Ye will speak to the air - A proverbial expression. Will utterly lose your labour.

11. I shall be a barbarian to him - Shall seem to talk unintelligible gibberish.

13. That he may be able to interpret - Which was a distinct gift.

14. If I pray in an unknown tongue - The apostle, as he did at ver. 6, transfers it to himself. My spirit prayeth - By the power of the Spirit I understand the words myself. But my understanding is unfruitful - The knowledge I have is no benefit to others.

15. I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the understanding also - I will use my own understanding, as well as the power of the Spirit. I will not act so absurdly, as to utter in a congregation what can edify none but myself.

16. Otherwise how shall he that filleth the place of a private person - That is, any private hearer. Say Amen - Assenting and confirming your words, as it was even then usual for the whole congregation to do.

19. With my understanding - In a rational manner; so as not only to understand myself, but to be understood by others.

20. Be not children in understanding - This is an admirable stroke of true oratory! to bring down the height of their spirits, by representing that wherein they prided themselves most, as mere folly and childishness. In wickedness be ye infants - Have all the innocence of that tender age. But in

understanding be ye grown men - Knowing religion was not designed to destroy any of our natural faculties, but to exalt and improve them, our reason in particular.

21. It is written in the Law - The word here, as frequently, means the Old Testament. In foreign tongues will I speak to this people - And so he did. He spake terribly to them by the Babylonians, when they had set at nought what he had spoken by the prophets, who used their own language. These words received a farther accomplishment on the day of pentecost. Isaiah xxviii, 11.

22. Tongues are intended for a sign to unbelievers - To engage their attention, and convince them the message is of God. Whereas prophecy is not so much for unbelievers, as for the confirmation of them that already believe.

23. Yet - Sometimes prophecy is of more use, even to unbelievers, than speaking with tongues. For instance: If the whole church be met together - On some extraordinary occasion. It is probable, in so large a city, they ordinarily met in several places. And there come in ignorant persons - Men of learning might have understood the tongues in which they spoke. It is observable, St. Paul says here, ignorant persons or unbelievers; but in the next verse, an unbeliever or an ignorant person. Several bad men met together hinder each other by evil discourse. Single persons are more easily gained.

24. He is convicted by all - who speak in their turns, and speak to the heart of the hearers. He is judged by all - Every one says something to which his conscience bears witness.

25. The secrets of his heart are made manifest - Laid open, clearly described; in a manner which to him is most astonishing and utterly unaccountable. How many instances of it are seen at this day! So does God still point his word.

26. What a thing is it, brethren - This was another disorder among them. Every one hath a psalm - That is, at the same time one begins to sing a psalm; another to deliver a doctrine; another to speak in an unknown tongue; another to declare what has been revealed to him; another to interpret what the former is speaking; every one probably gathering a little company about him, just as they did in the schools of the philosophers. Let all be done to edification - So as to profit the hearers.

27. By two or three at most - Let not above two or three speak at one meeting. And that by course - That is, one after another. And let one interpret - Either himself, ver. 13; or, if he have not the gift, some other, into the vulgar tongue. It seems, the gift of tongues was an instantaneous knowledge of a tongue till then unknown, which he that received it could afterwards speak when he thought fit, without any new miracle.

28. Let him speak - That tongue, if he find it profitable to himself in his private devotions.

29. Let two or three of the prophets - Not more, at one meeting. Speak - One after another, expounding the scripture.

31. All - Who have that gift. That all may learn - Both by speaking and by hearing.

32. For the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets - But what enthusiast considers this? The impulses of the Holy Spirit, even in men really inspired, so suit themselves to their rational faculties, as not to divest them of the government of themselves, like the heathen priests under their diabolical possession. Evil spirits threw their prophets into such ungovernable ecstasies, as forced them to speak and act like madmen. But the Spirit of God left his prophets the clear use of their judgment, when, and how long, it was fit for them to speak, and never hurried them into any improprieties either as to the matter, manner, or time of their speaking.

34. Let your women be silent in the churches - Unless they are under an extraordinary impulse of the Spirit. For, in other cases, it is not permitted them to speak - By way of teaching in public

assemblies. But to be in subjection - To the man whose proper office it is to lead and to instruct the congregation. Gen. iii, 16.

35. And even if they desire to learn anything - Still they are not to speak in public, but to ask their own husbands at home - That is the place, and those the persons to inquire of.

36. Are ye of Corinth either the first or the only Christians? If not, conform herein to the custom of all the churches.

37. Or spiritual - Endowed with any extraordinary gift of the Spirit. Let him - Prove it, by acknowledging that I now write by the Spirit.

38. Let him be ignorant - Be it at his own peril.

39. Therefore - To sum up the whole.

40. Decently - By every individual. In order - By the whole church.

## XV

2. Ye are saved, if ye hold fast - Your salvation is begun, and will be perfected, if ye continue in the faith. Unless ye have believed in vain - Unless indeed your faith was only a delusion.

3. I received - From Christ himself. It was not a fiction of my own. Isaiah liii, 8, 9.

4. According to the scriptures - He proves it first from scripture, then from the testimony of a cloud of witnesses. Psalm xvi, 10.

5. By the twelve - This was their standing appellation; but their full number was not then present.

6. Above five hundred - Probably in Galilee. A glorious and incontestable proof! The greater part remain - Alive.

7. Then by all the apostles - The twelve were mentioned ver. 5. This title here, therefore, seems to include the seventy; if not all those, likewise, whom God afterwards sent to plant the gospel in heathen nations.

8. An untimely birth - It was impossible to abase himself more than he does by this single appellation. As an abortion is not worthy the name of a man, so he affirms himself to be not worthy the name of an apostle.

9. I persecuted the church - True believers are humbled all their lives, even for the sins they committed before they believed.

10. I laboured more than they all - That is, more than any of them, from a deep sense of the peculiar love God had shown me. Yet, to speak more properly, it is not I, but the grace of God that is with me - This it is which at first qualified me for the work, and still excites me to zeal and diligence in it.

11. Whether I or they, so we preach - All of us speak the same thing.

12. How say some - Who probably had been heathen philosophers.

13. If there be no resurrection - If it be a thing flatly impossible.

14. Then is our preaching - From a commission supposed to be given after the resurrection. Vain - Without any real foundation.

15. If the dead rise not - If the very notion of a resurrection be, as they say, absurd and impossible.

17. Ye are still in your sins - That is, under the guilt of them. So that there needed something more than reformation, (which was plainly wrought,) in order to their being delivered from the guilt of sin even that atonement, the sufficiency of which God attested by raising our great Surety from the grave.

18. They who sleep in Christ - Who have died for him, or believing in him. Are perished - Have lost their life and being together.

19. If in this life only we have hope - If we look for nothing beyond the grave. But if we have a divine evidence of things not seen, if we have "a hope full of immortality," if we now taste of "the powers of the world to come," and see "the crown that fadeth not away," then, notwithstanding" all our present trials, we are more happy than all men.

20. But now - St. Paul declares that Christians "have hope," not "in this life only." His proof of the resurrection lies in a narrow compass, ver. 12-19. Almost all the rest of the chapter is taken up in illustrating, vindicating, and applying it. The proof is short, but solid and convincing, that which arose from Christ's resurrection. Now this not only proved a resurrection possible, but, as it proved him to be a divine teacher, proved the certainty of a general resurrection, which he so expressly taught. The first fruit of them that slept - The earnest, pledge, and insurance of their resurrection who slept in him: even of all the righteous. It is of the resurrection of these, and these only, that the apostle speaks throughout the chapter.

22. As through Adam all, even the righteous, die, so through Christ all these shall be made alive - He does not say, "shall revive," (as naturally as they die,) but shall be made alive, by a power not their own.

23. Afterward - The whole harvest. At the same time the wicked shall rise also. But they are not here taken into the account.

24. Then - After the resurrection and the general judgment. Cometh the end - Of the world; the grand period of all those wonderful scenes that have appeared for so many succeeding generations. When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father, and he (the Father) shall have abolished all adverse rule, authority, and power - Not that the Father will then begin to reign without the Son, nor will the Son then cease to reign. For the divine reign both of the Father and Son is from everlasting to everlasting. But this is spoken of the Son's mediatorial kingdom, which will then be delivered up, and of the immediate kingdom or reign of the Father, which will then commence. Till then the Son transacts the business which the Father hath given him, for those who are his, and by them as well as by the angels, with the Father, and against their enemies. So far as the Father gave the kingdom to the Son, the Son shall deliver it up to the Father, John xiii, 3. Nor does the Father cease to reign, when he gives it to the Son; neither the Son, when he delivers it to the Father: but the glory which he had before the world began, John xvii, 5; Heb. i, 8, will remain even after this is delivered up. Nor will he cease to be a king even in his human nature, Luke i, 33. If the citizens of the new Jerusalem" shall reign for ever," Rev. xxii, 5, how much more shall he?

25. He must reign - Because so it is written. Till he - the Father hath put all his enemies under his feet. Psalm cx, 1.

26. The last enemy that is destroyed is death - Namely, after Satan, Heb. ii, 14, and sin, ver. 56, are destroyed. In the same order they prevailed. Satan brought in sin, and sin brought forth death. And Christ, when he of old engaged with these enemies, first conquered Satan, then sin, in his death; and, lastly, death, in his resurrection. In the same order he delivers all the faithful from

them, yea, and destroys these enemies themselves. Death he so destroys that it shall be no more; sin and Satan, so that they shall no more hurt his people.

27. Under him - Under the Son. Psalm viii, 6, 7

28. The Son also shall be subject - Shall deliver up the mediatorial kingdom. That the three-one God may be all in all - All things, (consequently all persons,) without any interruption, without the intervention of any creature, without the opposition of any enemy, shall be subordinate to God. All shall say, "My God, and my all." This is the end. Even an inspired apostle can see nothing beyond this.

29. Who are baptized for the dead - Perhaps baptized in hope of blessings to be received after they are numbered with the dead. Or, "baptized in the room of the dead" - Of them that are just fallen in the cause of Christ: like soldiers who advance in the room of their companions that fell just before their face.

30. Why are we - The apostles. Also in danger every hour - It is plain we can expect no amends in this life.

31. I protest by your rejoicing, which I have - Which love makes my own. I die daily - I am daily in the very jaws of death. Beside that I live, as it were, in a daily martyrdom.

32. If to speak after the manner of men - That is, to use a proverbial phrase, expressive of the most imminent danger I have fought with wild beasts at Ephesus - With the savage fury of a lawless multitude, Acts xix, 29, &c. This seems to have been but just before. Let as eat, &c. - We might, on that supposition, as well say, with the Epicureans, Let us make the best of this short life, seeing we have no other portion.

33. Be not deceived - By such pernicious counsels as this. Evil communications corrupt good manners - He opposes to the Epicurean saying, a well - known verse of the poet Menander. Evil communications - Discourse contrary to faith, hope, or love, naturally tends to destroy all holiness.

34. Awake - An exclamation full of apostolical majesty. Shake off your lethargy! To righteousness - Which flows from the true knowledge of God, and implies that your whole soul be broad awake. And sin not - That is, and ye will not sin Sin supposes drowsiness of soul. There is need to press this. For some among you have not the knowledge of God - With all their boasted knowledge, they are totally ignorant of what it most concerns them to know. I speak this to your shame - For nothing is more shameful, than sleepy ignorance of God, and of the word and works of God; in these especially, considering the advantages they had enjoyed.

35. But some one possibly will say, How are the dead raised up, after their whole frame is dissolved? And with what kind of bodies do they come again, after these are mouldered into dust?

36. To the inquiry concerning the manner of rising, and the quality of the bodies that rise, the Apostle answers first by a similitude, ver. 36-42, and then plainly and directly, ver. 42, 43. That which thou sowest, is not quickened into new life and verdure, except it die - Undergo a dissolution of its parts, a change analogous to death. Thus St. Paul inverts the objection; as if he had said, Death is so far from hindering life, that it necessarily goes before it.

37. Thou sowest not the body that shall be - Produced from the seed committed to the ground, but a bare, naked grain, widely different from that which will afterward rise out of the earth.

38. But God - Not thou, O man, not the grain itself, giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, from the time he distinguished the various Species of beings; and to each of the seeds, not only of the fruits, but animals also, (to which the Apostle rises in the following verse,) its own body; not only

peculiar to that species, but proper to that individual, and arising out of the substance of that very grain.

39. All flesh - As if he had said, Even earthy bodies differ from earthy, and heavenly bodies from heavenly. What wonder then, if heavenly bodies differ from earthy? or the bodies which rise from those that lay in the grave?

40. There are also heavenly bodies - As the sun, moon, and stars; and there are earthy - as vegetables and animals. But the brightest lustre which the latter can have is widely different from that of the former.

41. Yea, and the heavenly bodies themselves differ from each other.

42. So also is the resurrection of the dead - So great is the difference between the body which fell, and that which rises. It is sown - A beautiful word; committed, as seed, to the ground. In corruption - Just ready to putrefy, and, by various degrees of corruption and decay, to return to the dust from whence it came. It is raised in incorruption - Utterly incapable of either dissolution or decay.

43. It is sown in dishonour - Shocking to those who loved it best, human nature in disgrace! It is raised in glory - Clothed with robes of light, fit for those whom the King of heaven delights to honour. It is sown in weakness - Deprived even of that feeble strength which it once enjoyed. It is raised in power - Endued with vigour, strength, and activity, such as we cannot now conceive.

44. It is sown in this world a merely animal body - Maintained by food, sleep, and air, like the bodies of brutes: but it is raised of a more refined contexture, needing none of these animal refreshments, and endued with qualities of a spiritual nature, like the angels of God.

45. The first Adam was made a living soul - God gave him such life as other animals enjoy: but the last Adam, Christ, is a quickening spirit - As he hath life in himself, so he quickeneth whom he will; giving a more refined life to their very bodies at the resurrection. Gen. ii, 7

47. The first man was from the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven-The first man, being from the earth, is subject to corruption and dissolution, like the earth from which he came. The second man - St. Paul could not so well say, "Is from heaven, heavenly:" because, though man owes it to the earth that he is earthy, yet the Lord does not owe his glory to heaven. He himself made the heavens, and by descending from thence showed himself to us as the Lord. Christ was not the second man in order of time; but in this respect, that as Adam was a public person, who acted in the stead of all mankind, so was Christ. As Adam was the first general representative of men, Christ was the second and the last. And what they severally did, terminated not in themselves, but affected all whom they represented.

48. They that are earthy - Who continue without any higher principle. They that are heavenly - Who receive a divine principle from heaven.

49. The image of the heavenly - Holiness and glory.

50. But first we must be entirely changed; for such flesh and blood as we are clothed with now, cannot enter into that kingdom which is wholly spiritual: neither doth this corruptible body inherit that incorruptible kingdom.

51. A mystery - A truth hitherto unknown; and not yet fully known to any of the sons of men. We - Christians. The Apostle considers them all as one, in their succeeding generations. Shall not all die - Suffer a separation of soul and body. But we shall all - Who do not die, be changed - So that this animal body shall become spiritual.

52. In a moment - Amazing work of omnipotence! And cannot the same power now change us into saints in a moment? The trumpet shall sound - To awaken all that sleep in the dust of the earth.

54. Death is swallowed up in victory - That is, totally conquered, abolished for ever.

55. O death, where is thy sting? - Which once was full of hellish poison. O hades, the receptacle of separate souls, where is thy victory - Thou art now robbed of all thy spoils; all thy captives are set at liberty. Hades literally means the invisible world, and relates to the soul; death, to the body. The Greek words are found in the Septuagint translation of Hosea xiii, 14. Isaiah xxv, 8

56. The sting of death is sin - Without which it could have no power. But this sting none can resist by his own strength. And the strength of sin is the law - As is largely declared, Rom. vii, 7, &c.

57. But thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory - Over sin, death, and hades.

58. Be ye steadfast - In yourselves. Unmovable - By others; continually increasing in the work of faith and labour of love. Knowing your labour is not in vain in the Lord - Whatever ye do for his sake shall have its full reward in that day. Let us also endeavour, by cultivating holiness in all its branches, to maintain this hope in its full energy; longing for that glorious day, when, in the utmost extent of the expression, death shall be swallowed up for ever, and millions of voices, after the long silence of the grave, shall burst out at once into that triumphant song, O death, where is thy sting? O hades, where is thy victory?

## XVI

1. The saints - A more solemn and a more affecting word, than if he had said, the poor.

2. Let every one - Not the rich only: let him also that hath little, gladly give of that little. According as he hath been prospered - Increasing his alms as God increases his substance. According to this lowest rule of Christian prudence, if a man when he has or gains one pound give a tenth to God, when he has or gains an hundred he will give the tenth of this also. And yet I show unto you a more excellent way. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Stint yourself to no proportion at all. But lend to God all you can.

4. They shall go with me - To remove any possible suspicion.

5. I pass through Macedonia - I purpose going that way.

7. I will not see you now - Not till I have been in Macedonia.

8. I will stay at Ephesus - Where he was at this time.

9. A great door - As to the number of hearers. And effectual - As to the effects wrought upon them. And there are many adversaries - As there must always be where Satan's kingdom shakes. This was another reason for his staying there.

10. Without fear - Of any one's despising him for his youth. For he worketh the work of the Lord - The true ground of reverence to pastors. Those who do so, none ought to despise.

11. I look for him with the brethren - That accompany him.

12. I besought him much - To come to you. With the brethren - Who were then going to Corinth. Yet he was by no means willing to come now - Perhaps lest his coming should increase the divisions among them.

13. To conclude. Watch ye - Against all your seen and unseen enemies. Stand fast in the faith - Seeing and trusting him that is invisible. Acquit yourselves like men - With courage and patience. Be strong - To do and suffer all his will.

15. The first fruits of Achaia - The first converts in that province.

16. That ye also - In your turn. Submit to such - So repaying their free service. And to every one that worketh with us and laboureth - That labours in the gospel either with or without a fellow-labourer.

17. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaiacus - Who were now returned to Corinth but the joy which their arrival had occasioned remained still in his heart. They have supplied what was wanting on your part - They have performed the offices of love, which you could not, by reason of your absence.

18. For they have refreshed my spirit and yours - Inasmuch as you share in my comfort. Such therefore acknowledge - With suitable love and respect.

19. Aquila and Priscilla had formerly made some abode at Corinth, and there St. Paul's acquaintance with them began, Acts xviii, 1, 2.

21. With my own hand - What precedes having been wrote by an amanuensis.

22. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ - If any be an enemy to his person, offices, doctrines, or commands. Let him be Anathema. Maran-atha-Anathema signifies a thing devoted to destruction. It seems to have been customary with the Jews of that age, when they had pronounced any man an Anathema, to add the Syriac expression, Maran-atha, that is, "The Lord cometh;" namely, to execute vengeance upon him. This weighty sentence the apostle chose to write with his own hand; and to insert it between his salutation and solemn benediction, that it might be the more attentively regarded.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

IN this epistle, written from Macedonia, within a year after the former, St. Paul beautifully displays his tender affection toward the Corinthians, who were greatly moved by the seasonable severity of the former, and repeats several of the admonitions he had there given them. In that he had written concerning the affairs of the Corinthians: in this he writes chiefly concerning his own; but in such a manner as to direct all he mentions of himself to their spiritual profit. The thread and connection of the whole epistle is historical: other things are interwoven only by way of digression. It contains,

I.The inscription, C.i. 1, 2

II.The treatise itself.

1. In Asia I was greatly pressed; but God comforted me; as I acted uprightly; even in this, that I have not yet come to you; who ought to obey me, Cii. 11
2. From Troas I hastened to Macedonia, spreading the gospel everywhere, the glorious charge of which I execute, according to its importance, Cvii. 1
3. In Macedonia I received a joyful message concerning you, 2-16

4. In this journey I had a proof of the liberality of the Macedonians, whose example ye ought to follow, C.viii.1-C.ix.15
5. I am now on my way to you, armed with the power of Christ. Therefore obey, C.x 1-C.xiii.10 The conclusion 11-13

# 2nd CORINTHIANS

## I

1. Timotheus our brother - St. Paul writing to Timotheus styled him his son; writing of him, his brother.

3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ - A solemn and beautiful introduction, highly suitable to the apostolical spirit. The Father of mercies, and God of all comfort - Mercies are the fountain of comfort; comfort is the outward expression of mercy. God shows mercy in the affliction itself. He gives comfort both in and after the affliction. Therefore is he termed, the God of all comfort. Blessed be this God!

4. Who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them who are in any affliction - He that has experienced one kind of affliction is able to comfort others in that affliction. He that has experienced all kinds of affliction is able to comfort them in all.

5. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us - The sufferings endured on his account. So our comfort also aboundeth through Christ - The sufferings were many, the comfort one; and yet not only equal to, but overbalancing, them all.

6. And whether we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation - For your present comfort, your present and future salvation. Or whether we are comforted, it is for your comfort - That we may be the better able to comfort you. Which is effectual in the patient enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer - Through the efficacy of which you patiently endure the same kind of sufferings with us.

7. And our hope concerning you - Grounded on your patience in suffering for Christ's sake, is steadfast.

8. We would not have you ignorant, brethren, of the trouble which befell us in Asia - Probably the same which is described in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts. The Corinthians knew before that he had been in trouble: he now declares the greatness and the fruit of it. We were exceedingly pressed, above our strength - Above the ordinary strength even of an apostle.

9. Yea, we had the sentence of death in ourselves - We ourselves expected nothing but death.

10. We trust that he will still deliver - That we may at length be able to come to you.

11. You likewise - As well as other churches. Helping with us by prayer, that for the gift - Namely, my deliverance. Bestowed upon us by means of many persons - Praying for it, thanks may be given by many.

12. For I am the more emboldened to look for this, because I am conscious of my integrity; seeing this is our rejoicing - Even in the deepest adversity. The testimony of our conscience - Whatever others think of us. That in simplicity - Having one end in view, aiming singly at the glory

of God. And godly sincerity - Without any tincture of guile, dissimulation, or disguise. Not with carnal wisdom, but by the grace of God - Not by natural, but divine, wisdom. We have had our conversation in the world - In the whole world; in every circumstance.

14. Ye have acknowledged us in part - Though not so fully as ye will do. That we are you rejoicing - That ye rejoice in having known us. As ye also are ours - As we also rejoice in the success of our labours among you; and we trust shall rejoice therein in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15. In this confidence - That is, being confident of this.

17. Did I use levity - Did I lightly change my purpose? Do I purpose according to the flesh - Are my purposes grounded on carnal or worldly considerations? So that there should be with me yea and nay - Sometimes one, sometimes the other; that is, variableness and inconstancy.

18. Our word to you - The whole tenor of our doctrine. Hath not been yea and nay - Wavering and uncertain.

19. For Jesus Christ, who was preached by us - That is, our preaching concerning him. Was not yea and nay - Was not variable and inconsistent with itself. But was yea in him - Always one and the same, centering in him.

20. For all the promises of God are yea and amen in him - Are surely established in and through him. They are yea with respect to God promising; amen, with respect to men believing; yea, with respect to the apostles; amen, with respect to their hearers.

21. I say, to the glory of God - For it is God alone that is able to fulfil these promises. That establisheth us - Apostles and teachers. With you - All true believers. In the faith of Christ; and hath anointed us - With the oil of gladness, with joy in the Holy Ghost, thereby giving us strength both to do and suffer his will.

22. Who also hath sealed us - Stamping his image on our hearts, thus marking and sealing us as his own property. And given us the earnest of his Spirit - There is a difference between an earnest and a pledge. A pledge is to be restored when the debt is paid; but an earnest is not taken away, but completed. Such an earnest is the Spirit. The first fruits of it we have Rom. viii, 23; and we wait for all the fulness.

23. I call God for a record upon my soul - Was not St. Paul now speaking by the Spirit? And can a more solemn oath be conceived? Who then can imagine that Christ ever designed to forbid all swearing? That to spare you I came not yet to Corinth - Lest I should be obliged to use severity. He says elegantly to Corinth, not to you, when be is intimating his power to punish.

24. Not that we have dominion over your faith - This is the prerogative of God alone. But are helpers of your joy - And faith from which it springs. For by faith ye have stood - To this day. We see the light in which ministers should always consider themselves, and in which they are to be considered by others. Not as having dominion over the faith of their people, and having a right to dictate by their own authority what they shall believe, or what they shall do; but as helpers of their joy, by helping them forward in faith and holiness. In this view, how amiable does their office appear! and how friendly to the happiness of mankind! How far, then, are they from true benevolence, who would expose it to ridicule and contempt!

## II

1. In grief - Either on account of the particular offender, or of the church in general.

2. For if I grieve you, who is he that cheereth me, but he that is grieved by me - That is, I cannot be comforted myself till his grief is removed.

3. And I wrote thus to you - I wrote to you before in this determination, not to come to you in grief.

4. From much anguish I wrote to you, not so much that ye might be grieved, as that ye might know by my faithful admonition my abundant love toward you.

5. He hath grieved me but in part - Who still rejoice over the greater part of you. Otherwise I might burden you all.

6. Sufficient for such an one - With what a remarkable tenderness does St. Paul treat this offender! He never once mentions his name. Nor does he here so much as mention his crime. By many - Not only by the rulers of the church: the whole congregation acquiesced in the sentence.

10. To whom ye forgive - He makes no question of their complying with his direction. Anything - So mildly does he speak even of that heinous sin, after it was repented of. In the person of Christ - By the authority wherewith he has invested me.

11. Lest Satan - To whom he had been delivered, and who sought to destroy not only his flesh, but his soul also. Get an advantage over us - For the loss of one soul is a common loss.

12. Now when I came to Troas - It seems, in that passage from Asia to Macedonia, of which a short account is given, Acts xx, 1, 2. Even though a door was opened to me - That is, there was free liberty to speak, and many were willing to hear: yet,

13. I had no rest in my spirit - From an earnest desire to know how my letter had been received. Because I did not find Titus - In his return from you. So I went forth into Macedonia - Where being much nearer, I might more easily be informed concerning you. The apostle resumes the thread of his discourse, chap. vii, 2, interposing an admirable digression concerning what he had done and suffered elsewhere, the profit of which he by this means derives to the Corinthians also; and as a prelude to his apology against the false apostles.

14. To triumph, implies not only victory, but an open manifestation of it. And as in triumphal processions, especially in the east, incense and perfumes were burned near the conqueror, the apostle beautifully alludes to this circumstance in the following verse: as likewise to the different effects which strong perfumes have upon different persons; some of whom they revive, while they throw others into the most violent disorders.

15. For we - The preachers of the gospel. Are to God a sweet odour of Christ - God is well-pleased with this perfume diffused by us, both in them that believe and are saved, treated of, chap. iii, 1; chap. iv, 2; and in them that obstinately disbelieve and, consequently, perish, treated of, chap. iv, 3-6.

16. And who is sufficient for these things - No man living, but by the power of God's Spirit.

17. For we are not as many, who adulterate the word of God - Like those vintners (so the Greek word implies) who mix their wines with baser liquors. But as of sincerity - Without any mixture. But as from God - This rises higher still; transmitting his pure word, not our own. In the sight of God - Whom we regard as always present, and noting every word of our tongue. Speak we - The tongue is ours, but the power is God's. In Christ - Words which he gives, approves, and blesses.

**III**

1. Do we begin again to recommend ourselves - Is it needful? Have I nothing but my own word to recommend me? St. Paul chiefly here intends himself; though not excluding Timotheus, Titus, and Silvanus. Unless we need - As if he had said, Do I indeed want such recommendation?

2. Ye are our recommendatory letter - More convincing than bare words could be. Written on our hearts - Deeply engraven there, and plainly legible to all around us.

3. Manifestly declared to be the letter of Christ - Which he has formed and published to the world. Ministered by us - Whom he has used herein as his instruments, therefore ye are our letter also. Written not in tables of stone - Like the ten commandments. But in the tender, living tables of their hearts - God having taken away the hearts of stone and given them hearts of flesh.

4. Such trust have we in God - That is, we trust in God that this is so.

5. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves - So much as to think one good thought; much less, to convert sinners.

6. Who also hath made us able ministers of the new covenant - Of the new, evangelical dispensation. Not of the law, fitly called the letter, from God's literally writing it on the two tables. But of the Spirit - Of the gospel dispensation, which is written on the tables of our hearts by the Spirit. For the letter - The law, the Mosaic dispensation. Killeth - Seals in death those who still cleave to it. But the Spirit - The gospel, conveying the Spirit to those who receive it. Giveth life - Both spiritual and eternal: yea, if we adhere to the literal sense even of the moral law, if we regard only the precept and the sanction as they stand in themselves, not as they lead us to Christ, they are doubtless a killing ordinance, and bind us down under the sentence of death.

7. And if the ministration of death - That is, the Mosaic dispensation, which proves such to those who prefer it to the gospel, the most considerable part of which was engraven on those two stones, was attended with so great glory.

8. The ministration of the Spirit - That is, the Christian dispensation.

9. The ministration of condemnation - Such the Mosaic dispensation proved to all the Jews who rejected the gospel whereas through the gospel (hence called the ministration of righteousness) God both imputed and imparted righteousness to all believers. But how can the moral law (which alone was engraven on stone) be the ministration of condemnation, if it requires no more than a sincere obedience, such as is proportioned to our infirm state? If this is sufficient to justify us, then the law ceases to be a ministration of condemnation. It becomes (flatly contrary to the apostle's doctrine) the ministration of righteousness.

10. It hath no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excelleth - That is, none in comparison of this more excellent glory. The greater light swallows up the less.

11. That which remaineth - That dispensation which remains to the end of the world; that spirit and life which remain for ever.

12. Having therefore this hope - Being fully persuaded of this.

13. And we do not act as Moses did, who put a veil over his face - Which is to be understood with regard to his writings also. So that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly to the end of that dispensation which is now abolished - The end of this was Christ. The whole Mosaic dispensation tended to, and terminated in, him; but the Israelites had only a dim, wavering sight of him, of whom Moses spake in an obscure, covert manner.

14. The same veil remaineth on their understanding unremoved - Not so much as folded back, (so the word implies,) so as to admit a little, glimmering light. On the public reading of the Old Testament - The veil is not now on the face of Moses or of his writings, but on the reading of them, and on the heart of them that believe not. Which is taken away in Christ - That is, from the heart of them that truly believe on him.

16. When it - Their heart. Shall turn to the Lord - To Christ, by living faith. The veil is taken away - That very moment; and they see, with the utmost clearness, how all the types and prophecies of the law are fully accomplished in him.

17. Now the Lord - Christ is that Spirit of the law whereof I speak, to which the letter was intended to lead. And where the Spirit of the Lord, Christ, is, there is liberty - Not the veil, the emblem of slavery. There is liberty from servile fear, liberty from the guilt and from the power of sin, liberty to behold with open face the glory of the Lord.

18. And, accordingly, all we that believe in him, beholding as in a glass - In the mirror of the gospel. The glory of the Lord - His glorious love. Are transformed into the same image - Into the same love. From one degree of this glory to another, in a manner worthy of his almighty Spirit. What a beautiful contrast is here! Moses saw the glory of the Lord, and it rendered his face so bright, that he covered it with a veil; Israel not being able to bear the reflected light. We behold his glory in the glass of his word, and our faces shine too; yet we veil them not, but diffuse the lustre which is continually increasing, as we fix the eye of our mind more and more steadfastly on his glory displayed in the gospel.

## IV

1. Therefore having this ministry - Spoken of, chap. iii, 6. As we have received mercy - Have been mercifully supported in all our trials. We faint not - We desist not in any degree from our glorious enterprise.

2. But have renounced - Set at open defiance. The hidden things of shame - All things which men need to hide, or to be ashamed of. Not walking in craftiness - Using no disguise, subtlety, guile. Nor privily corrupting the pure word of God - By any additions or alterations, or by attempting to accommodate it to the taste of the hearers.

3. But if our gospel also - As well as the law of Moses.

4. The God of this world - What a sublime and horrible description of Satan! He is indeed the God of all that believe not, and works in them with inconceivable energy. Hath blinded - Not only veiled, the eye of their understanding. Illumination - Is properly the reflection or propagation of light, from those who are already enlightened, to others. Who is the image of God - Hence also we may understand how great is the glory of Christ. He that sees the Son, sees the Father in the face of Christ. The Son exactly exhibits the Father to us.

5. For - The fault is not in us, neither in the doctrine they hear from us. We preach not ourselves - As able either to enlighten, or pardon, or sanctify you. But Jesus Christ - As your only wisdom, righteousness, sanctification. And ourselves your servants - Ready to do the meanest offices. For Jesus' sake - Not for honour, interest, or pleasure.

6. For God hath shined in our hearts - The hearts of all those whom the God of this world no longer blinds. God who is himself our light; not only the author of light, but also the fountain of it. To enlighten us with the knowledge of the glory of God - Of his glorious love, and of his glorious image. In the face of Jesus Christ - Which reflects his glory in another manner than the face of Moses did.

7. But we - Not only the apostles, but all true believers. Have this treasure - Of divine light, love, glory. In earthen vessels - In frail, feeble, perishing bodies. He proceeds to show, that afflictions, yea, death itself, are so far from hindering the ministration of the Spirit, that they even further it, sharpen the ministers, and increase the fruit. That the excellence of the power, which works these in us, may undeniably appear to be of God.

8. We are troubled, &c. - The four articles in this verse respect inward, the four in the next outward, afflictions. In each clause the former part shows the "earthen vessels;" the latter, "the excellence of the power." Not crushed - Not swallowed up in care and anxiety. Perplexed - What course to take, but never despairing of his power and love to carry us through.

10. Always - Wherever we go. Bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus - Continually expecting to lay down our lives like him. That the life also of Jesus might be manifested in our body - That we may also rise and be glorified like him.

11. For we who yet live - Who are not yet killed for the testimony of Jesus. Are always delivered unto death - Are perpetually in the very jaws of destruction; which we willingly submit to, that we may "obtain a better resurrection."

12. So then death worketh in us, but life in you - You live in peace; we die daily. Yet - Living or dying, so long as we believe, we cannot but speak.

13. Having the same spirit of faith - Which animated the saints of old; David, in particular, when he said, I believed, and therefore have I spoken - That is, I trusted in God, and therefore he hath put this song of praise in my mouth. We also speak - We preach the gospel, even in the midst of affliction and death, because we believe that God will raise us up from the dead, and will present us, ministers, with you, all his members, "faultless before his presence with exceeding joy." Psalm cxvi, 10.

15. For all things - Whether adverse or prosperous. Are for your sakes - For the profit of all that believe, as well as all that preach. That the overflowing grace - Which continues you alive both in soul and body. Might abound yet more through the thanksgiving of many - For thanksgiving invites more: abundant grace.

16. Therefore - Because of this grace, we faint not. The outward man - The body. The inward man - The soul.

17. Our light affliction - The beauty and sublimity of St. Paul's expressions here, as descriptive of heavenly glory, opposed to temporal afflictions, surpass all imagination, and cannot be preserved in any translation or paraphrase, which after all must sink infinitely below the astonishing original.

18. The things that are seen - Men, money, things of earth. The things that are not seen - God, grace, heaven.

## V

1. Our earthly house - Which is only a tabernacle, or tent, not designed for a lasting habitation.

2. Desiring to be clothed upon - This body, which is now covered with flesh and blood, with the glorious house which is from heaven. Instead of flesh and blood, which cannot enter heaven, the rising body will be clothed or covered with what is analogous thereto, but incorruptible and immortal. Macarius speaks largely of this.

3. If being clothed - That is, with the image of God, while we are in the body. We shall not be found naked - Of the wedding garment.

4. We groan being burdened - The apostle speaks with exact propriety. A burden naturally expresses groans. And we are here burdened with numberless afflictions, infirmities, temptations. Not that we would be unclothed - Not that we desire to remain without a body. Faith does not understand that philosophical contempt of what the wise Creator has given. But clothed upon - With the glorious, immortal, incorruptible, spiritual body. That what is mortal - This present mortal body. May be swallowed up of life - Covered with that which lives for ever.

5. Now he that hath wrought us to this very thing - This longing for immortality. Is God - For none but God, none less than the Almighty, could have wrought this in us.

6. Therefore we behave undauntedly - But most of all when we have death in view; knowing that our greatest happiness lies beyond the grave.

7. For we cannot clearly see him in this life, wherein we walk by faith only: an evidence, indeed, that necessarily implies a kind of "seeing him who is invisible;" yet as far beneath what we shall have in eternity, as it is above that of bare, unassisted reason.

8. Present with the Lord - This demonstrates that the happiness of the saints is not deferred till the resurrection.

9. Therefore we are ambitious - The only ambition which has place in a Christian. Whether present - In the body. Or absent - From it.

10. For we all - Apostles as well as other men, whether now present in the body, or absent from it. Must appear - Openly, without covering, where all hidden things will be revealed; probably the sins, even of the faithful, which were forgiven long before. For many of their good works, as their repentance, their revenge against sin, cannot other wise appear. But this will be done at their own desire, without grief, and without shame. According to what he hath done in the body, whether good or evil - In the body he did either good or evil; in the body he is recompensed accordingly.

11. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we the more earnestly persuade men to seek his favour; and as God knoweth this, so, I trust, ye know it in your own consciences.

12. We do not say this, as if we thought there was any need of again recommending ourselves to you, but to give you an occasion of rejoicing and praising God, and to furnish you with an answer to those false apostles who glory in appearance, but not in heart, being condemned by their own conscience.

13. For if we are transported beyond ourselves - Or at least, appear so to others, treated of, 2 Cor. v, 15-21, speaking or writing with uncommon vehemence. It is to God - He understands (if men do not) the emotion which himself inspires. If we be sober - Treated of, chap. vi, 1-10. If I proceed in a more calm, sedate manner. It is for your sakes - Even good men bear this, rather than the other method, in their teachers. But these must obey God, whoever is offended by it.

14. For the love of Christ - To us, and our love to him. Constraineth us - Both to the one and the other; beareth us on with such a strong, steady, prevailing influence, as winds and tides exert when they waft the vessel to its destined harbour. While we thus judge, that if Christ died for all,

then are all, even the best of men, naturally dead - In a state of spiritual death, and liable to death eternal. For had any man been otherwise, Christ had not needed to have died for him.

15. And that he died for all - That all might be saved. That they who live - That all who live upon the earth. Should not henceforth - From the moment they know him. Live unto themselves - Seek their own honour, profit, pleasure. But unto him - In all righteousness and true holiness.

16. So that we from this time - That we knew the love of Christ. Know no one - Neither ourselves, nor you, neither the rest of the apostles, Gal. ii, 6, nor any other person. After the flesh - According to his former state, country, descent, nobility, riches, power, wisdom. We fear not the great. We regard not the rich or wise. We account not the least less than ourselves. We consider all, only in order to save all. Who is he that thus knows no one after the flesh? ln what land do these Christians live? Yea, if we have known even Christ after the flesh - So as to love him barely with a natural love, so as to glory in having conversed with him on earth, so as to expect only temporal benefits from him.

17. Therefore if any one be in Christ - A true believer in him. There is a new creation - Only the power that makes a world can make a Christian. And when he is so created, the old things are passed away - Of their own accord, even as snow in spring. Behold - The present, visible, undeniable change! All things are become new - He has new life, new senses, new faculties, new affections, new appetites, new ideas and conceptions. His whole tenor of action and conversation is new, and he lives, as it were, in a new world. God, men, the whole creation, heaven, earth, and all therein, appear in a new light, and stand related to him in a new manner, since he was created anew in Christ Jesus.

18. And all these new things are from God, considered under this very notion, as reconciling us - The world, 2 Cor. v, 19, to himself.

19. Namely - The sum of which is, God - The whole Godhead, but more eminently God the Father. Was in Christ, reconciling the world - Which was before at enmity with God. To himself - So taking away that enmity, which could no otherwise be removed than by the blood of the Son of God.

20. Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ-we beseech you in Christ's stead - Herein the apostle might appear to some "transported beyond himself." In general he uses a more calm, sedate kind of exhortation, as in the beginning of the next chapter. What unparalleled condescension and divinely tender mercies are displayed in this verse! Did the judge ever beseech a condemned criminal to accept of pardon? Does the creditor ever beseech a ruined debtor to receive an acquittance in full? Yet our almighty Lord, and our eternal Judge, not only vouchsafes to offer these blessings, but invites us, entreats us, and, with the most tender importunity, solicits us, not to reject them.

21. He made him a sin offering, who knew no sin - A commendation peculiar to Christ. For us - Who knew no righteousness, who were inwardly and outwardly nothing but sin; who must have been consumed by the divine justice, had not this atonement been made for our sins. That we might be made the righteousness of God through him - Might through him be invested with that righteousness, first imputed to us, then implanted in us, which is in every sense the righteousness of God.

## VI

1. We then not only beseech, but as fellow-labourers with you, who are working out your own salvation, do also exhort you, not to receive the grace of God - Which we have been now describing. In vain - We receive it by faith; and not in vain, if we add to this, persevering holiness.

2. For he saith - The sense is, As of old there was a particular time wherein God was pleased to pour out his peculiar blessing, so there is now. And this is the particular time: this is a time of peculiar blessing. Isaiah xlix, 8.

3. Giving, as far as in us lies, no offense, that the ministry be not blamed on our account.

4. But approving ourselves as the ministers of God - Such as his ministers ought to be. In much patience - Shown,

1. In afflictions, necessities, distresses - All which are general terms.
2. In stripes, imprisonments, tumults - Which are particular sorts of affliction, necessity, distress
3. In labours, watchings, fastings - Voluntarily endured. All these are expressed in the plural number, to denote a variety of them. In afflictions, several ways to escape may appear, though none without difficulty in necessities, one only, and that a difficult one; in distresses, none at all appears.

5. In tumults - The Greek word implies such attacks as a man cannot stand against, but which bear him hither and thither by violence.

6. By prudence - Spiritual divine; not what the world terms so. Worldly prudence is the practical use of worldly wisdom: divine prudence is the due exercise of grace, making spiritual understanding go as far as possible. By love unfeigned - The chief fruit of the Spirit.

7. By the convincing and converting power of God - Accompanying his word; and also attesting it by divers miracles. By the armour of righteousness on the right hand and the left - That is, on all sides; the panoply or whole armour of God.

8. By honour and dishonour - When we are present. By evil report and good report - When we are absent. Who could bear honour and good report, were it not balanced by dishonour? As deceivers - Artful, designing men. So the world represents all true ministers of Christ. Yet true - Upright, sincere, in the sight of God.

9. As unknown - For the world knoweth us not, as it knew him not. Yet well known - To God, and to those who are the seals of our ministry. As dying, yet behold - Suddenly, unexpectedly, God interposes, and we live.

10. As sorrowing - For our own manifold imperfections, and for the sins and sufferings of our brethren. Yet always rejoicing - In present peace, love, power, and a sure hope of future glory. As having nothing, yet possessing all things - For all things are ours, if we are Christ's. What a magnificence of thought is this!

11. From the praise of the Christian ministry, which he began chap. ii, 14, he now draws his affectionate exhortation. O ye Corinthians - He seldom uses this appellation. But it has here a peculiar force. Our mouth is opened toward you - With uncommon freedom, because our heart is enlarged - In tenderness.

12. Ye are not straitened in us - Our heart is wide enough to receive you all. But ye are straitened in your own bowels - Your hearts are shut up, and so not capable of the blessings ye might enjoy.

13. Now for a recompence of the same - Of my parental tenderness. I speak as to my children - I ask nothing hard or grievous. Be ye also enlarged - Open your hearts, first to God, and then to us, so chap. viii, 5, that God may "dwell in you," 2 Cor. vi, 16; vii, 1; and that ye may "receive us," chap. vii, 2.

14. Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers - Christians with Jews or heathens. The apostle particularly speaks of marriage. But the reasons he urges equally hold against any needless intimacy with them. Of the five questions that follow, the three former contain the argument; the two latter, the conclusion.

15. What concord hath Christ - Whom ye serve. With Belial - To whom they belong.

16. What agreement hath the temple of God with idols - If God would not endure idols in any part of the land wherein he dwelt, how much less, under his own roof! He does not say, with the temple of idols, for idols do not dwell in their worshippers. As God hath said - To his ancient church, and in them to all the Israel of God. I will dwell in them, and walk in them - The former signifying his perpetual presence; the latter, his operation. And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people - The sum of the whole gospel covenant. Lev. xxvi, 11, &c.

17. Touch not the unclean person - Keep at the utmost distance from him. And I will receive you - Into my house and family. Isaiah lii, 11; Zephaniah iii, 19, 20.

18. And ye shall be to me for sons and for daughters, saith the Lord Almighty - The promise made to Solomon, 1 Chr. xxviii, 6, is here applied to all believers; as the promise made particularly to Josh. is applied to them, Heb. xiii, 5. Who can express the worth, who can conceive the dignity, of this divine adoption? Yet it belongs to all who believe the gospel, who have faith in Christ. They have access to the Almighty; such free and welcome access, as a beloved child to an indulgent father. To him they may fly for aid in every difficulty, and from him obtain a supply in all their wants. Isaiah xliii, 6.

## VII

1. Let us cleanse ourselves - This is the latter part of the exhortation, which was proposed, chap. vi, 1, and resumed, chap. vi, 14. From all pollution of the flesh - All outward sin. And of the spirit - All inward. Yet let us not rest in negative religion, but perfect holiness - Carrying it to the height in all its branches, and enduring to the end in the loving fear of God, the sure foundation of all holiness.

2. Receive us - The sum of what is said in this, as well as in the tenth and following chapters. We have hurt no man - In his person. We have corrupted no man - In his principles. We have defrauded no man - Of his property. In this he intimates likewise the good he had done them, but with the utmost modesty, as it were not looking upon it.

3. I speak not to condemn you - Not as if I accused you of laying this to my charge. I am so far from thinking so unkindly of you, that ye are in our hearts, to live and die with you - That is, I could rejoice to spend all my days with you.

4. I am filled with comfort - Of this he treats, 2 Cor. vii, 6, &c.; of his joy, 2 Cor. vii, 7, &c.; of both, 2 Cor. vii, 13.

5. Our flesh - That is, we ourselves. Had no rest from without - From the heathens. Were fightings - Furious and cruel oppositions. From within - From our brethren. Were fears - Lest they should be seduced.

7. Your earnest desire - To rectify what had been amiss. Your grief - For what had offended God, and troubled me.

8. I did repent - That is, I felt a tender sorrow for having grieved you, till I saw the happy effect of it.

10. The sorrow of the world - Sorrow that arises from worldly considerations. Worketh death - Naturally tends to work or occasion death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

11. How great diligence it wrought in you - Shown in all the following particulars. Yea, clearing of yourselves - Some had been more, some less, faulty; whence arose these various affections. Hence their apologizing and indignation, with respect to themselves; their fear and desire, with respect to the apostle; their zeal and revenge, with respect to the offender, yea, and themselves also. Clearing of yourselves - From either sharing in, or approving of, his sin. Indignation - That ye had not immediately corrected the offender. Fear - Of God's displeasure, or lest I should come with a rod. Vehement desire - To see me again. Zeal - For the glory of God, and the soul of that sinner. Yea, revenge - Ye took a kind of holy revenge upon yourselves, being scarce able to forgive yourselves. In all things ye - As a church. Have approved yourselves to be pure - That is, free from blame, since ye received my letter.

12. It was not only, or chiefly, for the sake of the incestuous person, or of his father; but to show my care over you.

## VIII

1. We declare to you the grace of God - Which evidently appeared by this happy effect.

2. In a great trial of affliction - Being continually persecuted, harassed, and plundered.

4. Praying us with much entreaty - Probably St. Paul had lovingly admonished them not to do beyond their power.

5. And not as we hoped - That is, beyond all we could hope. They gave themselves to us, by the will of God - In obedience to his will, to be wholly directed by us.

6. As he had begun - When he was with you before.

9. For ye know - And this knowledge is the true source of love. The grace - The most sincere, most free, and most abundant love. He became poor - In becoming man, in all his life; in his death. Rich - In the favour and image of God.

12. A man - Every believer. Is accepted - With God. According to what he hath - And the same rule holds universally. Whoever acknowledges himself to be a vile, guilty sinner, and, in consequence of this acknowledgment, flies for refuge to the wounds of a crucified saviour, and relies on his merits alone for salvation, may in every circumstance of life apply this indulgent declaration to himself.

14. That their abundance - If need should so require. May be - At another time. A supply to your want: that there may be an equality - No want on one side, no superfluity on the other. It may likewise have a further meaning:-that as the temporal bounty of the Corinthians did now supply

the temporal wants of their poor brethren in Judea, so the prayers of these might be a means of bringing down many spiritual blessings on their benefactors: so that all the spiritual wants of the one might be amply supplied; all the temporal of the other.

15. As it is written, He that had gathered the most had nothing over; and he that had gathered the least did not lack - That is, in which that scripture is in another sense fulfilled. Exod. xvi, 18

17. Being more forward - Than to need it, though he received it well.

18. We - I and Timothy. The brother - The ancients generally supposed this was St. Luke. Whose praise - For faithfully dispensing the gospel, is through all the churches.

19. He was appointed by the churches - Of Macedonia. With this gift - Which they were carrying from Macedonia to Jerusalem. For the declaration of our ready mind - That of Paul and his fellow-traveler, ready to be the servants of all.

22. With them - With Titus and Luke. Our brother - Perhaps Apollos.

23. My partner - In my cares and labours. The glory of Christ - Signal instruments of advancing his glory.

24. Before the churches - Present by their messengers.

## IX

1. To write to you - Largely.

2. I boast to them of Macedonia - With whom he then was.

3. I have sent the above mentioned brethren before me.

5. Spoken of before - By me, to the Macedonians. Not as a matter of covetousness - As wrung by importunity from covetous persons.

6. He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly; he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully - A general rule. God will proportion the reward to the work, and the temper whence it proceeds.

7. Of necessity - Because he cannot tell how to refuse.

8. How remarkable are these words! Each is loaded with matter and increases all the way it goes. All grace - Every kind of blessing. That ye may abound to every good work - God gives us everything, that we may do good therewith, and so receive more blessings. All things in this life, even rewards, are, to the faithful, seeds in order to a future harvest. Prov. xxii, 9

9. He hath scattered abroad - (A generous word.) With a full hand, without any anxious thought which way each grain falls. His righteousness - His beneficence, with the blessed effects of it. Remaineth for ever - Unexhausted, God still renewing his store. Psalm cxii, 9

10. And he who supplieth seed - Opportunity and ability to help others. And bread - All things needful for your own souls and bodies. Will continually supply you with that seed, yea, multiply it to you more and more. And increase the fruits of your righteousness - The happy effects of your love to God and man. Isaiah lv, 10

11. Which worketh by us thanksgiving to God - Both from us who distribute, and them who receive, your bounty.

13. Your avowed subjection - Openly testified by your actions. To all men - Who stand in need of it.

15. His unspeakable gift - His outward and inward blessings, the number and excellence of which cannot be uttered.

## X

1. Now I Paul myself - - A strongly emphatical expression. Who when present am base among you - So, probably, some of the false teachers affirmed. Copying after the meekness and gentleness of Christ, entreat - Though I might command you.

2. Do not constrain me when present to be bold - To exert my apostolical authority. Who think of us as walking after the flesh - As acting in a cowardly or crafty manner.

3. Though we walk in the flesh - In mortal bodies, and, consequently, are not free from human weakness. Yet we do not war - Against the world and the devil. After the flesh - By any carnal or worldly methods. Though the apostle here, and in several other parts of this epistle, speaks in the plural number, for the sake of modesty and decency, yet he principally means himself. On him were these reflections thrown, and it is his own authority which he is vindicating.

4. For the weapons of our warfare - Those we use in this war. Are not carnal - But spiritual, and therefore mighty to the throwing down of strong holds - Of all the difficulties which men or devils can raise in our way. Though faith and prayer belong also to the Christian armour, Eph. vi, 15, &c., yet the word of God seems to be here chiefly intended.

5. Destroying all vain reasonings, and every high thing which exalteth itself - As a wall or rampart. Against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought - Or, rather, faculty of the mind. Into captivity to the obedience of Christ - Those evil reasonings are destroyed. The mind itself, being overcome and taken captive, lays down all authority of its own, and entirely gives itself up to perform, for the time to come, to Christ its conqueror the obedience of faith.

6. Being in readiness to avenge all disobedience - Not only by spiritual censure, but miraculous punishments. When your obedience is fulfilled - When the sound part of you have given proof of your obedience, so that I am in no danger of punishing the innocent with the guilty.

7. Do ye look at the outward appearance of things - Does any of you judge of a minister of Christ by his person, or any outward circumstance? Let him again think this of himself - Let him learn it from his own reflection, before I convince him by a severer method.

8. I should not be ashamed - As having said more than I could make good.

9. I say this, that I may not seem to terrify you by letters - Threatening more than I can perform.

10. His bodily presence is weak - His stature, says St. Chrysostom, was low, his body crooked, and his head bald.

12. For we presume not - A strong irony. To equal ourselves - As partners of the same office. Or to compare ourselves - As partakers of the same labour. They among themselves limiting themselves - Choosing and limiting their provinces according to their own fancy.

13. But we will not, like them, boastingly extend ourselves beyond our measure, but according to the measure of the province which God hath allotted us - To me, in particular, as the apostle of the gentiles. A measure which reaches even unto you - God allotted to each apostle his province, and the measure or bounds thereof.

14. We are come even to you - By a gradual, regular process, having taken the intermediate places in our way, in preaching the gospel of Christ.

15. Having hope, now your faith is increased - So that you can the better spare us. To be enlarged by you abundantly - That is, enabled by you to go still further.

16. In the regions beyond you - To the west and south, where the gospel had not yet been preached.

## XI

1. I wish ye would bear - So does he pave the way for what might otherwise have given offense. With my folly - Of commending myself; which to many may appear folly; and really would be so, were it not on this occasion absolutely necessary.

2. For - The cause of his seeming folly is expressed in this and the following verse; the cause why they should bear with him, 2 Cor. xi, 4.

3. But I fear - Love is full of these fears. Lest as the serpent - A most apposite comparison. Deceived Eve - Simple, ignorant of evil. By his subtilty - Which is in the highest degree dangerous to such a disposition. So your minds - We might therefore be tempted, even if there were no sin in us. Might be corrupted - Losing their virginal purity. From the simplicity that is in Christ - That simplicity which is lovingly intent on him alone, seeking no other person or thing.

4. If indeed - Any could show you another saviour, a more powerful Spirit, a better gospel. Ye might well bear with him - But this is impossible.

6. If I am unskilful in speech - If I speak in a plain, unadorned way, like an unlearned person. So the Greek word properly signifies.

7. Have I committed an offense - Will any turn this into an objection? In humbling myself - To work at my trade. That ye might be exalted - To be children of God.

8. I spoiled other churches - I, as it were, took the spoils of them: it is a military term. Taking wages (or pay, another military word) of them - When I came to you at first. And when I was present with you, and wanted - My work not quite supplying my necessities. I was chargeable to no man - Of Corinth.

9. For - I choose to receive help from the poor Macedonians, rather than the rich Corinthians! Were the poor in all ages more generous than the rich?

10. This my boasting shall not be stopped - For I will receive nothing from you.

11. Do I refuse to receive anything of you, because I love you not? God knoweth that is not the case.

12. Who desire any occasion - To censure me. That wherein they boast, they may be found even as we - They boasted of being "burdensome to no man." But it was a vain boast in them, though not in the apostle.

14. Satan himself is transformed - Uses to transform himself; to put on the fairest appearances.

15. Therefore it is no great, no strange, thing; whose end, notwithstanding all their disguises, shall be according to their works.

16. I say again - He premises a new apology to this new commendation of himself. Let no man think me a fool - Let none think I do this without the utmost necessity. But if any do think me foolish herein, yet bear with my folly.

17. I speak not after the Lord - Not by an express command from him; though still under the direction of his Spirit. But as it were foolishly - In such a manner as many may think foolish.

18. After the flesh - That is, in external things.

19. Being wise - A beautiful irony.

20. For ye suffer - Not only the folly, but the gross abuses, of those false apostles. If a man enslave you - Lord it over you in the most arbitrary manner. If he devour you - By his exorbitant demands; not - withstanding his boast of not being burdensome. If he take from you - By open violence. If he exalt himself - By the most unbounded self-commendation. If he smite you on the face - (A very possible case,) under pretense of divine zeal.

21. I speak with regard to reproach, as though we had been weak - I say, "Bear with me," even on supposition that the weakness be real which they reproach me with.

22. Are they Hebrews, Israelites, the seed of Abraham - These were the heads on which they boasted.

23. I am more so than they. In deaths often - Surrounding me in the most dreadful forms.

24. Five times I received from the Jews forty stripes save one - Which was the utmost that the law allowed. With the Roman he sometimes pleaded his privilege as a Roman; but from the Jews he suffered all things.

25. Thrice I have been shipwrecked - Before his voyage to Rome. In the deep - Probably floating on some part of the vessel.

27. In cold and nakedness - Having no place where to lay my head; no convenient raiment to cover me; yet appearing before noble-men, governors, kings; and not being ashamed.

28. Beside the things which are from without - Which I suffer on the account of others; namely, the care of all the churches - A more modest expression than if he had said, the care of the whole church. All - Even those I have not seen in the flesh. St. Peter himself could not have said this in so strong a sense.

29. Who - So he had not only the care of the churches, but of every person therein. Is weak, and I am not weak - By sympathy, as well as by condescension. Who is offended - Hindered in, or turned out of, the good way. And I burn not - Being pained as though I had fire in my bosom.

30. I will glory of the things that concern my infirmities - Of what shows my weakness, rather than my strength.

32. The governor under Aretas - King of Arabia and Syria of which Damascus was a chief city, willing to oblige the Jews, kept the city - Setting guards at all the gates day and night.

33. Through a window - Of an house which stood on the city wall.

## XII

1. It is not expedient - Unless on so pressing occasion. Visions are seen; Revelations, heard.

2. I knew a man in Christ - That is, a Christian. It is plain from 2 Cor. xii, 6, 7, that he means himself, though in modesty he speaks as of a third person. Whether in the body or out of the body

I know not - It is equally possible with God to present distant things to the imagination in the body, as if the soul were absent from it, and present with them; or to transport both soul and body for what time he pleases to heaven; or to transport the soul only thither for a season, and in the mean time to preserve the body fit for its re- entrance. But since the apostle himself did not know whether his soul was in the body, or whether one or both were actually in heaven, it would be vain curiosity for us to attempt determining it. The third heaven - Where God is; far above the aerial and the starry heaven. Some suppose it was here the apostle was let into the mystery of the future state of the church; and received his orders to turn from the Jews and go to the gentiles.

3. Yea, I knew such a man - That at another time.

4. He was caught up into paradise - The seat of happy spirits in their separate state, between death and the resurrection. Things which it is not possible for man to utter - Human language being incapable of expressing them. Here he anticipated the joyous rest of the righteous that die in the Lord. But this rapture did not precede, but follow after, his being caught up to the third heaven: a strong intimation that he must first discharge his mission, and then enter into glory. And beyond all doubt, such a foretaste of it served to strengthen him in all his after trials, when he could call to mind the very joy that was prepared for him.

5. Of such an one I will - I might, glory; but I will not glory of myself - As considered in myself.

6. For if I should resolve to glory - Referring to, I might glory of such a glorious Revelation. I should not be a fool - That is, it could not justly be accounted folly to relate the naked truth. But I forbear - I speak sparingly of these things, for fear any one should think too highly of me - O where is this fear now to be found? Who is afraid of this?

7. There was given me - By the wise and gracious providence of God. A thorn in the flesh - A visitation more painful than any thorn sticking in the flesh. A messenger or angel of Satan to buffet me - Perhaps both visibly and invisibly; and the word in the original expresses the present, as well as the past, time. All kinds of affliction had befallen the apostle. Yet none of those did he deprecate. But here he speaks of one, as above all the rest, one that macerated him with weakness, and by the pain and ignominy of it prevented his being lifted up mere, or, at least, not less, than the most vehement head ache could have done; which many of the ancients say he laboured under. St. Paul seems to have had a fresh fear of these buffetings every moment, when he so frequently represses himself in his boasting, though it was extorted from him by the utmost necessity.

8. Concerning this - He had now forgot his being lifted up. I besought the Lord thrice - As our Lord besought his Father.

9. But he said to me - ln answer to my third request. My grace is sufficient for thee - How tender a repulse! We see there may be grace where there is the quickest sense of pain. My strength is more illustriously displayed by the weakness of the instrument. Therefore I will glory in my weaknesses rather than my Revelations, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me - The Greek word properly means, may cover me all over like a tent. We ought most willingly to accept whatever tends to this end, however contrary to flesh and blood.

10. Weaknesses - Whether proceeding from Satan or men. For when I am weak - Deeply conscious of my weakness, then does the strength of Christ rest upon me.

11. Though I am nothing - Of myself.

14. The third time - Having been disappointed twice. I seek not yours - Your goods. But you - Your souls.

15. I will gladly spend - All I have. And be spent - Myself.

16. But some may object, though I did not burden you, though I did not take anything of you myself, yet being crafty I caught you with guile - I did secretly by my messengers what I would not do openly, or in person.

17. I answer this lying accusation by appealing to plain fact. Did I make a gain of you by Titus - Or any other of my messengers? You know the contrary. It should be carefully observed, that St. Paul does not allow, but absolutely denies, that he had caught them with guile; so that the common plea for guile, which has been often drawn from this text, is utterly without foundation.

18. I desired Titus - To go to you.

19. Think ye that we again excuse ourselves - That I speak this for my own sake? No. I speak all this for your sakes.

21. Who had sinned before - My last coming to Corinth. Uncleanness - Of married persons. Lasciviousness - Against nature.

## XIII

1. I am coming this third time - He had been coming twice before, though he did not actually come.

2. All the rest - Who have since then sinned in any of these kinds. I will not spare - I will severely punish them.

4. He was crucified through weakness - Through the impotence of human nature. We also are weak with him - We appear weak and despicable by partaking of the same sufferings for his sake. But we shall live with him - Being raised from the dead. By the power of God in you - By that divine energy which is now in every believer, 2 Cor. xiii, 5.

5. Prove yourselves - Whether ye are such as can, or such as cannot, bear the test - This is the proper meaning of the word which we translate, reprobates. Know ye not yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you - All Christian believers know this, by the witness and by the fruit of his Spirit. Some translate the words, Jesus Christ is among you; that is, in the church of Corinth; and understand them of the miraculous gifts and the power of Christ which attended the censures of the apostle.

6. And I trust ye shall know - By proving yourselves, not by putting my authority to the proof.

7. I pray God that ye may do no evil - To give me occasion of showing my apostolical power. I do not desire to appear approved - By miraculously punishing you. But that ye may do that which is good, though we should be as reprobates - Having no occasion to give that proof of our apostleship.

8. For we can do nothing against the truth - Neither against that which is just and right, nor against those who walk according to the truth of the gospel.

9. For we rejoice when we are weak - When we appear so, having no occasion to show our apostolic power. And this we wish, even your perfection - In the faith that worketh by love.

11. Be perfect - Aspire to the highest degree of holiness. Be of good comfort - Filled with divine consolation. Be of one mind - Desire, labour, pray for it, to the utmost degree that is possible.

13. The grace - Or favour. Of our Lord Jesus Christ - By which alone we can come to the Father. And the love of God - Manifested to you, and abiding in you. And the communion - Or fellowship. Of the Holy Ghost - In all his gifts and graces. It is with great reason that this comprehensive and instructive blessing is pronounced at the close of our solemn assemblies; and it is a very indecent

thing to see so many quitting them, or getting into postures of remove, before this short sentence can be ended. How often have we heard this awful benediction pronounced! Let us study it more and more, that we may value it proportionably; that we may either deliver or receive it with a becoming reverence, with eyes and hearts lifted up to God, "who giveth the blessing out of Sion, and life for evermore."

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

THIS epistle is not written, as most of St. Paul's are, to the Christians of a particular city, but to those of a whole country in Asia Minor, the metropolis of which was Ancyra. These readily embraced the gospel; but, after St. Paul had left them, certain men came among them, who (like those mentioned, Acts xv, 1.) taught that it was necessary to be circumcised, and to keep the Mosaic law. They affirmed, that all the other apostles taught thus; that St. Paul was inferior to them; and that even he sometimes practiced and recommended the law, though at other times he opposed it. The first part, therefore, of this epistle is spent in vindicating himself and his doctrine; proving,

1. That he had it immediately from Christ himself; and that he was not inferior to the other apostles.
2. That it was the very same which the other apostles preached. And,
3. That his practice was consistent with his doctrine. The second contains proofs, drawn from the Old Testament, that the law and all its ceremonies were abolished by Christ. The third contains practical inferences, closed with his usual benediction. To be a little more distinct - This epistle contains,

I. The inscription, C.i. 1-5

II. The calling the Galatians back to the true gospel; wherein he

1. Reproves them for leaving it, 6-10
2. Asserts the authority of the gospel he had preached, who,
    1. Of a persecutor was made an apostle, by an immediate call from heaven, 11-17
    2. Was no way inferior to Peter himself, 18-C.ii. 21
    3. Defends justification by faith, and again reproves the Galatians, C.iii. 1-iv. 11
    4. Explains the same thing by an allegory taken out of the law itself, 12-31
    5. Exhorts them to maintain their liberty, C.v.1-12 warns them not to abuse it, and admonishes them to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,. 13-C.vi. 10

III. The conclusion, 11-18

## GALATIANS

### I

1. Paul, an apostle - Here it was necessary for St. Paul to assert his authority; otherwise he is very modest in the use of this title. He seldom mentions it when he mentions others in the salutations with himself, as in the Epistles to the Philippians and Thessalonians; or when he writes about secular affairs, as in that to Philemon; nor yet in writing to the Hebrews because he was not properly their apostle. Not of men - Not commissioned from them, but from God the Father. Neither by man - Neither by any man as an instrument, but by Jesus Christ. Who raised him from the dead - Of which it was the peculiar business of an apostle to bear witness.

2. And all the brethren - Who agree with me in what I now write.

4. That he might deliver us from the present evil world - From the guilt, wickedness, and misery wherein it is involved, and from its vain and foolish customs and pleasures. According to the will of God - Without any merit of ours. St. Paul begins most of his epistles with thanksgiving; but, writing to the Galatians, he alters his style, and first sets down his main proposition, That by the merits of Christ alone, giving himself for our sins, we are justified: neither does he term them, as he does others, either saints," elect," or churches of God."

5. To whom be glory - For this his gracious will.

6. I marvel that ye are removed so soon - After my leaving you. From him who called you by the grace of Christ - His gracious gospel, and his gracious power.

7. Which, indeed, is not properly another gospel. For what ye have now received is no gospel at all; it is not glad, but heavy, tidings, as setting your acceptance with God upon terms impossible to be performed. But there are some that trouble you - The same word occurs, Acts xv, 24. And would - If they were able. Subvert or overthrow the gospel of Christ - The better to effect which, they suggest, that the other apostles, yea, and I myself, insist upon the observance of the law.

8. But if we - I and all the apostles. Or an angel from heaven - If it were possible. Preach another gospel, let him be accursed - Cut off from Christ and God.

9. As - He speaks upon mature deliberation; after pausing, it seems, between the two verses. We - I and the brethren who are with me. Have said before - Many times, in effect, if not in terms. So I say - All those brethren knew the truth of the gospel. St. Paul knew the Galatians had received the true gospel.

10. For - He adds the reason why he speaks so confidently. Do I now satisfy men - Is this what I aim at in preaching or writing? If I still - Since I was an apostle. Pleased men - Studied to please them; if this were my motive of action; nay, if I did in fact please the men who know not God. I should not be the servant of Christ - Hear this, all ye who vainly hope to keep in favour both with God and with the world!

11. But I certify you, brethren - He does not till now give them even this appellation. That the gospel which was preached by me among you is not according to man - Not from man, not by man, not suited to the taste of man.

12. For neither did I receive it - At once. Nor was I taught it - Slowly and gradually, by any man. But by the Revelation of Jesus Christ - Our Lord revealed to him at first, his resurrection, ascension, and the calling of the gentiles, and his own apostleship; and told him then, there were other things for which he would appear to him.

13. I Persecuted the church of God - That is, the believers in Christ.

14. Being zealous of the unwritten traditions - Over and above those written in the law.

15. But when it pleased God - He ascribes nothing to his own merits, endeavours, or sincerity. Who separated me from my mother's womb - Set me apart for an apostle, as he did Jeremiah for a

prophet. Jer. i, 5. Such an unconditional predestination as this may consist, both with God's justice and mercy. And called me by his grace - By his free and almighty love, to be both a Christian and an apostle.

16. To reveal his Son in me - By the powerful operation of his Spirit, chap. iv, 6; as well as to me, by the heavenly vision. That I might preach him to others - Which I should have been ill qualified to do, had I not first known him myself. I did not confer with flesh and blood - Being fully satisfied of the divine will, and determined to obey, I took no counsel with any man, neither with my own reason or inclinations, which might have raised numberless objections.

17. Neither did I go up to Jerusalem - The residence of the apostles. But I immediately went again into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus - He presupposes the journey to Damascus, in which he was converted, as being known to them all.

18. Then after three years - Wherein I had given full proof of my apostleship. I went to visit Peter - To converse with him.

19. But other of the apostles I saw none, save James the brother (that is, the kinsman) of the Lord - Therefore when Barnabas is said to have "brought him into the apostles," Acts ix, 27, only St. Peter and St James are meant.

24. In me - That is, on my account.

## II

1. Then fourteen years after - My first journey thither. I went up again to Jerusalem - This seems to be the journey mentioned Acts xv, 2; several passages here referring to that great council, wherein all the apostles showed that they were of the same judgment with him.

2. I went up - Not by any command from them, but by an express Revelation from God. And laid before them - The chief of the church in Jerusalem. The gospel which I preach among the gentiles - Acts xv, 4, touching justification by faith alone; not that they might confirm me therein, but that I might remove prejudice from them. Yet not publicly at first, but severally to those of eminence - Speaking to them one by one. Lest I should run, or should have run, in vain - Lest I should lose the fruit either of my present or past labours. For they might have greatly hindered this, had they not been fully satisfied both of his mission and doctrine. The word run beautifully expresses the swift progress of the gospel.

3. But neither was Titus who was with me - When I conversed with them. Compelled to be circumcised - A clear proof that none of the apostles insisted on the circumcising gentile believers. The sense is, And it is true, some of those false brethren would fain have compelled Titus to be circumcised; but I utterly refused it.

4. Because of false brethren - Who seem to have urged it. Introduced unawares - Into some of those private conferences at Jerusalem. Who had slipped in to spy out our liberty - From the ceremonial law. That they might, if possible, bring us into that bondage again.

5. To whom we did not yield by submission - Although in love he would have yielded to any. With such wonderful prudence did the apostle use his Christian liberty! circumcising Timothy, Acts xvi, 3, because of weak brethren, but not Titus, because of false brethren. That the truth of

the gospel - That is, the true genuine gospel. Might continue with you - With you gentiles. So we defend, for your sakes, the privilege which you would give up.

6. And they who undoubtedly were something - Above all others. What they were - How eminent soever. It is no difference to me - So that I should alter either my doctrine or my practice. God accepteth no man's person - For any eminence in gifts or outward prerogatives. In that conference added nothing to me - Neither as to doctrine nor mission.

7. But when they saw - By the effects which I laid before them, ver. 8; Acts xv, 12. That I was intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision - That is, with the charge of preaching it to the uncircumcised heathens.

8. For he that wrought effectually in Peter for the apostleship of the circumcision - To qualify him for, and support him in, the discharge of that office to the Jews. Wrought likewise effectually in and by me - For and in the discharge of my office toward the gentiles.

9. And when James - Probably named first because he was bishop of the church in Jerusalem. And Cephas - Speaking of him at Jerusalem he calls him by his Hebrew name. And John - Hence it appears that he also was at the council, though he is not particularly named in the Acts. Who undoubtedly were pillars - The principal supporters and defenders of the gospel. Knew - After they had heard the account I gave them. The grace - Of apostleship. Which was given me, they - In the name of all. Gave to me and Barnabas - My fellow-labourer. The right hands of fellowship - They gave us their hands in token of receiving us as their fellow- labourers, mutually agreeing that we - I and those in union with me. Should go to the gentiles - Chiefly. And they - With those that were in union with them, chiefly to the circumcision - The Jews.

10. Of the poor - The poor Christians in Judea, who had lost all they had for Christ's sake.

11. But - The argument here comes to the height. Paul reproves Peter himself. So far was he from receiving his doctrine from man, or from being inferior to the chief of the apostles. When Peter - Afterwards, Came to Antioch - Then the chief of all the Gentile churches. I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed - For fear of man, ver. 12; for dissimulation, ver. 13; and for not walking uprightly. ver. 14.

13. And the other believing Jews - Who were at Antioch. Dissembled with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation - Was born away, as with a torrent, into the same ill practice.

14. I said to Cephas before them all - See Paul single against Peter and all the Jews! If thou being a Jew, yet livest, in thy ordinary conversation, after the manner of the gentiles - Not observing the ceremonial law, which thou knowest to be now abolished. Why compellest thou the gentiles - By withdrawing thyself and all the ministers from them; either to judaize, to keep the ceremonial law, or to be excluded from church communion?

15. We - St. Paul, to spare St. Peter, drops the first person singular, and speaks in the plural number. ver. 18, he speaks in the first person singular again by a figure; and without a figure, ver. 19, &c. Who are Jews by nature - By birth, not proselytes only. And not sinners of the gentiles - That is, not sinful Gentiles; not such gross, enormous, abandoned sinners, as the heathens generally were.

16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law - Not even of the moral, much less the ceremonial, law. But by the faith of Jesus Christ - That is, by faith in him. The name Jesus was first known by the gentiles; the name Christ by the Jews. And they are not always placed promiscuously; but generally in a more solemn way of speaking, the Apostle says, Christ Jesus; in

a more familiar, Jesus Christ. Even we - And how much more must the Gentiles, who have still less pretense to depend on their own works! Have believed - Knowing there is no other way. Because - Considering the demands of the law, and the fate of human nature, it is evident, that by the works of the law - By such an obedience as it requires. Shall no flesh living - No human creature, Jew or Gentile, be justified. Hitherto St. Paul had been considering that single question, "Are Christians obliged to observe the ceremonial law? But he here insensibly goes farther, and, by citing this scripture, shows that what he spoke directly of the ceremonial, included also the moral, law. For David undoubtedly did so, when he said, Psalm cxliii, 2, the place here referred to, "In thy sight shall no man living be justified;" which the Apostle likewise explains, Rom. iii, 19, 20, in such a manner as can agree to none but the moral law.

17. But if while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are still found sinners - If we continue in sin, will it therefore follow, that Christ is the minister or countenancer of sin?

18. By no means. For if I build again - By my sinful practice. The things which I destroyed - By my preaching, I only make myself - Or show myself, not Christ, to be a transgressor; the whole blame lies on me, not him or his gospel. As if he had said, The objection were just, if the gospel promised justification to men continuing in sin. But it does not. Therefore if any who profess the gospel do not live according to it, they are sinners, it is certain, but not justified, and so the gospel is clear.

19. For I through the law - Applied by the Spirit to my heart, and deeply convincing me of my utter sinfulness and helplessness. Am dead to the law - To all hope of justification from it. That I may live to God - Not continue in sin. For this very end am I, in this sense, freed from the law, that I may be freed from sin.

20. The Apostle goes on to describe how he is freed from sin; how far he is from continuing therein. I am crucified with Christ - Made conformable to his death; "the body of sin is destroyed." Rom. vi, 6. And I - As to my corrupt nature. Live no longer - Being dead to sin. But Christ liveth in me - Is a fountain of life in my inmost soul, from which all my tempers, words, and actions flow. And the life that I now live in the flesh - Even in this mortal body, I live by faith in the Son of God - I derive every moment from that supernatural principle; from a divine evidence and conviction, that "he loved me, and delivered up himself for me."

21. Meantime I do not make void - In seeking to be justified by my own works. The grace of God - The free love of God in Christ Jesus. But they do, who seek justification by the law. For if righteousness is by the law - If men might be justified by their obedience to the law, moral or ceremonial. Then Christ died in vain - Without any necessity for it, since men might have been saved without his death; might by their own obedience have been both discharged from condemnation, and entitled to eternal life.

## III

1. O thoughtless Galatians - He breaks in upon them with a beautiful abruptness. Who hath bewitched you - Thus to contradict both your own reason and experience. Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been as evidently set forth - By our preaching, as if he had been crucified among you.

2. This only would I learn of you - That is, this one argument might convince you. Did ye receive the witness and the fruit of the Spirit by performing the works of the law, or by hearing of and receiving faith?

3. Are ye so thoughtless - As not to consider what you have yourselves experienced? Having begun in the Spirit - Having set out under the light and power of the Spirit by faith, do ye now, when ye ought to be more spiritual, and more acquainted with the power of faith, expect to be made perfect by the flesh? Do you think to complete either your justification or sanctification, by giving up that faith, and depending on the law, which is a gross and carnal thing when opposed to the gospel?

4. Have ye suffered - Both from the zealous Jews and from the heathens. So many things - For adhering to the gospel. In vain - So as to lose all the blessings which ye might have obtained, by enduring to the end. If it be yet in vain - As if he had said, I hope better things, even that ye will endure to the end.

5. And, at the present time, Doth he that ministereth the gift of the Spirit to you, and worketh miracles among you, do it by the works of the law - That is, in confirmation of his preaching justification by works, or of his preaching justification by faith?

6. Doubtless in confirmation of that grand doctrine, that we are justified by faith, even as Abraham was. The Apostle, both in this and in the epistle to the Romans, makes great use of the instance of Abraham: the rather, because from Abraham the Jews drew their great argument, as they do this day, both for their own continuance in Judaism, and for denying the gentiles to be the church of God. Gen. xv, 6

7. Know then that they who are partakers of his faith, these, and these only, are the sons of Abraham, and therefore heirs of the promises made to him.

8. And the scripture - That is, the Holy Spirit, who gave the scripture. Foreseeing that God would justify the gentiles also by faith, declared before - So great is the excellency and fulness of the scripture, that all the things which can ever be controverted are therein both foreseen and determined. In or through thee - As the father of the Messiah, shall all the nations be blessed. Gen. xii, 3

9. So then all they, and they only, who are of faith - Who truly believe. Are blessed with faithful Abraham - Receive the blessing as he did, namely, by faith.

10. They only receive it. For as many as are of the works of the law - As God deals with on that footing, only on the terms the law proposes, are under a curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all the things which are written in the law. Who continueth not in all the things - So it requires what no man can perform, namely, perfect, uninterrupted, and perpetual obedience. Deut. xxvii, 26

11. But that none is justified by his obedience to the law in the sight of God - Whatever may be done in the sight of man, is farther evident from the words of Habakkuk, The just shall live by faith - That is, the man who is accounted just or righteous before God, shall continue in a state of acceptance, life, and salvation, by faith. This is the way God hath chosen. Hab. ii, 4.

12. And the law is not of faith - But quite opposite to it: it does not say, Believe; but, Do. Lev. xviii, 5

13. Christ - Christ alone. The abruptness of the sentence shows an holy indignation at those who reject so great a blessing. Hath redeemed us - Whether Jews or gentiles, at an high price. From the curse of the law - The curse of God, which the law denounces against all transgressors of it.

Being made a curse for us - Taking the curse upon himself, that we might be delivered from it, willingly submitting to that death which the law pronounces peculiarly accursed. Deut. xxi, 23.

14. That the blessing of Abraham - The blessing promised to him. Might come on the gentiles - Also. That we - Who believe, whether Jews or gentiles. Might receive the promise of the Spirit - Which includes all the other promises. Through faith - Not by works; for faith looks wholly to the promise.

15. I speak after the manner of men - I illustrate this by a familiar instance, taken from the practice of men. Though it be but a man's covenant, yet, if it be once legally confirmed, none - No, not the covenanter himself, unless something unforeseen occur, which cannot be the case with God. Disannulleth, or addeth thereto - Any new conditions.

16. Now the promises were made to Abraham and his seed - Several promises were made to Abraham; but the chief of all, and which was several times repeated, was that of the blessing through Christ. He - That is, God. Saith not, And to seeds, as of many - As if the promise were made to several kinds of seed. But as of one - That is, one kind of seed, one posterity, one kind of sons. And to all these the blessing belonged by promise. Which is Christ - including all that believe in him. Gen. xxii, 18.

17. And this I say - What I mean is this. The covenant which was before confirmed of God - By the promise itself, by the repetition of it, and by a solemn oath, concerning the blessing all nations. Through Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after - Counting from the time when the promise was first made to Abraham, Gen. xii, 2, 3. Doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of no effect - With regard to all nations, if only the Jewish were to receive it; yea, with regard to them also, if it was by works, so as to supersede it, and introduce another way of obtaining the blessing.

18. And again - This is a new argument. The former was drawn from the time, this from the nature, of the transaction. If the eternal inheritance be obtained by keeping the law, it is no more by virtue of the free promise - These being just opposite to each other. But it is by promise. Therefore it is not by the law.

19. It - The ceremonial law. Was added - To the promise. Because of transgressions - Probably, the yoke of the ceremonial law was inflicted as a punishment for the national sin of idolatry, Exod. xxxii, 1, at least the more grievous parts of it; and the whole of it was a prophetic type of Christ. The moral law was added to the promise to discover and restrain transgressions, to convince men of their guilt, and need of the promise, and give some check to sin. And this law passeth not away; but the ceremonial law was only introduced till Christ, the seed to or through whom the promise was made, should come. And it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator - It was not given to Israel, like the promise to Abraham, immediately from God himself; but was conveyed by the ministry of angels to Moses, and delivered into his hand as a mediator between God and them, to remind them of the great Mediator.

20. Now the mediator is not a mediator of one - There must be two parties, or there can be no mediator between them; but God who made the free promise to Abraham is only one of the parties. The other, Abraham, was not present at the time of Moses. Therefore in the promise Moses had nothing to do. The law, wherein he was concerned, was a transaction of quite another nature.

21. Will it follow from hence that the law is against, opposite to, the promises of God? By no means. They are well consistent. But yet the law cannot give life, as the promise doth. If there had been a law which could have given life - Which could have entitled a sinner to life, God would

have spared his own Son, and righteousness, or justification. with all the blessings consequent upon it, would have been by that law.

22. But, on the contrary, the scripture wherein that law is written hath concluded all under sin - Hath shut them up together, (so the word properly signifies,) as in a prison, under sentence of death, to the end that all being cut off from expecting justification by the law, the promise might be freely given to them that believe.

23. But before faith - That is, the gospel dispensation. Came, we were kept - As in close custody. Under the law - The Mosaic dispensation. Shut up unto the faith which was to be revealed - Reserved and prepared for the gospel dispensation.

24. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ - It was designed to train us up for Christ. And this it did both by its commands, which showed the need we had of his atonement; and its ceremonies, which all pointed us to him.

25. But faith - That is, the gospel dispensation. Being come, we are no longer under that schoolmaster - The Mosaic dispensation.

26. For ye - Christians. Are all adult sons of God - And so need a schoolmaster no longer.

27. For as many of you as have testified your faith by being baptized in the name of Christ, have put on Christ - Have received him as your righteousness, and are therefore sons of God through him.

28. There is neither Jew nor Greek - That is, there is no difference between them; they are equally accepted through faith. There is neither male nor female - Circumcision being laid aside, which was peculiar to males, and was designed to put a difference, during that dispensation, between Jews and gentiles.

29. If ye are Christ's - That is, believers in him.

## IV

1. Now - To illustrate by a plain similitude the preeminence of the Christian, over the legal, dispensation. The heir, as long as he is a child - As he is under age. Differeth nothing from a servant - Not being at liberty either to use or enjoy his estate. Though he be Lord - Proprietor of it all.

2. But is under tutors - As to his person. And stewards - As to his substance.

3. So we - The church of God. When we were children - In our minority, under the legal dispensation. Were in bondage - In a kind of servile state. Under the elements of the world - Under the typical observances of the law, which were like the first elements of grammar, the A B C of children; and were of so gross a nature, as hardly to carry our thoughts beyond this world.

4. But when the fulness of the time - Appointed by the Father, ver. 2. Was come, God sent forth - From his own bosom. His Son, miraculously made of the substance of a woman - A virgin, without the concurrence of a man. Made under the law - Both under the precept, and under the curse, of it.

5. To redeem those under the law - From the curse of it, and from that low, servile state. That we - Jews who believe. Might receive the adoption - All the privileges of adult sons.

6. And because ye - Gentiles who believe, are also thus made his adult sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts likewise, crying, Abba, Father - Enabling you to call upon

God both with the confidence, and the tempers, of dutiful children. The Hebrew and Greek word are joined together, to express the joint cry of the Jews and gentiles.

7. Wherefore thou - Who believest in Christ. Art no more a servant - Like those who are under the law. But a son - Of mature age. And if a son, then an heir of all the promises, and of the all-sufficient God himself.

8. Indeed then when ye knew not God, ye served them that by nature - That is, in reality. Are no gods - And so were under a far worse bondage than even that of the Jews. For they did serve the true God, though in a low, slavish manner.

9. But now being known of God - As his beloved children. How turn ye back to the weak and poor elements - Weak, utterly unable to purge your conscience from guilt, or to give that filial confidence in God. Poor - incapable of enriching the soul with such holiness and happiness as ye are heirs to. Ye desire to be again in bondage - Though of another kind; now to these elements, as before to those idols.

10. Ye observe days - Jewish sabbaths. And months - New moons. And times - As that of the passover, pentecost, and the feast of tabernacles. And years - Annual solemnities. it does not mean sabbatic years. These were not to be observed out of the land of Canaan.

11. The apostle here, dropping the argument, applies to the affections, ver. 11-20, and humbles himself to the Galatians, with an inexpressible tenderness.

12. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am - Meet me in mutual love. For I am as ye were - I still love you as affectionately as ye once loved me. Why should I not? Ye have not injured me at all - I have received no personal injury from you.

13. I preached to you, notwithstanding infirmity of the flesh - That is, notwithstanding bodily weakness, and under great disadvantage from the despicableness of my outward appearance.

14. And ye did not slight my temptation - That is, ye did not slight or disdain me for my temptation, my "thorn in the flesh."

15. What was then the blessedness ye spake of - On which ye so congratulated one another.

17. They - The judaizing teachers who are come among you. Zealously affect you - Express an extraordinary regard for you. But not well - Their zeal is not according to knowledge; neither have they a single eye to your spiritual advantage. Yea, they would exclude you - From me and from the blessings of the gospel. That ye might affect - Love and esteem them.

18. In a good thing - In what is really worthy our zeal. True zeal is only fervent love.

19. My little children - He speaks as a parent, both with authority, and the most tender sympathy, toward weak and sickly children. Of whom I travail in birth again - As I did before, ver. 13, in vehement pain, sorrow, desire, prayer. Till Christ be formed in you - Till there be in you all the mind that was in him.

20. I could wish to be present with you now - Particularly in this exigence. And to change - Variously to attemper. My voice - He writes with much softness; but he would speak with more. The voice may more easily be varied according to the occasion than a letter can. For I stand in doubt of you - So that I am at a loss how to speak at this distance.

21. Do ye not hear the law - Regard what it says.

22. Gen. xxi, 2, 9.

23. Was born after the flesh - In a natural way. By promise - Through that supernatural strength which was given Abraham in consequence of the promise.

24. Which things are an allegory - An allegory is a figurative speech, wherein one thing is expressed, and another intended. For those two sons are types of the two covenants. One covenant is that given from mount Sinai, which beareth children to bondage - That is, all who are under this, the Jewish covenant, are in bondage. Which covenant is typified by Agar.

25. For this is mount Sinai in Arabia - That is, the type of mount Sinai. And answereth to - Resembles Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage - Like Agar, both to the law and to the Romans.

26. But the other covenant is derived from Jerusalem that is above, which is free - Like Sarah from all inward and outward bondage, and is the mother of us all - That is, all who believe in Christ, are free citizens of the New Jerusalem.

27. For it is written - Those words in the primary sense promise a flourishing state to Judea, after its desolation by the Chaldeans. Rejoice. thou barren, that bearest not - Ye heathen nations, who, like a barren woman, were destitute, for many ages, of a seed to serve the Lord. Break forth and cry aloud for joy, thou that, in former time, travailedst not: for the desolate hath many more children than she that hath an husband - For ye that were so long utterly desolate shall at length bear more children than the Jewish church, which was of old espoused to God. Isaiah liv, 1.

28. Now we - Who believe, whether Jews or Gentiles. Are children of the promise - Not born in a natural way, but by the supernatural power of God. And as such we are heirs of the promise made to believing Abraham.

29. But as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so it is now also - And so it will be in all ages and nations to the end of the world.

30. But what saith the scripture - Showing the consequence of this. Cast out the bondwoman and her son - Who mocked Isaac. In like manner will God cast out all who seek to be justified by the law; especially if they persecute them who are his children by faith. Gen. xxi, 10.

31. So then - To sum up all. We - Who believe. Are not children of the bondwoman - Have nothing to do with the servile Mosaic dispensation. But of the free - Being free from the curse and the bond of that law, and from the power of sin and Satan.

## V

1. Stand fast therefore in the liberty - From the ceremonial law. Wherewith Christ hath made us - And all believers, free; and be not entangled again with the yoke of legal bondage.

2. If ye be circumcised - And seek to be justified thereby. Christ - The Christian institution. Will profit you nothing - For you hereby disclaim Christ, and all the blessings which are through faith in him.

3. I testify to every man - Every gentile. That is circumcised - He thereby makes himself a debtor - Obliges.

4. Therefore Christ is become of no effect to you - Who seek to be justified by the law. Ye are fallen from grace - Ye renounce the new covenant. Ye disclaim the benefit of this gracious dispensation.

5. For we - Who believe in Christ, Who are under the gospel dispensation. Through the Spirit - Without any of those carnal ordinances. Wait for - in sure confidence of attaining. The hope of

righteousness - The righteousness we hope for, and full reward of it. This righteousness we receive of God through faith; and by faith we shall obtain the reward.

6. For in Christ Jesus - According to the institution which he hath established, according to the tenor of the Christian covenant. Neither circumcision - With the most punctual observance of the law. Nor uncircumcision - With the most exact heathen morality. Availeth anything - Toward present justification or eternal salvation. But faith - Alone; even that faith which worketh by love - All inward and outward holiness.

7. Ye did run well - In the race of faith. Who hath hindered you in your course, that ye should not still obey the truth?

8. This your present persuasion cometh not from God, who called you - to his kingdom and glory.

9. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump - One troubler, ver. 10, troubles all.

10. Yet I have confidence that - After ye have read this. Ye will be no otherwise minded - Than I am, and ye were. But he that troubleth you - It seems to have been one person chiefly who endeavoured to seduce them. Shall bear his judgment - A heavy burden, already hanging over his head.

11. But if I still preach circumcision - As that troubler seems to have affirmed, probably taking occasion from his having circumcised Timothy. Why do I still suffer persecution? then is the offense of the cross ceased - The grand reason why the Jews were so offended at his preaching Christ crucified, and so bitterly persecuted him for it, was, that it implied the abolition of the law. Yet St. Paul did not condemn the conforming, out of condescension to the weakness of any one, even to the ceremonial law; but he did absolutely condemn those who taught it as necessary to justification.

12. I would they were even cut off - From your communion; cast out of your church, that thus trouble you.

13. Ye have been called to liberty - From sin and misery, as well as from the ceremonial law. Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh - Take not occasion from hence to gratify corrupt nature. But by love serve one another - And hereby show that Christ has made you free.

14. For all the law is fulfilled in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself - inasmuch as none can do this without loving God, 1 John iv, 12; and the love of God and man includes all perfection. Lev. xix, 18.

15. But if - On the contrary, in consequence of the divisions which those troublers have occasioned among you, ye bite one another by evil speaking. And devour one another - By railing and clamour. Take heed ye be not consumed one of another - By bitterness, strife, and contention, our health and strength, both of body and soul, are consumed, as well as our substance and reputation.

16. I say then - He now explains what he proposed, ver. 13. Walk by the Spirit - Follow his guidance in all things. And fulfil not - In anything. The desire of the flesh - Of corrupt nature.

17. For the flesh desireth against the Spirit - Nature desires what is quite contrary to the Spirit of God. But the Spirit against the flesh- - But the Holy Spirit on his part opposes your evil nature. These are contrary to each other - The flesh and the Spirit; there can be no agreement between them. That ye may not do the things which ye would- - That, being thus strengthened by the Spirit, ye may not fulfil the desire of the flesh, as otherwise ye would do.

18. But if ye are led by the Spirit - Of liberty and love, into all holiness. Ye are not under the law - Not under the curse or bondage of it; not under the guilt or the power of sin.

19. Now the works of the flesh - By which that inward principle is discovered. Are manifest - Plain and undeniable. Works are mentioned in the plural because they are distinct from, and often inconsistent with, each other. But "the fruit of the Spirit" is mentioned in the singular, ver. 22, as being all consistent and connected together. Which are these - He enumerates those "works of the flesh" to which the Galatians were most inclined; and those parts of "the fruit of the Spirit" of which they stood in the greatest need. Lasciviousness - The Greek word means anything inward or outward that is contrary to chastity, and yet short of actual uncleanness.

20. Idolatry, witchcraft - That this means witchcraft, strictly speaking, (not poisoning,) appears from its being joined with the worship of devil-gods, and not with murder. This is frequently and solemnly forbidden in the Old Testament. To deny therefore that there is, or ever was, any such thing, is, by plain consequence, to deny the authority both of the Old and New Testament. Divisions - In domestic or civil matters. Heresies are divisions in religious communities.

21. Revellings - Luxurious entertainments. Some of the works here mentioned are wrought principally, if not entirely, in the mind; and yet they are called "works of the flesh." Hence it is clear, the apostle does not by "the flesh" mean the body, or sensual appetites and inclinations only, but the corruption of human nature, as it spreads through all the powers of the soul, as well as all the members of the body. Of which I tell you before - Before the event, I forewarn you.

22. Love - The root of all the rest. Gentleness - Toward all men; ignorant and wicked men in particular. Goodness - The Greek word means all that is benign, soft, winning, tender, either in temper or behaviour.

23. Meekness - Holding all the affections and passions in even balance.

24. And they that are Christ's - True believers in him. Have thus crucified the flesh - Nailed it, as it were, to a cross whence it has no power to break loose, but is continually weaker and weaker. With its affections and desires - All its evil passions, appetites, and inclinations.

25. If we live by the Spirit - If we are indeed raised from the dead, and are alive to God, by the operation of his Spirit. Let us walk by the Spirit - Let us follow his guidance, in all our tempers, thoughts, words, and actions.

26. Be not desirous of vain glory - Of the praise or esteem of men. They who do not carefully and closely follow the Spirit, easily slide into this: the natural effects of which are, provoking to envy them that are beneath us, and envying them that are above us.

## VI

1. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any fault - By surprise, ignorance, or stress of temptation. Ye who are spiritual - Who continue to live and walk by the Spirit. Restore such an one - By reproof, instruction, or exhortation. Every one who can, ought to help herein; only in the spirit of meekness - This is essential to a spiritual man; and in this lies the whole force of the cure. Considering thyself - The plural is beautifully changed into the singular. Let each take heed to himself. Lest thou also be tempted - Temptation easily and swiftly passes from one to another; especially if a man endeavours to cure another without preserving his own meekness.

2. Bear ye one another's burdens - Sympathize with, and assist, each other, in all your weaknesses, grievances, trials. And so fulfil the law of Christ - The law of Christ (an uncommon expression) is

the law of love: this our Lord peculiarly recommends; this he makes the distinguishing mark of his disciples.

3. If any one think himself to be something - Above his brethren, or by any strength of his own. When he is nothing, he deceiveth himself - He alone will bear their burdens, who knows himself to be nothing.

4. But let every man try his own work - Narrowly examine all he is, and all he doeth. And then he shall have rejoicing in himself - He will find in himself matter of rejoicing, if his works are right before God. And not in another - Not in glorying over others.

5. For every one shall bear his own burden - ln that day shall give an account of himself to God.

6. Let him that is taught impart to him that teacheth all such temporal good things as he stands in need of.

7. God is not mocked - Although they attempt to mock him, who think to reap otherwise than they sow.

8. For he that now soweth to the flesh - That follows the desires of corrupt nature. Shall hereafter of the flesh - Out of this very seed. Reap corruption - Death everlasting. But he that soweth to the Spirit - That follows his guidance in all his tempers and conversation. Shall of the Spirit - By the free grace and power of God, reap life everlasting.

9. But let us not be weary in well doing - Let us persevere in sowing to the Spirit. For in due season - When the harvest is come, we shall reap, if we faint not.

10. Therefore as we have opportunity - At whatever time or place, and in whatever manner we can. The opportunity in general is our lifetime; but there are also many particular opportunities. Satan is quickened in doing hurt, by the shortness of the time, Rev. xii, 12. By the same consideration let us be quickened in doing good. Let us do good - In every possible kind, and in every possible degree. Unto all men - neighbours or strangers, good or evil, friends or enemies. But especially to them who are of the household of faith. For all believers are but one family.

11. Ye see how large a letter - St. Paul had not yet wrote a larger to any church. I have written with my own hand - He generally wrote by an amanuensis.

12. As many as desire to make a fair appearance in the flesh - To preserve a fair character. These constrain you - Both by their example and importunity. To be circumcised - Not so much from a principle of conscience, as lest they should suffer persecution - From the unbelieving Jews. For the cross of Christ - For maintaining that faith in a crucified saviour is alone sufficient for justification.

13. For neither they themselves keep the whole law - So far are they from a real zeal for it. But yet they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh - That they may boast of you as their proselytes, and make a merit of this with the other Jews.

14. But God forbid that I should glory - Should boast of anything I have, am, or do; or rely on anything for my acceptance with God, but what Christ hath done and suffered for me. By means of which the world is crucified to me - All the things and persons in it are to me as nothing. And I unto the world - I am dead to all worldly pursuits, cares, desires, and enjoyments.

15. For neither circumcision is anything, nor uncircumcision - Neither of these is of any account. But a new creation - Whereby all things in us become new.

16. And as many as walk according to this rule -

1. Glorying only in the cross of Christ.
2. Being crucified to the world. And,

3. Created anew. Peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel, that is, the Church, of God - Which consists of all those, and those only, of every nation and kindred, who walk by this rule.

17. From henceforth let none trouble me - By quarrels and disputes. For I bear - And afflictions should not be added to the afflicted. In my body the marks of the Lord Jesus - The scars, marks, and brands of my sufferings for Him.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

EPHESUS was the chief city of that part of Asia, which was a Roman province. Here St. Paul preached for three years, Acts xx, 31; and from hence the gospel was spread throughout the whole province, Acts xix, 10. At his taking leave of the church there, he forewarned them both of great persecutions from without, and of divers heresies and schisms which would arise among themselves. And accordingly he writes this epistle, nearly resembling that to the Colossians, written about the same time, to establish them in the doctrine he had delivered, to arm them against false teachers, and to build them up in love and holiness, both of heart and conversation. He begins this, as most of his epistles, with thanksgiving to God for their embracing and adhering to the gospel. He shows the inestimable blessings and advantages they received thereby, as far above all the Jewish privileges, as all the wisdom and philosophy of the heathens. He proves that our Lord is the Head of the whole church; of angels and spirits, the church triumphant, and of Jews and gentiles, now equally members of the church militant. In the three last chapters he exhorts them to various duties, civil and religious, personal and relative, suitable to their Christian character, privileges, assistances, and obligations. In this epistle we may observe,

I. The inscription, Chap. i. 1, 2

II. The doctrine pathetically explained, which contains,

1. Praise to God for the whole gospel blessing, 3-14 With thanksgiving and prayer for the saints, 15- ii. 10
2. A more particular admonition concerning their once miserable, but now happy, condition, 11-12 A prayer for their establishment, iii. 1-19 A doxology, 20, 21

III. The exhortation,

1. General: to walk worthy of their calling, agreeably to,
   1.The unity of the Spirit, and the diversity of his gifts, C.iv.1-16
   2.The difference between their former and their present state, 17- 24
2. Particular To avoid,
   1. Lying, 25
   2. Anger, 26, 27
   3. Theft, 28
   4. Corrupt communication, 29, 30
   5. Bitterness, 31- 5. 2
   6. Uncleanness, 3-14

7. Drunkenness, 15-21 With a commendation of the opposite virtues To do their duty, as,
   1. Wives and husbands, 22-33
   2. Children and parents, vi. 1-4
   3. Servants and masters, 5-9
3. Final: to war the spiritual warfare, 10-20

IV. The conclusion, 21-24

# EPHESIANS

## I

1. By the will of God - Not by any merit of my own. To the saints who are at Ephesus - And in all the adjacent places. For this epistle is not directed to the Ephesians only, but likewise to all the other churches of Asia.

3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us - God's blessing us is his bestowing all spiritual and heavenly blessings upon us. Our blessing God is the paying him our solemn and grateful acknowledgments, both on account of his own essential blessedness, and of the blessings which he bestows upon us. He is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, as man and Mediator: he is his Father, primarily, with respect to his divine nature, as his only begotten Son; and, secondarily, with respect to his human nature, as that is personally united to the divine. With all spiritual blessings in heavenly things - With all manner of spiritual blessings, which are heavenly in their nature, original, and tendency, and shall be completed in heaven: far different from the external privileges of the Jews, and the earthly blessings they expected from the Messiah.

4. As he hath chosen us - Both Jews and gentiles, whom he foreknew as believing in Christ, 1 Pet. i, 2.

5. Having predestinated us to the adoption of sons - Having foreordained that all who afterwards believed should enjoy the dignity of being sons of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. According to the good pleasure of his will - According to his free, fixed, unalterable purpose to confer this blessing on all those who should believe in Christ, and those only.

6. To the praise of the glory of his grace - His glorious, free love without any desert on our part.

7. By whom we - Who believe. Have - From the moment we believe. Redemption - From the guilt and power of sin. Through his blood - Through what he hath done and suffered for us. According to the riches of his grace - According to the abundant overflowings of his free mercy and favour.

8. In all wisdom - Manifested by God in the whole scheme of our salvation. And prudence - Which be hath wrought in us, that we may know and do all his acceptable and perfect will.

9. Having made known to us - By his word and by his Spirit. The mystery of his will - The gracious scheme of salvation by faith, which depends on his own sovereign will alone. This was but darkly discovered under the law; is now totally hid from unbelievers; and has heights and depths which surpass all the knowledge even of true believers.

10. That in the dispensation of the fulness of the times - In this last administration of God's fullest grace, which took place when the time appointed was fully come. He might gather together into one in Christ - Might recapitulate, re-unite, and place in order again under Christ, their common Head. All things which are in heaven, and on earth - All angels and men, whether living or dead, in the Lord.

11. Through whom we - Jews. Also have obtained an inheritance - The glorious inheritance of the heavenly Canaan, to which, when believers, we were predestinated according to the purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will - The unalterable decree, "He that believeth shall be delivered;" which will is not an arbitrary will, but flowing from the rectitude of his nature, else, what security would there be that it would be his will to keep his word even with the elect?

12. That we - Jews. Who first believed - Before the gentiles. So did some of them in every place. Here is another branch of the true gospel predestination: he that believes is not only elected to salvation, (if he endures to the end,) but is fore-appointed of God to walk in holiness, to the praise of his glory.

13. In whom ye - Gentiles. Likewise believed, after ye had heard the gospel - Which God made the means of your salvation; in whom after ye had believed - Probably some time after their first believing. Ye were sealed by that Holy Spirit of promise - Holy both in his nature and in his operations, and promised to all the children of God. The sealing seems to imply,

1. A full impression of the image of God on their souls.
2. A full assurance of receiving all the promises, whether relating to time or eternity.

14. Who, thus sealing us, is an earnest - Both a pledge and a foretaste of our inheritance. Till the redemption of the purchased possession - Till the church, which he has purchased with his own blood, shall be fully delivered from all sin and sorrow, and advanced to everlasting glory. To the praise of his glory - Of his glorious wisdom, power, and mercy.

15. Since I heard of your faith and love - That is, of their perseverance and increase therein.

16. I cease not - In all my solemn addresses to God. To give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers - So he did of all the churches, Col. i, 9.

17. That the Father of that infinite glory which shines in the face of Christ, from whom also we receive the glorious inheritance, ver. 18, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and Revelation - The same who is the Spirit of promise is also, in the progress of the faithful, the Spirit of wisdom and Revelation; making them wise unto salvation, and revealing to them the deep things of God. He is here speaking of that wisdom and Revelation which are common to all real Christians.

18. The eyes of your understanding - It is with these alone that we discern the things of God. Being first opened, and then enlightened - By his Spirit. That ye may know what is the hope of his calling - That ye may experimentally and delightfully know what are the blessings which God has called you to hope for by his word and his Spirit. And what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints - What an immense treasure of blessedness he hath provided as an inheritance for holy souls.

19. And what the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe - Both in quickening our dead souls, and preserving them in spiritual life. According to the power which he exerted in Christ, raising him from the dead - By the very same almighty power whereby he raised Christ; for no less would suffice.

20. And he hath seated him at his own right hand - That is, he hath exalted him in his human nature, as a recompence for his sufferings, to a quiet, everlasting possession of all possible blessedness, majesty, and glory.

21. Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion - That is, God hath invested him with uncontrollable authority over all demons in hell, all angels in heaven, and all the princes and potentates on earth. And every name that is named - We know the king is above all, though we cannot name all the officers of his court. So we know that Christ is above all, though we are not able to name all his subjects. Not only in this world, but also in that which is to come - The world to come is so styled, not because it does not yet exist, but because it is not yet visible. Principalities and powers are named now; but those also who are not even named in this world, but shall be revealed in the world to come, are all subject to Christ.

22. And he hath given him to be head over all things to the church - An head both of guidance and government, and likewise of life and influence, to the whole and every member of it. All these stand in the nearest union with him, and have as continual and effectual a communication of activity, growth, and strength from him, as the natural body from its head.

23. The fulness of him that filleth all in all - It is hard to say in what sense this can be spoken of the church; but the sense is easy and natural, if we refer it to Christ, who is the fulness of the Father.

## II

1. And he hath quickened you - In the nineteenth and twentieth verses of the preceding chapter, St. Paul spoke of God's working in them by the same almighty power whereby he raised Christ from the dead. On the mention of this he, in the fulness of his heart, runs into a flow of thought concerning the glory of Christ's exaltation in the three following verses. He here resumes the thread of his discourse. Who were dead - Not only diseased, but dead; absolutely void of all spiritual life; and as incapable of quickening yourselves, as persons literally dead. In trespasses and sins-Sins seem to be spoken chiefly of the gentiles, who knew not God; trespasses, of the Jews, who had his law, and yet regarded it not, ver. 5. The latter herein obeyed the flesh; the former, the prince of the power of the air.

2. According to the course of this world - The word translated course properly means a long series of times, wherein one corrupt age follows another. According to the prince of the power of the air - The effect of which power all may perceive, though all do not understand the cause of it: a power unspeakably penetrating and widely diffused; but yet, as to its baneful influences, beneath the orb of believers. The evil spirits are united under one head, the seat of whose dominion is in the air. Here he sometimes raises storms, sometimes makes visionary representations, and is continually roving to and fro. The spirit that now worketh - With mighty power; and so he did, and doth in all ages. In the sons of disobedience - In all who do not believe and obey the gospel.

3. Among whom we - Jews. Also, formerly had our conversation: doing the will of the flesh - In gross, brutal sins. And of the mind - By spiritual, diabolical wickedness. In the former clause, flesh denotes the whole evil nature; in the latter, the body opposed to the soul. And were by nature - That is, in our natural state. Children of wrath - Having the wrath of God abiding on us, even as

the gentiles. This expression, by nature, occurs also, Gal. iv, 8; Rom. ii, 14; and thrice in the eleventh chapter. But in none of these places does it signify, by custom, or practice, or customary practice, as a late writer affirms. Nor can it mean so here For this would make the apostle guilty of gross tautology, their customary sinning having been expressed already, in the former part of the verse. But all these passages agree in expressing what belongs to the nature of the persons spoken of.

4. Mercy removes misery: love confers salvation.

5. He hath quickened us together with Christ - In conformity to him, and by virtue of our union with him. By grace ye are saved - Grace is both the beginning and end. The apostle speaks indifferently either in the first or second person; the Jews and gentiles being in the same circumstance, both by nature and by grace. This text lays the axe to the very root of spiritual pride, and all glorying in ourselves. Therefore St. Paul, foreseeing the backwardness of mankind to receive it, yet knowing the absolute necessity of its being received, again asserts the very same truth, ver. 8, in the very same words.

6. And hath raised us up together - Both Jews and gentiles already in spirit; and ere long our bodies too will be raised. And made us all sit together in heavenly places - This is spoken by way of anticipation. Believers are not yet possessed of their seats in heaven; but each of them has a place prepared for him.

7. The ages to come - That is, all succeeding ages.

8. By grace ye are saved through faith - Grace, without any respect to human worthiness, confers the glorious gift. Faith, with an empty hand, and without any pretense to personal desert, receives the heavenly blessing. And this is not of yourselves - This refers to the whole preceding clause, That ye are saved through faith, is the gift of God.

9. Not by works - Neither this faith nor this salvation is owing to any works you ever did, will, or can do.

10. For we are his workmanship - Which proves both that salvation is by faith, and that faith is the gift of God. Created unto good works - That afterwards we might give ourselves to them. Which God had before preprepared - The occasions of them: so we must still ascribe the whole to God. That we might walk in them - Though not be justified by them.

11. Wherefore remember - Such a remembrance strengthens faith, and increases gratitude. That ye being formerly gentiles in the flesh - Neither circumcised in body nor in spirit. Who were accordingly called the uncircumcision - By way of reproach. By that which is called the circumcision - By those who call themselves the circumcised, and think this a proof that they are the people of God; and who indeed have that outward circumcision which is performed by hands in the flesh.

12. Were at that time without Christ - Having no faith in, or knowledge of, him. Being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel - Both as to their temporal privileges and spiritual blessings. And strangers to the covenants of promise - The great promise in both the Jewish and Christian covenant was the Messiah. Having no hope - Because they had no promise whereon to ground their hope. And being without God - Wholly ignorant of the true God, and so in effect atheists. Such in truth are, more or less, all men, in all ages, till they know God by the teaching of his own Spirit. In the world - The wide, vain world, wherein ye wandered up and down, unholy and unhappy.

13. Far off - From God and his people. Nigh - Intimately united to both.

14. For he is our peace - Not only as he purchased it, but as he is the very bond and center of union. He who hath made both - Jews and gentiles, one church. The apostle describes,

1. The conjunction of the gentiles with Israel, ver. 14, 15. And,

2. The conjunction of both with God, ver. 15-18. Each description is subdivided into two parts. And the former part of the one, concerning abolishing the enmity, answers the former part of the other; the latter part of the one, concerning the evangelical decrees, the latter part of the other. And hath broken down the middle wall of partition - Alluding to that wall of old, which separated the court of Israel from the court of the gentiles. Such a wall was the ceremonial law, which Christ had now taken away.

15. Having abolished by his suffering in the flesh the cause of enmity between the Jews and gentiles, even the law of ceremonial commandments, through his decrees - Which offer mercy to all; see Colossians ii, 14. That he might form the two - Jew and gentile. Into one new man - one mystical body.

16. In one body - One church. Having slain - By his own death on the cross. The enmity - Which had been between sinners and God.

17. And he came - After his resurrection. And preached peace - By his ministers and his Spirit. To you - Gentiles. That were afar off - At the utmost distance from God. And to them that were nigh - To the Jews, who were comparatively nigh, being his visible church.

18. For through him, we both - Jews and gentiles. Have access - Liberty of approaching, by the guidance and aid of one Spirit to God as our Father. Christ, the Spirit, and the Father, the three-one God, stand frequently in the same order.

19. Therefore ye are no longer strangers, but citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem; no longer foreigners, but received into the very family of God.

20. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets - As the foundation sustains the building, so the word of God, declared by the apostles and prophets, sustains the faith of all believers. God laid the foundation by them; but Christ himself is the chief corner-stone of the foundation. Elsewhere he is termed the foundation itself, 1 Cor. iii, 11.

21. On whom all the building fitly framed together - The whole fabric of the universal church rises up like a great pile of living materials. Into an holy temple in the Lord - Dedicated to Christ, and inhabited by him, in which he displays his presence, and is worshipped and glorified. What is the temple of Diana of the Ephesians, whom ye formerly worshipped, to this?

## III

1. For this cause - That ye may be so "built together," I am a prisoner for you gentiles - For your advantage, and for asserting your right to these blessings. This it was which so enraged the Jews against him.

2. The dispensation of the grace of God given me in your behalf - That is, the commission to dispense the gracious gospel; to you gentiles in particular. This they had heard from his own mouth.

3. The mystery - Of salvation by Christ alone, and that both to Jews and gentiles. As I wrote before - Namely, chap. i, 9, 10; the very words of which passage he here repeats.

5. Which in other - In former, ages was not so clearly or fully made known to the sons of men - To any man, no, not to Ezekiel, so often styled, "son of man;" nor to any of the ancient prophets. Those here spoken of are New Testament prophets.

6. That the gentiles are joint-heirs - Of God. And of the same body - Under Christ the head. And joint-partakers of his promise - The communion of the Holy Ghost.

7. According to the gift of the grace of God - That is, the apostle- ship which he hath graciously given me, and which he hath qualified me for. By the effectual working of his power - In me and by me.

8. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given - Here are the noblest strains of eloquence to paint the exceeding low opinion the apostle had of himself, and the fulness of unfathomable blessings which are treasured up in Christ.

9. What is the fellowship of the mystery - What those mysterious blessings are whereof all believers jointly partake. Which was, in a great measure, hidden from eternity by God, who, to make way for the free exercise of his love, created all things - This is the foundation of all his dispensations.

10. That the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church - By what is done in the church, which is the theatre of the divine wisdom.

12. By whom we have free access - Such as those petitioners have, who are introduced to the royal presence by some distinguished favourite. And boldness - Unrestrained liberty of speech, such as children use in addressing an indulgent father, when, without fear of offending, they disclose all their wants, and make known all their requests.

13. The not fainting is your glory.

15. Of whom - The Father. The whole family of angels in heaven, saints in paradise, and believers on earth is named. Being the "children of God," (a more honourable title than "children of Abraham,") and depending on him as the Father of the family.

16. The riches of his glory - The immense fulness of his glorious wisdom, power, and mercy. The inner man - The soul.

17. Dwell - That is, constantly and sensibly abide.

18. That being rooted and grounded - That is, deeply fixed and firmly established, in love. Ye may comprehend - So far as an human mind is capable. What is the breadth of the love of Christ - Embracing all mankind. And length - From everlasting to everlasting. And depth - Not to be fathomed by any creature. And height - Not to be reached by any enemy.

19. And to know - But the apostle corrects himself, and immediately observes, it cannot be fully known. This only we know, that the love of Christ surpasses all knowledge. That ye may be filled - Which is the sum of all. With all the fulness of God - With all his light, love, wisdom, holiness, power, and glory. A perfection far beyond a bare freedom from sin.

20. Now to him - This doxology is admirably adapted to strengthen our faith, that we may not stagger at the great things the apostle has been praying for, as if they were too much for God to give, or for us to expect from him. That is able - Here is a most beautiful gradation. When he has given us exceeding, yea, abundant blessings, still we may ask for more. And he is able to do it. But we may think of more than we have asked. He is able to do this also. Yea, and above all this. Above all we ask - Above all we can think. Nay, exceedingly, abundantly above all that we can either ask or think.

21. In the church - On earth and in heaven.

## IV

1. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord - Imprisoned for his sake and for your sakes; for the sake of the gospel which he had preached amongst them. This was therefore a powerful motive to them to comfort him under it by their obedience.

3. endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit - That mutual union and harmony, which is a fruit of the Spirit. The bond of peace is love.

4. There is one body - The universal church, all believers throughout the world. One Spirit, one Lord, one God and Father - The ever-blessed Trinity. One hope - Of heaven.

5. One outward baptism.

6. One God and Father of all - That believe. Who is above all - Presiding over all his children, operating through them all by Christ, and dwelling in all by his Spirit.

7. According to the measure of the gift of Christ - According as Christ is pleased to give to each.

8. Wherefore he saith - That is, in reference to which God saith by David, Having ascended on high, he led captivity captive - He triumphed over all his enemies, Satan, sin, and death, which had before enslaved all the world: alluding to the custom of ancient conquerors, who led those they had conquered in chains after them. And, as they also used to give donatives to the people, at their return from victory, so he gave gifts to men - Both the ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. Psalm lxviii, 18.

9. Now this expression, He ascended, what is it, but that he descended - That is, does it not imply, that he descended first? Certainly it does, on the supposition of his being God. Otherwise it would not: since all the saints will ascend to heaven, though none of them descended thence. Into the lower parts of the earth - So the womb is called, Psalm cxxxix, 5; the grave, Psalm lxiii, 9.

10. He that descended - That thus amazingly humbled himself. Is the same that ascended - That was so highly exalted. That he might fill all things - The whole church, with his Spirit, presence, and operations.

11. And, among other his free gifts, he gave some apostles - His chief ministers and special witnesses, as having seen him after his resurrection, and received their commission immediately from him. And same prophets, and some evangelists - A prophet testifies of things to come; an evangelist of things past: and that chiefly by preaching the gospel before or after any of the apostles. All these were extraordinary officers. The ordinary were. Some pastors - Watching over their several flocks. And some teachers - Whether of the same or a lower order, to assist them, as occasion might require.

12. In this verse is noted the office of ministers; in the next, the aim of the saints; in the 14th, 15th, 16th, the way of growing in grace. And each of these has three parts, standing in the same order. For the perfecting the saints - The completing them both in number and their various gifts and graces. To the work of the ministry - The serving God and his church in their various ministrations. To the edifying of the body of Christ - The building up this his mystical body in faith, love, holiness.

13. Till we all - And every one of us. Come to the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God - To both an exact agreement in the Christian doctrine, and an experimental knowledge of Christ as the Son of God. To a perfect man - To a state of spiritual manhood both in understanding

and strength. To the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ - To that maturity of age and spiritual stature wherein we shall be filled with Christ, so that he will be all in all.

14. Fluctuating to and fro - From within, even when there is no wind. And carried about with every wind - From without; when we are assaulted by others, who are unstable as the wind. By the sleight of men - By their "cogging the dice;" so the original word implies.

15. Into him - Into his image and Spirit, and into a full union with him.

16. From whom the whole mystical body fitly joined together - All the parts being fitted for and adapted to each other, and most exactly harmonizing with the whole. And compacted - Knit and cemented together with the utmost firmness. Maketh increase by that which every joint supplieth - Or by the mutual help of every joint. According to the effectual working in the measure of every member - According as every member in its measure effectually works for the support and growth of the whole. A beautiful allusion to the human body, composed of different joints and members, knit together by various ligaments, and furnished with vessels of communication from the head to every part.

17. This therefore I say - He returns thither where he begun, ver. 1. And testify in the Lord - In the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus. In the vanity of their mind - Having lost the knowledge of the true God, Rom. i, 21. This is the root of all evil walking.

18. Having their understanding darkened, through the ignorance that is in them - So that they are totally void of the light of God, neither have they any knowledge of his will. Being alienated from the life of God - Utter strangers to the divine, the spiritual life. Through the hardness of their hearts - Callous and senseless. And where there is no sense, there can be no life.

19. Who being past feeling - The original word is peculiarly significant. It properly means, past feeling pain. Pain urges the sick to seek a remedy, which, where there is no pain, is little thought of. Have given themselves up - Freely, of their own accord. Lasciviousness is but one branch of uncleanness, which implies impurity of every kind.

20. But ye have not so learned Christ - That is, ye cannot act thus, now ye know him, since you know the Christian dispensation allows of no sin.

21. Seeing ye have heard him - Teaching you inwardly by his Spirit. As the truth is in Jesus - According to his own gospel.

22. The old man - That is, the whole body of sin. All sinful desires are deceitful; promising the happiness which they cannot give.

23. The spirit of your mind - The very ground of your heart.

24. The new man - Universal holiness. After - In the very image of God.

25. Wherefore - Seeing ye are thus created anew, walk accordingly, in every particular. For we are members one of another - To which intimate union all deceit is quite repugnant.

26. Be ye angry, and sin not - That is, if ye are angry, take heed ye sin not. Anger at sin is not evil; but we should feel only pity to the sinner. If we are angry at the person, as well as the fault, we sin. And how hardly do we avoid it. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath - Reprove your brother, and be reconciled immediately. Lose not one day. A clear, express command. Reader, do you keep it?

27. Neither give place to the devil - By any delay.

28. But rather let him labour - Lest idleness lead him to steal again. And whoever has sinned in any kind ought the more zealously to practice the opposite virtue. That he may have to give - And so be no longer a burden and nuisance, but a blessing, to his neighbours.

29. But that which is good - Profitable to the speaker and hearers. To the use of edifying - To forward them in repentance, faith, or holiness. That it may minister grace - Be a means of conveying more grace into their hearts. Hence we learn, what discourse is corrupt, as it were stinking in the nostrils of God; namely, all that is not profitable, not edifying, not apt to minister grace to the hearers.

30. Grieve not the Holy Spirit - By any disobedience. Particularly by corrupt discourse; or by any of the following sins. Do not force him to withdraw from you, as a friend does whom you grieve by unkind behaviour. The day of redemption - That is, the day of judgment, in which our redemption will be completed.

31. Let all bitterness - The height of settled anger, opposite to kindness, ver. 32. And wrath - Lasting displeasure toward the ignorant, and them that are out of the way, opposite to tenderheartedness. And anger - The very first risings of disgust at those that injure you, opposite to forgiving one another. And clamour - Or bawling. "I am not angry," says one; "but it is my way to speak so." Then unlearn that way: it is the way to hell. And evil speaking - Be it in ever so mild and soft a tone, or with ever such professions of kindness. Here is a beautiful retrogradation, beginning with the highest, and descending to the lowest, degree of the want of love.

32. As God, showing himself kind and tenderhearted in the highest degree, hath forgiven you.

## V

1. Be ye therefore followers - Imitators. Of God - In forgiving and loving. O how much more honourable and more happy, to be an imitator of God, than of Homer, Virgil, or Alexander the Great!

3. But let not any impure love be even named or heard of among you - Keep at the utmost distance from it, as becometh saints.

4. Nor foolish talking - Tittle tattle, talking of nothing, the weather, fashions, meat and drink. Or jesting - The word properly means, wittiness, facetiousness, esteemed by the heathens an half-virtue. But how frequently even this quenches the Spirit, those who are tender of conscience know. Which are not convenient - For a Christian; as neither increasing his faith nor holiness.

6. Because of these things - As innocent as the heathens esteem them, and as those dealers in vain words would persuade you to think them.

8. Ye were once darkness - Total blindness and ignorance. Walk as children of light - Suitably to your present knowledge.

9. The fruit of the light - Opposite to " the unfruitful works of darkness," chap. iv, 11. Is in - That is, consists in. Goodness and righteousness and truth - Opposite to the sins spoken of, chap. iv, 25,&c.

11. Reprove them - To avoid them is not enough.

12. In secret - As flying the light.

13. But all things which are reproved, are thereby dragged out into the light, and made manifest - Shown in their proper colours, by the light. For whatsoever doth make manifest is light - That is, for nothing but light, yea, light from heaven, can make anything manifest.

14. Wherefore he - God. Saith - In the general tenor of his word, to all who are still in darkness. Awake thou that steepest - In ignorance of God and thyself; in stupid insensibility. And arise from the dead - From the death of sin. And Christ shall give thee light - Knowledge, holiness, happiness.

15. Circumspectly - Exactly, with the utmost accuracy, getting to the highest pitch of every point of holiness. Not as fools - Who think not where they are going, or do not make the best of their way.

16. With all possible care redeeming the time - Saving all you can for the best purposes; buying every possible moment out of the hands of sin and Satan; out of the hands of sloth, ease, pleasure, worldly business; the more diligently, because the present are evil days, days of the grossest ignorance, immorality, and profaneness.

17. What the will of the Lord is - In every time, place, and circumstance.

18. Wherein is excess - That is, which leads to debauchery of every kind. But be ye filled with the Spirit - In all his graces, who gives a more noble pleasure than wine can do.

19. Speaking to each other - By the Spirit. In the Psalms - Of David. And hymns - Of praise. And spiritual songs - On any divine subject. By there being no inspired songs, peculiarly adapted to the Christian dispensation, as there were to the Jewish, it is evident that the promise of the Holy Ghost to believers, in the last days, was by his larger effusion to supply the lack of it. Singing with your hearts - As well as your voice. To the Lord - Jesus, who searcheth the heart.

20. Giving thanks - At all times and places. And for all things - Prosperous or adverse, since all work together for good. In the name of, or through, our Lord Jesus Christ - By whom we receive all good things.

22. In the following directions concerning relative duties, the inferiors are all along placed before the superiors, because the general proposition is concerning submission; and inferiors ought to do their duty, whatever their superiors do. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands - Unless where God forbids. Otherwise, in all indifferent things, the will of the husband is a law to the wife. As unto the Lord - The obedience a wife pays to her husband is at the same time paid to Christ himself; he being head of the wife, as Christ is head of the church.

23. The head - The governor, guide, and guardian of the wife. And he is the saviour of the body - The church, from all sin and misery.

24. In everything - Which is not contrary to any command of God.

25. Even as Christ loved the church - Here is the true model of conjugal affection. With this kind of affection, with this degree of it, and to this end, should husbands love their wives.

26. That he might sanctify it through the word - The ordinary channel of all blessings. Having cleansed it - From the guilt and power of sin. By the washing of water - In baptism; if, with "the outward and visible sign," we receive the "inward and spiritual grace."

27. That he might present it - Even in this world. To himself - As his spouse. A glorious church - All glorious within. Not having spot - Of impurity from any sin. Or wrinkle - Of deformity from any decay.

28. As their own bodies - That is, as themselves. He that loveth his wife loveth himself - Which is not a sin, but an indisputable duty.

29. His own flesh - That is, himself. Nourisheth and cherisheth - That is, feeds and clothes it.

30. For we - The reason why Christ nourishes and cherishes the church is, that close connection between them which is here expressed in the words of Moses, originally spoken concerning Eve.

Are members - Are as intimately united to Christ, in a spiritual sense, as if we were literally "flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone."

31. For this cause - Because of this intimate union. Gen. ii, 24.

## VI

1. Children, obey your parents - In all things lawful. The will of the parent is a law to the child. In the Lord - For his sake. For this is right - Manifestly just and reasonable.

2. honour - That is, love, reverence, obey, assist, in all things. The mother is particularly mentioned, as being more liable to be slighted than the father. Which is the first commandment with a promise - For the promise implied in the second commandment does not belong to the keeping that command in particular, but the whole law. Exod. xx, 12

3. That thou mayest live long upon the earth - This is usually fulfilled to eminently dutiful children; and he who lives long and well has a long seed-time for the eternal harvest. But this promise, in the Christian dispensation, is to be understood chiefly in a more exalted and Spiritual sense.

4. And, ye fathers - Mothers are included; but fathers are named, as being more apt to be stern and severe. Provoke not your children to wrath - Do not needlessly fret or exasperate them. But bring them up - With all tenderness and mildness. In the instruction and discipline of the Lord - Both in Christian knowledge and practice.

5. Your masters according to the flesh - According to the present state of things: afterward the servant is free from his master. With fear and trembling - A proverbial expression, implying the utmost care and diligence. In singleness of heart - With a single eye to the providence and will of God.

6. Not with eye-service - Serving them better when under their eye than at other times. But doing the will of God from the heart - Doing whatever you do, as the will of God, and with your might.

7. Unto the Lord, and not to men - That is, rather than to men; and by making every action of common life a sacrifice to God; having an eye to him in all things, even as if there were no other master.

8. He shall receive the same - That is, a full and adequate recompence for it.

9. Do the same things to them - That is, act toward them from the same principle. Forbearing threatening - Behaving with gentleness and humanity, not in a harsh or domineering way.

10. Brethren - This is the only place in this epistle where he uses this compellation. Soldiers frequently use it to each other in the field. Be strong - Nothing less will suffice for such a fight: to be weak, and remain so, is the way to perish. In the power of his might - A very uncommon expression, plainly denoting what great assistance we need as if his might would not do, it must be the powerful exertion of his might.

11. Put on the whole armour of God - The Greek word means a complete suit of armour. Believers are said to put on the girdle, breastplate, shoes; to take the shield of faith, and sword of the Spirit. The whole armour - As if the armour would scarce do, it must be the whole armour. This

is repeated, ver. 13, because of the strength and subtilty of our adversaries, and because of an "evil day" of sore trial being at hand.

12. For our wrestling is not only, not chiefly, against flesh and blood - Weak men, or fleshly appetites. But against principalities, against powers - The mighty princes of all the infernal legions. And great is their power, and that likewise of those legions whom they command. Against the rulers of the world - Perhaps these principalities and powers remain mostly in the citadel of their kingdom of darkness. But there are other evil spirits who range abroad, to whom the provinces of the world are committed. Of the darkness - This is chiefly spiritual darkness. Of this age - Which prevails during the present state of things. Against wicked spirits - Who continually oppose faith, love, holiness, either by force or fraud; and labour to infuse unbelief, pride, idolatry malice, envy, anger, hatred. In heavenly places - Which were once their abode, and which they still aspire to, as far as they are permitted.

13. In the evil day - The war is perpetual; but the fight is one day less, another more, violent. The evil day is either at the approach of death, or in life; may be longer or shorter and admits of numberless varieties. And having done all, to stand - That ye may still keep on your armour, still stand upon your guard, still watch and pray; and thus ye will be enabled to endure unto the end, and stand with joy before the face of the Son of Man.

14. Having your loins girt about - That ye may be ready for every motion. With truth - Not only with the truths of the gospel, but with "truth in the inward parts;" for without this all our knowledge of divine truth will prove but a poor girdle "in the evil day." So our Lord is described, Isaiah xi, 5. And as a girded man is always ready to go on, so this seems to intimate an obedient heart, a ready will. Our Lord adds to the loins girded, the lights burning, Luke xii, 35; showing that watching and ready obedience are the inseparable companions of faith and love. And having on the breastplate of righteousness - The righteousness of a spotless purity, in which Christ will present us faultless before God, through the merit of his own blood. With this breastplate our Lord is described, Isaiah lix, 17. In the breast is the seat of conscience, which is guarded by righteousness. No armour for the back is mentioned. We are always to face our enemies.

15. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel - Let this be always ready to direct and confirm you in every step. This part of the armour, for the feet, is needful, considering what a journey we have to go; what a race to run. Our feet must be so shod, that our footsteps slip not. To order our life and conversation aright, we are prepared by the gospel blessing, the peace and love of God ruling in the heart, Colossians iii, 14, 15. By this only can we tread the rough ways, surmount our difficulties, and hold out to the end.

16. Above or over all - As a sort of universal covering to every other part of the armour itself, continually exercise a strong and lively faith. This you may use as a shield, which will quench all the fiery darts, the furious temptations, violent and sudden injections of the devil.

17. And take for an helmet the hope of salvation - 1 Thess. v, 8. The head is that part which is most carefully to be defended. One stroke here may prove fatal. The armour for this is the hope of salvation. The lowest degree of this hope is a confidence that God will work the whole work of faith in us; the highest is a full assurance of future glory, added to the experimental knowledge of pardoning love. Armed with this helmet, the hope of the joy set before him, Christ "endured the cross, and despised the shame," Heb. xii, 2. And the sword of the Spirit, the word of God - This Satan cannot withstand, when it is edged and wielded by faith. Till now our armour has been only defensive. But we are to attack Satan, as well as secure ourselves; the shield in one hand, and the

sword in the other. Whoever fights with the powers of hell will need both. He that is covered with armour from head to foot, and neglects this, will be foiled after all. This whole description shows us how great a thing it is to be a Christian. The want of any one thing makes him incomplete. Though he has his loins girt with truth, righteousness for a breastplate, his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit; yet one thing he wants after all. What is that? It follows,

18. Praying always - At all times, and on every occasion, in midst of all employments, inwardly praying without ceasing. By the Spirit - Through the influence of the Holy Spirit. With all prayer - With all sort of prayer, public, private, mental, vocal. Some are careful in respect of one kind of prayer, and negligent in others. If we would have the petitions we ask, let us use all. Some there are who use only mental prayer or ejaculations, and think they are in a state of grace, and use a way of worship, far superior to any other: but such only fancy themselves to be above what is really above them; it requiring far more grace to be enabled to pour out a fervent and continued prayer, than to offer up mental aspirations. And supplication - Repeating and urging our prayer, as Christ did in the garden. And watching - Inwardly attending on God, to know his will, to gain power to do it, and to attain to the blessings we desire. With all perseverance - Continuing to the end in this holy exercise. And supplication for all the saints - Wrestling in fervent, continued intercession for others, especially for the faithful, that they may do all the will of God, and be steadfast to the end. Perhaps we receive few answers to prayer, because we do not intercede enough for others.

19. By the opening my mouth - Removing every inward and every outward hindrance.

20. An ambassador in bonds - The ambassadors of men usually appear in great pomp. How differently does the ambassador of Christ appear!

21. Ye also - As well as others.

22. That he might comfort your hearts - By relating the supports I find from God, and the success of the gospel.

23. Peace - This verse recapitulates the whole epistle.

24. In sincerity - Or in incorruption; without corrupting his genuine gospel, without any mixture of corrupt affections. And that with continuance, till grace issue in glory.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

PHILIPPI was so called from Philip, king of Macedonia, who much enlarged and beautified it. Afterwards it became a Roman colony, and the chief city of that part of Macedonia. Hither St. Paul was sent by a vision to preach and here, not long after his coming, he was shamefully entreated. Nevertheless many were converted by him, during the short time of his abode there; by whose liberality he was more assisted than by any other church of his planting. And they had now sent large assistance to him by Epaphroditus; by whom he returns them this epistle. It contains six parts:

I. The inscription, Chap. i. 1, 2

II. Thanksgiving and prayers for them, 3-11

III.He relates his present state and good hope: 12-24 Whence he exhorts them,

1. While he remains with them to walk worthy of the gospel, 25- 30 ii. 1-16

2. Though he should be killed, to rejoice with him, 17, 18 And promises,
    1. To certify them of all things by Timotheus, 19-24
    2. In the mean time to send Epaphroditus, 25-30

IV. He exhorts them to rejoice, iii. 1-3 admonishing them to beware of false teachers, and to imitate the true, 2-21 commending concord, iv. 1-3 He again exhorts them to joy and meekness 4-7 and to whatsoever things are excellent, 8-9

V. He accepts of their liberality, 10-20

VI. The conclusion, 21-23

# PHILIPPIANS

## I

1. Servants - St. Paul, writing familiarly to the Philippians, does not style himself an apostle. And under the common title of servants, he tenderly and modestly joins with himself his son Timotheus, who had come to Philippi not long after St. Paul had received him, Acts xvi, 3, 12. To all the saints - The apostolic epistles were sent more directly to the churches, than to the pastors of them. With the bishops and deacons - The former properly took care of the internal state, the latter, of the externals, of the church, 1 Tim. iii, 2-8; although these were not wholly confined to the one, neither those to the other. The word bishops here includes all the presbyters at Philippi, as well as the ruling presbyters: the names bishop and presbyter, or elder, being promiscuously used in the first ages.

4. With joy - After the epistle to the Ephesians, wherein love reigns, follows this, wherein there is perpetual mention of joy. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy." And joy peculiarly enlivens prayer. The sum of the whole epistle is, I rejoice. Rejoice ye.

5. The sense is, I thank God for your fellowship with us in all the blessings of the gospel, which I have done from the first day of your receiving it until now.

6. Being persuaded - The grounds of which persuasion are set down in the following verse. That he who hath begun a good work in you, will perfect it until the day of Christ - That he who having justified, hath begun to sanctify you, will carry on this work, till it issue in glory.

7. As it is right for me to think this of you all - Why? He does not say, "Because of an eternal decree;" or, "Because a saint must persevere;" but, because I have you in my heart, who were all partakers of my grace - That is, because ye were all (for which I have you in my heart, I bear you the most grateful and tender affection) partakers of my grace - That is, sharers in the afflictions which God vouchsafed me as a grace or favour, ver. 29, 30; both in my bonds, and when I was called forth to answer for myself, and to confirm the gospel. It is not improbable that, after they had endured that great trial of affliction, God had sealed them unto full victory, of which the apostle had a prophetic sight.

8. I long for you with the bowels of Jesus Christ - In Paul, not Paul lives, but Jesus Christ. Therefore he longs for them with the bowels, the tenderness, not of Paul, but of Jesus Christ.

9. And this I pray, that your love - Which they had already shown. May abound yet more and more - The fire which burned in the apostle never says, It is enough. In knowledge and in all spiritual sense - Which is the ground of all spiritual knowledge. We must be inwardly sensible of divine peace, joy, love; otherwise, we cannot know what they are.

10. That ye may try - By that spiritual sense. The things that are excellent - Not only good, but the very best; the superior excellence of which is hardly discerned, but by the adult Christian. That ye may be inwardly sincere - Having a single eye to the very best things, and a pure heart. And outwardly without offense - Holy, unblamable in all things.

11. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God - Here are three properties of that sincerity which is acceptable to God:

1. It must bear fruits, the fruits of righteousness, all inward and outward holiness, all good tempers, words, and works; and that so abundantly, that we may be filled with them.
2. The branch and the fruits must derive both their virtue and their very being from the all - supporting, all - supplying root, Jesus Christ.
3. As all these flow from the grace of Christ, so they must issue in the glory and praise of God.

12. The things concerning me - My sufferings. Have fallen out rather to the furtherance, than, as you feared, the hindrance, of the gospel.

13. My bonds in Christ - Endured for his sake. Have been made manifest - Much taken notice of. In the whole palace - Of the Roman emperor.

14. And many - Who were before afraid. Trusting in the Lord through my bonds - When they observed my constancy, and safety not withstanding, are more bold.

15, 16. Some indeed preach Christ out of contention - Envying St. Paul's success, and striving to hurt him thereby. Not sincerely - From a real desire to glorify God. But supposing - Though they were disappointed. To add more affliction to my bonds - By enraging the Roman against me.

17. But the others out of love - To Christ and me. Knowing - Not barely, supposing. That I am set - Literally, I lie; yet still going forward in his work. He remained at Rome as an ambassador in a place where he is employed on an important embassy.

18. In pretense - Under colour of propagating the gospel. In truth - With a real design so to do.

19. This shall turn to my salvation - Shall procure me an higher degree of glory. Through your prayer - Obtaining for me a larger supply of the Spirit.

20. As always - Since my call to the apostleship. In my body - however it may be disposed of. How that might be, he did not yet know. For the apostles did not know all things; particularly in things pertaining to themselves, they had room to exercise faith and patience.

21. To me to live is Christ - To know, to love, to follow Christ, is my life, my glory, my joy.

22. Here he begins to treat of the former clause of the preceding verse. Of the latter he treats, chap. ii, 17. But if I am to live is the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour - This is the fruit of my living longer, that I can labour more. Glorious labour! desirable fruit! in this view, long life is indeed a blessing. And what I should choose I know not - That is, if it were left to my choice.

23. To depart - Out of bonds, flesh, the world. And to be with Christ - In a nearer and fuller union. It is better to depart; it is far better to be with Christ.

25. I know - By a prophetic notice given him while he was writing this. That I shall continue some time longer with you - And doubtless he did see them after this confinement.

27. Only - Be careful for this, and nothing else. Stand fast in one spirit - With the most perfect unanimity. Striving together - With united strength and endeavours. For the faith of the gospel - For all the blessings revealed and promised therein.

28. Which - Namely, their being adversaries to the word of God, and to you the messengers of God. Is an evident token - That they are in the high road to perdition; and you, in the way of salvation.

29. For to you it is given - As a special token of God's love, and of your being in the way of salvation.

30. Having the same kind of conflict with your adversaries, which ye saw in me - When I was with you, Acts xvi, 12, 19, &c.

## II

1. If there be therefore any consolation - In the grace of Christ. If any comfort - In the love of God. If any fellowship of the Holy Ghost; if any bowels of mercies - Resulting therefrom; any tender affection towards each other.

2. Think the same thing - Seeing Christ is your common Head. Having the same love - To God, your common Father. Being of one soul - Animated with the same affections and tempers, as ye have all drank ill to one spirit. Of one mind - Tenderly rejoicing and grieving together.

3. Do nothing through contention - Which is inconsistent with your thinking the same thing. Or vainglory - Desire of praise, which is directly opposite to the love of God. But esteem each the others better than themselves - (For every one knows more evil of himself than he can of another:) Which is a glorious fruit of the Spirit, and an admirable help to your continuing "of one soul."

4. Aim not every one at his own things - Only. If so, ye have not bowels of mercies.

6. Who being in the essential form - The incommunicable nature. Of God - From eternity, as he was afterward in the form of man; real God, as real man. Counted it no act of robbery - That is the precise meaning of the words, - no invasion of another's prerogative, but his own strict and unquestionable right. To be equal with God - the word here translated equal, occurs in the adjective form five or six times in the New Testament, Matt. xx, 12; Luke vi, 34; John v, 18; Acts xi, 17; Rev. xxi, 16. In all which places it expresses not a bare resemblance, but a real and proper equalitg. It here implies both the fulness and the supreme height of the Godhead; to which are opposed, he emptied and he humbled himself.

7. Yet - He was so far from tenaciously insisting upon, that he willingly relinquished, his claim. He was content to forego the glories of the Creator, and to appear in the form of a creature; nay, to be made in the likeness of the fallen creatures; and not only to share the disgrace, but to suffer the punishment, due to the meanest and vilest among them all. He emptied himself - Of that divine fulness, which he received again at his exaltation. Though he remained full, John i, 14, yet he appeared as if he had been empty; for he veiled his fulness from the sight of men and angels. Yea, he not only veiled, but, in some sense, renounced, the glory which he had before the world began. Taking - And by that very act emptying himself. The form of a servant - The form, the likeness, the fashion, though not exactly the same, are yet nearly related to each other. The form expresses something absolute; the likeness refers to other things of the same kind; the fashion respects what

appears to sight and sense. Being made in the likeness of men - A real man, like other men. Hereby he took the form of a servant.

8. And being found in fashion as a man - A common man, without any peculiar excellence or comeliness. He humbled himself - To a still greater depth. Becoming obedient - To God, though equal with him. Even unto death - The greatest instance both of humiliation and obedience. Yea, the death of the cross - Inflicted on few but servants or slaves.

9. Wherefore - Because of his voluntary humiliation and obedience. He humbled himself; but God hath exalted him - So recompensing his humiliation. And hath given him - So recompensing his emptying himself. A name which is above every name - Dignity and majesty superior to every creature.

10. That every knee - That divine honour might be paid in every possible manner by every creature. Might bow - Either with love or trembling. Of those in heaven, earth, under the earth - That is, through the whole universe.

11. And every tongue - Even of his enemies. Confess that Jesus Christ is Lord - Jehovah; not now "in the form of a servant," but enthroned in the glory of God the Father.

12. Wherefore - Having proposed Christ's example, he exhorts them to secure the salvation which Christ has purchased. As ye have always - Hitherto. Obeyed - Both God, and me his minister. Now in my absence - When ye have not me to instruct, assist, and direct you. Work out your own salvation - Herein let every man aim at his own things. With fear and trembling - With the utmost care and diligence.

13. For it is God - God alone, who is with you, though I am not. That worketh in you according to his good pleasure - Not for any merit of yours. Yet his influences are not to supersede, but to encourage, our own efforts. Work out your own salvation - Here is our duty. For it is God that worketh in you - Here is our encouragement. And O, what a glorious encouragement, to have the arm of Omnipotence stretched out for our support and our succor!

14. Do all things - Not only without contention, ver. 3, but even without murmurings and disputings - Which are real, though smaller, hindrances of love.

15. That ye may be blameless - Before men. And simple - Before God, aiming at him alone. As the sons of God - The God of love; acting up to your high character. Unrebukable in the midst of a crooked - Guileful, serpentine, and perverse generation - Such as the bulk of mankind always were. Crooked - By a corrupt nature, and yet more perverse by custom and practice.

17. Here he begins to treat of the latter clause of chap. i, 22. Yea, and if I be offered - Literally, If I be poured out. Upon the sacrifice of your faith - The Philippians, as the other converted heathens, were a sacrifice to God through St. Paul's ministry, Rom. xv, 16. And as in sacrificing, wine was poured at the foot of the altar, so he was willing that his blood should be poured out. The expression well agrees with that kind of martyrdom by which he was afterwards offered up to God.

18. Congratulate me - When I am offered up.

19. When I know - Upon my return, that ye stand steadfast.

20. I have none - Of those who are now with me.

21. For all - But Timotheus. Seek their own - Ease, safety, pleasure, or profit. Amazing! In that golden age of the church, could St. Paul throughly approve of one only, among all the labourers that were with him? chap. i, 14, 17. And how many do we think can now approve themselves to God? Not the things of Jesus Christ - They who seek these alone, will sadly experience this. They will find few helpers likeminded with themselves, willing naked to follow a naked Master.

22. As a son with his father - He uses an elegant peculiarity of phrase, speaking partly as of a son, partly as of a fellowlabourer.

25. To send Epaphroditus - Back immediately. Your messenger - The Philippians had sent him to St. Paul with their liberal contribution.

26. He was full of heaviness - Because he supposed you would be afflicted at hearing that he was sick.

27. God had compassion on him - Restoring him to health.

28. That I may be the less sorrowful - When I know you are rejoicing.

30. To supply your deficiency of service - To do what you could not do in person.

## III

1. The same things - Which you have heard before.

2. Beware of dogs - Unclean, unholy, rapacious men. The title which the Jews usually gave the gentiles, he returns upon themselves. The concision - Circumcision being now ceased, the apostle will not call them the circumcision, but coins a term on purpose, taken from a Greek word used by the LXX, Lev. xxi, 5, for such a cutting as God had forbidden.

3. For we - Christians. Are the only true circumcision - The people now in covenant with God. Who worship God in spirit - Not barely in the letter, but with the spiritual worship of inward holiness. And glory in Christ Jesus - As the only cause of all our blessings. And have no confidence in the flesh - In any outward advantage or prerogative.

4. Though I - He subjoins this in the singular number, because the Philippians could not say thus.

5. Circumcised the eighth day - Not at ripe age, as a proselyte. Of the tribe of Benjamin - Sprung from the wife, not the handmaid. An Hebrew of Hebrews - By both my parents; in everything, nation, religion, language. Touching the law, a pharisee - One of that sect who most accurately observe it.

6. Having such a zeal for it as to persecute to the death those who did not observe it. Touching the righteousness which is described and enjoined by the Law - That is, external observances, blameless.

7. But all these things, which I then accounted gain, which were once my confidence, my glory, and joy, those, ever since I have believed, I have accounted loss, nothing worth in comparison of Christ.

8. Yea, I still account both all these and all things else to be mere loss, compared to the inward, experimental knowledge of Christ, as my Lord, as my prophet, priest, and king, as teaching me wisdom, atoning for my sins, and reigning in my heart. To refer this to justification only, is miserably to pervert the whole scope of the words. They manifestly relate to sanctification also; yea, to that chiefly. For whom I have actually suffered the loss of all things - Which the world loves, esteems, or admires; of which I am so far from repenting, that I still account them but dung - The discourse rises. Loss is sustained with patience, but dung is cast away with abhorrence. The Greek word signifies any, the vilest refuse of things, the dross of metals, the dregs of liquors, the excrements of animals, the most worthless scraps of meat, the basest offals, fit only for dogs. That I may gain

Christ - He that loses all things, not excepting himself, gains Christ, and is gained by Christ. And still there is more; which even St. Paul speaks of his having not yet gained.

9. And be found by God ingrafted in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law - That merely outward righteousness prescribed by the law, and performed by my own strength. But that inward righteousness which is through faith - Which can flow from no other fountain. The righteousness which is from God - From his almighty Spirit, not by my own strength, but by faith alone. Here also the apostle is far from speaking of justification only.

10. The knowledge of Christ, mentioned in the eighth verse, is here more largely explained. That I may know him - As my complete saviour. And the power of his resurrection - Raising me from the death of sin, into all the life of love. And the fellowship of his sufferings - Being crucified with him. And made conformable to his death - So as to be dead to all things here below.

11. The resurrection of the dead - That is, the resurrection to glory.

12. Not that I have already attained - The prize. He here enters on a new set of metaphors, taken from a race. But observe how, in the utmost fervour, he retains his sobriety of spirit. Or am already perfected - There is a difference between one that is perfect, and one that is perfected. The one is fitted for the race, ver. 15; the other, ready to receive the prize. But I pursue, if I may apprehend that - Perfect holiness, preparatory to glory. For, in order to which I was apprehended by Christ Jesus - Appearing to me in the way, Acts xxvi, 14. The speaking conditionally both here and in the preceding verse, implies no uncertainty, but only the difficulty of attaining.

13. I do not account myself to have apprehended this already; to be already possessed of perfect holiness.

14. Forgetting the things that are behind - Even that part of the race which is already run. And reaching forth unto - Literally, stretched out over the things that are before - Pursuing with the whole bent and vigour of my soul, perfect holiness and eternal glory. In Christ Jesus - The author and finisher of every good thing.

15. Let us, as many as are perfect - Fit for the race, strong in faith; so it means here. Be thus minded - Apply wholly to this one thing. And if in anything ye - Who are not perfect, who are weak in faith. Be otherwise minded - Pursuing other things. God, if ye desire it, shall reveal even this unto you - Will convince you of it.

16. But let us take care not to lose the ground we have already gained. Let us walk by the same rule we have done hitherto.

17. Mark them - For your imitation.

18. Weeping - As he wrote. Enemies of the cross of Christ - Such are all cowardly, all shamefaced, all delicate Christians.

19. Whose end is destruction - This is placed in the front, that what follows may be read with the greater horror. Whose God is their belly - Whose supreme happiness lies in gratifying their sensual appetites. Who mind - Relish, desire, seek, earthly things.

20. Our conversation - The Greek word is of a very extenslve meaning: our citizenship, our thoughts, our affections, are already in heaven.

21. Who will transform our vile body - Into the most perfect state, and the most beauteous form. It will then be purer than the unspotted firmament, brighter than the lustre of the stars and, which exceeds all parallel, which comprehends all perfection, like unto his glorious body - Like that wonderfully glorious body which he wears in his heavenly kingdom, and on his triumphant throne.

## IV

1. So stand - As ye have done hitherto.

2. I beseech - He repeats this twice, as if speaking to each face to face, and that with the utmost tenderness.

3. And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow - St. Paul had many fellowlabourers, but not many yokefellows. In this number was Barnabas first, and then Silas, whom he probably addresses here; for Silas had been his yokefellow at the very place, Acts xvi, 19. Help those women who laboured together with me - Literally, who wrestled. The Greek word doth not imply preaching, or anything of that kind; but danger and toil endured for the sake of the gospel, which was also endured at the same time, probably at Philippi, by Clement and my other fellowlabourers - This is a different word from the former, and does properly imply fellowpreachers. Whose names, although not set down here, are in the book of life - As are those of all believers. An allusion to the wrestlers in the Olympic games, whose names were all enrolled in a book. Reader, is thy name there? Then walk circumspectly, lest the Lord blot thee out of his book!

5. Let your gentleness - Yieldingness, sweetness of temper, the result of joy in the Lord. Be known - By your whole behaviour. To all men - Good and bad, gentle and froward. Those of the roughest tempers are good natured to some, from natural sympathy and various motives; a Christian, to all. The Lord - The judge, the rewarder, the avenger. Is at hand - Standeth at the door.

6. Be anxiously careful for nothing - If men are not gentle towards you, yet neither on this, nor any other account, be careful, but pray. Carefulness and prayer cannot stand together. In every thing - Great and small. Let your requests be made known - They who by a preposterous shame or distrustful modesty, cover, stifle, or keep in their desires, as if they were either too small or too great, must be racked with care; from which they are entirely delivered, who pour them out with a free and filial confidence. To God - It is not always proper to disclose them to men. By supplication - Which is the enlarging upon and pressing our petition. With thanksgiving - The surest mark of a soul free from care, and of prayer joined with true resignation. This is always followed by peace. Peace and thanksgiving are both coupled together, Colossians iii, 15.

7. And the peace of God - That calm, heavenly repose, that tranquility of spirit, which God only can give. Which surpasseth all understanding - Which none can comprehend, save he that receiveth it. Shall keep - Shall guard, as a garrison does a city. Your hearts - Your affections. Your minds - Your understandings, and all the various workings of them; through the Spirit and power of Christ Jesus, in the knowledge and love of God. Without a guard set on these likewise, the purity and vigour of our affections cannot long be preserved.

8. Finally - To sum up all. Whatsoever things are true - Here are eight particulars placed in two fourfold rows; the former containing their duty; the latter, the commendation of it. The first word in the former row answers the first in the latter; the second word, the second and so on. True - In speech. Honest - In action. Just - With regard to others. Pure - With regard to yourselves. Lovely - And what more lovely than truth? Of good report - As is honesty, even where it is not practiced. If there be any virtue - And all virtues are contained in justice. If there be any praise - In those things which relate rather to ourselves than to our neighbour. Think on these things - That ye may both practice them yourselves, and recommend them to others.

9. The things which ye have learned - As catechumens. And received - By continual instructions. And heard and seen - In my life and conversation. These do, and the God of peace shall be with you - Not only the peace of God, but God himself, the fountain of peace.

10. I rejoiced greatly - St. Paul was no Stoic: he had strong passions, but all devoted to God. That your care of me hath flourished again - As a tree blossoms after the winter. Ye wanted opportunity - Either ye had not plenty yourselves, or you wanted a proper messenger.

11. I have learned - From God. He only can teach this. In everything, therewith to be content - Joyfully and thankfully patient. Nothing less is Christian content. We may observe a beautiful gradation in the expressions, I have learned; I know; I am instructed; I can.

12. I know how to be abased - Having scarce what is needful for my body. And to abound - Having wherewith to relieve others also. Presently after, the order of the words is inverted, to intimate his frequent transition from scarcity to plenty, and from plenty to scarcity. I am instructed - Literally, I am initiated in that mystery, unknown to all but Christians. Both to be full and to be hungry - For one day. Both to abound and to want - For a longer season.

13. I can do all things - Even fulfil all the will of God.

15. In the beginning of the gospel - When it was first preached at Philippi. In respect of giving - On your part. And receiving - On mine.

17. Not that I desire - For my own sake, the very gift which I receive of you.

18. An odour of a sweet smell - More pleasing to God than the sweetest perfumes to men.

19. All your need - As ye have mine. According to his riches in glory - In his abundant, eternal glory.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

COLOSSE was a city of the Greater Phrygia, not far from Laodicea and Hierapolis. Though St. Paul preached in many parts of Phrygia, yet he never had been at this city. It had received the gospel by the preaching of Epaphras, who was with St. Paul when he wrote this epistle. It seems the Colossians were now in danger of being seduced by those who strove to blend Judaism, or heathen superstitions, with Christianity; pretending that God, because of his great majesty, was not to be approached but by the mediation of angels; and that they were certain rites and observances, chiefly borrowed from the law, whereby these angels might be made our friends. In opposition to them, the apostle,

1. Commends the knowledge of Christ, as more excellent than all other, and so entire and perfect that no other knowledge was necessary for a Christian. He shows,
2. That Christ is above all angels, who are only his servants; and that, being reconciled to God through him, we have free access to him in all our necessities.

This epistle contains,

I. The inscription, Chap. i. 1, 2

II. The doctrine, wherein the apostle pathetically explains the mystery of Christ, By thanksgiving for the Colossians, 3-8 By prayers for them, 9-23 With a declaration of his affection for them, 24-29 ii. 1-3

III. The exhortation,
1. General, wherein he excites them to perseverance, and warns them not to be deceived, 4-8 Describes again the mystery of Christ in order, 9-15 And in the same order, draws his admonitions,
1. From Christ the head, 16-19
2. From his death, 20-23
3. From his exaltation, iii. 1-4
2. Particular, 5-9
1. To avoid several vices,
2. To practice several virtues, 10, 11 Especially to love one another, 12-15 And study the scriptures 16, 17
3. To the relative duties of wives and husbands,. 18, 19 Children and parents, 20, 21 Servants and masters, 22-25 iv.1 Final, to prayer, 2-4 to spiritual wisdom 5, 6
V. The conclusion, 7-16

# COLOSSIANS

## I

2. The saints-This word expresses their union with God. And brethren - This, their union with their fellow-Christians.

3. We give thanks - There is a near resemblance between this epistle, and those to the Ephesians and Philippians.

5. Ye heard before - I wrote to you. In the word of truth, of the gospel - The true gospel preached to you.

6. It bringeth forth fruit in all the world - That is, in every place where it is preached. Ye knew the grace of God in truth - Truly experienced the gracious power of God.

7. The fellowservant - Of Paul and Timotheus.

8. Your love in the Spirit - Your love wrought in you by the Spirit.

9. We pray for you - This was mentioned in general, Colossians i, 3, but now more particularly. That ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will - Of his revealed will. In all wisdom - With all the wisdom from above. And spiritual understanding - To discern by that light whatever agrees with, or differs from, his will.

10. That, knowing his whole will, ye may walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing - So as actually to please him in all things; daily increasing in the living, experimental knowledge of God, our Father, saviour, Sanctifier.

11. Strengthened unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness - This is the highest point: not only to know, to do, to suffer, the whole will of God; but to suffer it to the end, not barely with patience, but with thankful joy.

12. Who, by justifying and sanctifying us, hath made us meet for glory.

13. Power detains reluctant captives, a kingdom cherishes willing subjects. His beloved Son - This is treated of in the fifteenth and following verses.

14. In whom we have redemption - This is treated of from the middle of Colossians i, 18. The voluntary passion of our Lord appeased the Father's wrath, obtained pardon and acceptance for us, and, consequently, dissolved the dominion and power which Satan had over us through our sins. So that forgiveness is the beginning of redemption, as the resurrection is the completion of it.

15. Who is - By describing the glory of Christ, and his pre- eminence over the highest angels, the apostle here lays a foundation for the reproof of all worshippers of angels. The image of the invisible God - Whom none can represent, but his only begotten Son; in his divine nature the invisible image, in his human the visible image, of the Father. The first begotten of every creature - That is, begotten before every creature; subsisting before all worlds, before all time, from all eternity.

16. For - This explains the latter part of the preceding verse. Through implies something prior to the particles by and for; so denoting the beginning, the progress, and the end. Him - This word, frequently repeated, signifies his supreme majesty, and excludes every creature. Were created all things that are in heaven - And heaven itself. But the inhabitants are named, because more noble than the house. Invisible - The several species of which are subjoined. Thrones are superior to dominions; principalities, to powers. Perhaps the two latter may express their office with regard to other creatures: the two former may refer to God, who maketh them his chariots, and, as it were, rideth upon their wings.

17. And he is before all things - It is not said, he was: he is from everlasting to everlasting. And by him all things consist - The original expression not only implies, that he sustains all things in being, but more directly, All things were and are compacted in him into one system. He is the cement, as well as support, of the universe. And is he less than the supreme God?

18. And - From the whole he now descends to the most eminent part, the church. He is the head of the church - Universal; the supreme and only head both of influence and of government to the whole body of believers. Who is - The repetition of the expression { Colossians i, 15} points out the entrance on a new paragraph. The beginning - Absolutely, the Eternal. The first begotten from the dead - From whose resurrection flows all the life, spiritual and eternal, of all his brethren. That in all things - Whether of nature or grace. He might have the pre-eminence - Who can sound this depth?

19. For it pleased the Father that all fulness - All the fulness of God. Should dwell in him - Constantly, as in a temple; and always ready for our approach to him.

20. Through the blood of the cross - The blood shed thereon. Whether things on earth - Here the enmity began: therefore this is mentioned first. Or things in heaven - Those who are now in paradise; the saints who died before Christ came.

21. And you that were alienated, and enemies - Actual alienation of affection makes habitual enmity. In your mind - Both your understanding and your affections. By wicked works - Which continually feed and increase inward alienation from, and enmity to, God. He hath now reconciled - From the moment ye believed.

22. By the body of his flesh - So distinguished from his body, the church. The body here denotes his entire manhood. Through death - Whereby he purchased the reconciliation which we receive by faith. To present you - The very end of that reconciliation. Holy - Toward God. Spotless - In yourselves. Unreprovable - As to your neighbour.

23. If ye continue in the faith - Otherwise, ye will lose all the blessings which ye have already begun to enjoy. And be not removed from the hope of the gospel - The glorious hope of perfect love. Which is preached - Is already begun to be preached to every creature under heaven.

24. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up - That is, whereby I fill up. That which is behind of the sufferings of Christ - That which remains to be suffered by his members. These are termed the sufferings of Christ,

1. Because the suffering of any member is the suffering of the whole; and of the head especially, which supplies strength, spirits, sense, and motion to all.
2. Because they are for his sake, for the testimony of his truth. And these also are necessary for the church; not to reconcile it to God, or satisfy for sin, (for that Christ did perfectly,) but for example to others, perfecting of the saints, and increasing their reward.

25. According to the dispensation of God which is given me - Or, the stewardship with which I am intrusted.

26. The mystery - Namely, Christ both justifying and sanctifying gentiles, as well as Jews. Which hath been comparatively hid from former ages and past generations of men.

27. Christ dwelling and reigning in you, The hope of glory - The ground of your hope.

28. We teach the ignorant, and admonish them that are already taught.

## II

1. How great a conflict - Of care, desire, prayer. As many as have not seen my face - Therefore, in writing to the Colossians, he refrains from those familiar appellations, "Brethren," "Beloved."

2. Unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the acknowledgment of the mystery of God - That is, unto the fullest and clearest understanding and knowledge of the gospel.

6. So walk in him - In the same faith, love, holiness.

7. Rooted in him - As the vine. Built - On the sure foundation.

8. Through philosophy and empty deceit - That is, through the empty deceit of philosophy blended with Christianity. This the apostle condemns,

1. Because it was empty and deceitful, promising happiness, but giving none.
2. Because it was grounded, not on solid reason, but the traditions of men, Zeno, Epicurus, and the rest. And,
3. Because it was so shallow and superficial, not advancing beyond the knowledge of sensible things; no, not beyond the first rudiments of them.

9. For in him dwelleth - Inhabiteth, continually abideth, all the fulness of the Godhead. Believers are "filled with all the fulness of God," Eph. iii, 19. But in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead; the most full Godhead; not only divine powers, but divine nature, Colossians i, 19. Bodily - Personally, really, substantially. The very substance of God, if one might so speak, dwells in Christ in the most full sense.

10. And ye - Who believe. Are filled with him - John i, 16. Christ is filled with God, and ye are filled with Christ. And ye are filled by him. The fulness of Christ overflows his church, Psalm cxxxiii, 3. He is originally full. We are filled by him with wisdom and holiness. Who is the head

of all principality and power - Of angels as well as men Not from angels therefore, but from their head, are we to ask whatever we stand in need of.

11. By whom also ye have been circumcised - Ye have received the spiritual blessings typified of old by circumcision. With a circumcision not performed with hands - By an inward, spiritual operation. In putting off, not a little skin, but the whole body of the sins of the flesh - All the sins of your evil nature. By the circumcision of Christ - By that spiritual circumcision which Christ works in your heart.

12. Which he wrought in you, when ye were as it were buried with him in baptism - The ancient manner of baptizing by immersion is as manifestly alluded to here, as the other manner of baptizing by sprinkling or pouring of water is, Heb. x, 22. But no stress is laid on the age of the baptized, or the manner of performing it, in one or the other; but only on our being risen with Christ, through the powerful operation of God in the soul; which we cannot but know assuredly, if it really is so: and if we do not experience this, our baptism has not answered the end of its institution. By which ye are also risen with him - From the death of sin to the life of holiness. It does not appear, that in all this St. Paul speaks of justification at all, but of sanctification altogether.

13. And you who were dead - Doubly dead to God, not only wallowing in trespasses, outward sins, but also in the uncircumcision of your flesh - A beautiful expression for original sin, the inbred corruption of your nature, your uncircumcised heart and affections. Hath he - God the Father. Quickened together with him - Making you partakers of the power of his resurrection. It is evident the apostle thus far speaks, not of justification, but of sanctification only.

14. Having blotted out - in consequence of his gracious decrees, that Christ should come into the world to save sinners, and that whosoever believeth on him should have everlasting life. The handwriting against us - Where a debt is contracted, it is usually testified by some handwriting; and when the debt is forgiven, the handwriting is destroyed, either by blotting it out, by taking it away, or by tearing it. The apostle expresses in all these three ways, God's destroying the handwriting which was contrary to us, or at enmity with us. This was not properly our sins themselves, (they were the debt,) but their guilt and cry before God.

15. And having spoiled the principalities and powers - The evil angels, of their usurped dominion. He - God the Father. Exposed them openly - Before all the hosts of hell and heaven. Triumphing over them in or by him - By Christ. Thus the paragraph begins with Christ, goes on with him, and ends with him.

16. Therefore - Seeing these things are so. Let none judge you - That is, regard none who judge you. In meat or drink - For not observing the ceremonial law in these or any other particulars. Or in respect of a yearly feast, the new moon, or the weekly Jewish sabbaths.

17. Which are but a lifeless shadow; but the body, the substance, is of Christ.

18. Out of pretended humility, they worshipped angels, as not daring to apply immediately to God. Yet this really sprung from their being puffed up: (the constant forerunner of a fall, (Prov. xvi, 18) so far was it from being an instance of true humility.

19. And not holding the head - He does not hold Christ, who does not trust in him alone. All the members are nourished by faith, and knit together by love and mutual sympathy.

20. Therefore - The inference begun, Colossians ii, 16; is continued. A new inference follows, Colossians iii, 1. If ye are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world - That is, If ye are dead with Christ, and so freed from them, why receive ye ordinances - Which Christ hath not enjoined, from which he hath made you free.

21. Touch not - An unclean thing. Taste not - Any forbidden meat. Handle not - Any consecrated vessel.

22. Perish in the using - Have no farther use, no influence on the mind.

23. Not sparing the body - Denying it many gratifications, and putting it to many inconveniences. Yet they are not of any real value before God, nor do they, upon the whole, mortify, but satisfy, the flesh. They indulge our corrupt nature, our self-will, pride, and desire of being distinguished from others.

## III

1. If ye are risen, seek the things above - As Christ being risen, immediately went to heaven.

3. For ye are dead - To the things on earth. And your real, spiritual life is hid from the world, and laid up in God, with Christ - Who hath merited, promised, prepared it for us, and gives us the earnest and foretaste of it in our hearts.

4. When Christ - The abruptness of the sentence surrounds us with sudden light. Our life - The fountain of holiness and glory. Shall appear - In the clouds of heaven.

5. Mortify therefore - Put to death, slay with a continued stroke. Your members - Which together make up the body of sin. Which are upon the earth - Where they find their nourishment. Uncleanness - In act, word, or thought. Inordinate affection - Every passion which does not flow from and lead to the love of God. Evil desire - The desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life. Covetousness - According to the derivation of the word, means the desire of having more, or of any thing independent on God. Which is idolatry - Properly and directly; for it is giving the heart to a creature.

6. For which - Though the heathens lightly regarded them.

7. Living denotes the inward principle; walking, the outward acts.

8. Wrath - Is lasting anger. Filthy discourse - And was there need to warn even these saints of God against so gross and palpable a sin as this? O what is man, till perfect love casts out both fear and sin.

10. In knowledge - The knowledge of God, his will, his word.

11. Where - In which case, it matters not what a man is externally, whether Jew or gentile, circumcised, or uncircumcised, barbarian, void of all the advantages of education, yea, Scythian, of all barbarians most barbarous. But Christ is in all that are thus renewed, and is all things in them and to them.

12. All who are thus renewed are elected of God, holy, and therefore the more beloved of him. Holiness is the consequence of their election, and God's superior love, of their holiness.

13. Forbearing one another - If anything is now wrong. And forgiving one another - What is past.

14. The love of God contains the whole of Christian perfection, and connects all the parts of it together.

15. And then the peace of God shall rule in your hearts - Shall sway every temper, affection, thought, as the reward (so the Greek word implies) of your preceding love and obedience.

16. Let the word of Christ - So the apostle calls the whole scripture, and thereby asserts the divinity of his Master. Dwell - Not make a short stay, or an occasional visit, but take up its stated residence. Richly - In the largest measure, and with the greatest efficacy; so as to fill and govern the whole soul.

17. In the name - In the power and Spirit of the Lord Jesus. Giving thanks unto God - The Holy Ghost. And the Father through him - Christ.

18. Wives, submit - Or be subject to. It is properly a military term, alluding to that entire submission that soldiers pay to their general. Eph. v, 22, &c.

19. Be not bitter - (Which may be without any appearance of anger) either in word or spirit.

21. Lest they be discouraged - Which may occasion their turning either desperate or stupid.

22. Eyeservice - Being more diligent under their eye than at other times. Singleness of heart - A simple intention of doing right, without looking any farther. Fearing God - That is, acting from this principle.

23. Heartily - Cheerfully, diligently. Menpleasers are soon dejected and made angry: the single-hearted are never displeased or disappointed; because they have another aim, which the good or evil treatment of those they serve cannot disappoint.

## IV

1. Just - According to your contract. Equitable - Even beyond the letter of your contract.

3. That God would open to us a door of utterance - That is, give us utterance, that we "may open our mouth boldly," Eph. vi, 19, and give us an opportunity of speaking, so that none may be able to hinder.

6. Let your speech be always with grace - Seasoned with the grace of God, as flesh is with salt.

10. Aristarchus my fellowprisoner - Such was Epaphras likewise for a time, Phil. i, 23. Ye have received directions - Namely, by Tychicus, bringing this letter. The ancients adapted their language to the time of reading the letter; not, as we do, to the time when it was written. It is not improbable, they might have scrupled to receive him, without this fresh direction, after he had left St. Paul, and "departed from the work."

11. These - Three, Aristarchus, Marcus, and Justus. Of all the circumcision - That is, of all my Jewish fellowlabourers. Are the only fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God - That is, in preaching the gospel. Who have been a comfort to me - What, then, can we expect? that all our fellowworkers should be a comfort to us?

12. Perfect - Endued with every Christian grace. Filled - As no longer being babes, but grown up to the measure of the stature of Christ; being full of his light, grace, wisdom, holiness.

14. Luke, the physician - Such he had been, at least, if he was not then.

15. Nymphas - Probably an eminent Christian at Laodicea.

16. The epistle from Laodicea - Not to Laodicea. Perhaps some letter had been written to St. Paul from thence.

17. And say to Archippus - One of the pastors of that church. Take heed - It is the duty of the flock to try them that say they are apostles to reject the false, and to warn, as well as to receive, the real. The ministry - Not a lordship, but a service; a labourious and painful work; an obligation to

do and suffer all things; to be the least, and the servant, of all. In the Lord - Christ by whom, and for whose sake, we receive the various gifts of the Holy Spirit.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS

THIS is the first of all the epistles which St. Paul wrote. Thessalonica was one of the chief cities of Macedonia. Hither St. Paul went after the persecution at Philippi: but he had not preached here long before the unbelieving Jews raised a tumult against him and Silvanus and Timotheus. On this the brethren sent them away to Berea. Thence St. Paul went by sea to Athens, and sent for Silvanus and Timotheus to come speedily to him. But being in fear, lest the Thessalonian converts should be moved from their steadfastness, after a short time he sends Timotheus to them, to know the state of their church. Timotheus returning found the apostle at Corinth from whence he sent them this epistle, about a year after he had been at Thessalonica. The parts of it are these:

I. The inscription, Chap. i, 1
II. He celebrates the grace of God towards them,. 2-10 Mentions the sincerity of himself and his fellowlabourers, ii. 1-12 And the teachableness of the Thessalonians,. 13-16
III. He declares,
  1. His desire, 17-20
  2. His care, iii. 1-5
  3. His joy and prayer for them, 6-13
IV. He exhorts them to grow,
  1. In holiness, iv.1-8
  2. In brotherly love with industry, 9-12
V. He teaches and exhorts,
  1. Concerning them that sleep, 13-18
  2. Concerning the times, v.1-11
VI. He adds miscellaneous exhortations, 12-24
VII. The conclusion, 25-28

## 1 THESSALONIANS

### I

1. Paul - In this epistle St. Paul neither uses the title of an apostle, nor any other, as writing to pious and simple-hearted men, with the utmost familiarity. There is a peculiar sweetness in this epistle, unmixed with any sharpness or reproof: those evils which the apostles afterward reproved having not yet crept into the church.

3. Remembering in the sight of God - That is, praising him for it. Your work of faith - Your active, ever-working faith. And labour of love - Love continually labouring for the bodies or souls

of men. They who do not thus labour, do not love. Faith works, love labours, hope patiently suffers all things.

4. Knowing your election - Which is through faith, by these plain proofs.

5. With power - Piercing the very heart with a sense of sin and deeply convincing you of your want of a saviour from guilt, misery, and eternal ruin. With the Holy Ghost - Bearing an outward testimony, by miracles, to the truth of what we preached, and you felt: also by his descent through laying on of hands. With much assurance - Literally, with full assurance, and much of it: the Spirit bearing witness by shedding the love of God abroad in your hearts, which is the highest testimony that can be given. And these signs, if not the miraculous gifts, always attend the preaching of the gospel, unless it be in vain: neither are the extraordinary operations of the Holy Ghost ever wholly withheld, where the gospel is preached with power, and men are alive to God. For your sake - Seeking your advantage, not our own.

6. Though in much affliction, yet with much joy.

8. For from you the word sounded forth - (Thessalonica being a city of great commerce.) Being echoed, as it were, from you. And your conversion was divulged far beyond Macedonia and Achaia. So that we need not speak anything - Concerning it.

9. For they themselves - The people wherever we come.

10. Whom he hath raised from the dead - In proof of his future coming to judgment. Who delivereth us - He redeemed us once; he delivers us continually; and will deliver all that believe from the wrath, the eternal vengeance, which will then come upon the ungodly.

## II

1. What was proposed, chap. i, 5, 6, is now more largely treated of: concerning Paul and his fellowlabourers, ver. 1-12; concerning the Thessalonians, ver. 13-16.

2. We had suffered - In several places. We are bold - Notwithstanding. With much contention - Notwithstanding both inward and outward conflicts of all kinds.

3. For our exhortation - That is, our preaching. A part is put for the whole. Is not, at any time, of deceit - We preach not a lie, but the truth of God. Nor of uncleanness - With any unholy or selfish view. This expression is not always appropriated to lust, although it is sometimes emphatically applied thereto. Nor in guile - But with great plainness of speech.

5. Flattering words - This ye know. Nor a cloak of covetousness - Of this God is witness. He calls men to witness an open fact; God, the secret intentions of the heart. In a point of a mixed nature, ver. 10, he appeals both to God and man.

6. Nor from others - Who would have honoured us more, if we had been burdensome - That is, taken state upon ourselves.

7. But we were gentle - Mild, tender. In the midst of you - Like a hen surrounded with her young. Even as a nurse cherisheth her own children - The offspring of her own womb.

8. To impart our own souls - To lay down our lives for your sake.

10. Holily - In the things of God. Justly - With regard to men. Unblamable - In respect of ourselves. Among you that believe - Who were the constant observers of our behaviour.

11. By exhorting, we are moved to do a thing willingly; by comforting, to do it joyfully; by charging, to do it carefully.

12. To his kingdom here, and glory hereafter.

14. Ye suffered the same things - The same fruit, the same afflictions, and the same experience, at all times, and in all places, are an excellent criterion of evangelical truth. As they from the Jews - Their countrymen.

15. Us - Apostles and preachers of the gospel. They please not God - Nor are they even careful to please him, notwithstanding their fair professions. And are contrary to all men - Are common enemies of mankind; not only by their continual seditions and insurrections, and by their utter contempt of all other nations; but in particular, by their endeavouring to hinder their hearing or receiving the gospel.

16. To fill up - The measure of their sins always, as they have ever done. But the vengeance of God is come upon them - Hath overtaken them unawares, whilst they were seeking to destroy others, and will speedily complete their destruction.

17. In this verse we have a remarkable instance, not so much of the transient affections of holy grief, desire, or joy, as of that abiding tenderness, that loving temper, which is so apparent in all St. Paul's writings, towards those he styles his children in the faith. This is the more carefully to be observed, because the passions occasionally exercising themselves, and flowing like a torrent, in the apostle, are observable to every reader; whereas it requires a nicer attention to discern those calm standing tempers, that fixed posture of his soul, from whence the others only flow out, and which more peculiarly distinguish his character.

18. Satan - By those persecuting Jews, Acts xvii, 13.

19. Ye also - As well as our other children.

## III

1. We - Paul and Silvanus. Could bear no longer - Our desire and fear for you.

3. We are appointed hereto - Are in every respect laid in a fit posture for it, by the very design and contrivance of God himself for the trial and increase of our faith and all other graces. He gives riches to the world; but stores up his treasure of wholesome afflictions for his children.

6. But now when Timotheus was come to us from you - Immediately after his return, St. Paul wrote; while his joy was fresh, and his tenderness at the height.

8. Now we live - Indeed; we enjoy life: so great is our affection for you.

10. And perfect that which is wanting in your faith - So St. Paul did not know that "they who are once upon the rock no longer need to be taught by man."

11. Direct our way - This prayer is addressed to Christ, as well as to the Father.

13. With all his, Christ's, saints - Both angels and men.

## IV

1. More and more - It is not enough to have faith, even so as to please God, unless we abound more and more therein.

3. Sanctification - Entire holiness of heart and life: particular branches of it are subjoined. That ye abstain from fornication - A beautiful transition from sanctification to a single branch of the contrary; and this shows that nothing is so seemingly distant, or below our thoughts, but we have need to guard against it.

4. That every one know - For this requires knowledge, as well as chastity. To possess his vessel - His wife. In sanctification and honour - So as neither to dishonour God or himself, nor to obstruct, but further, holiness; remembering, marriage is not designed to inflame, but to conquer, natural desires.

5. Not in passionate desire - Which had no place in man when in a state of innocence. Who know not God - And so may naturally seek happiness in a creature. What seemingly accidental words slide in; and yet how fine, and how vastly important!

6. In this matter - By violating his bed. The things forbidden, here are three: fornication, ver. 3; the passion of desire, or inordinate affection in the married state, ver. 5; and the breach of the marriage contract.

8. He that despiseth - The commandments we gave. Despiseth God - Himself. Who hath also given you his Holy Spirit - To convince you of the truth, and enable you to be holy. What naked majesty of words! How oratorical, and yet with what great simplicity!-a simplicity that does not impair, but improve, the understanding to the utmost; that, like the rays of heat through a glass, collects all the powers of reason into one orderly point, from being scattered abroad in utter confusion.

9. We need not write - Largely. For ye are taught of God - By his Spirit.

11. That ye study - Literally, that ye be ambitious: an ambition worthy a Christian. To work with your hands - Not a needless caution; for temporal concerns are often a cross to them who are newly filled with the love of God.

12. Decently - That they may have no pretense to say, (but they will say it still,) "This religion makes men idle, and brings them to beggary." And may want nothing - Needful for life and godliness. What Christian desires more?

13. Now - Herein the efficacy of Christianity greatly appears, - that it neither takes away nor embitters, but sweetly tempers, that most refined of all affections, our desire of or love to the dead.

14. So - As God raised him. With him - With their living head.

15. By the word of the Lord - By a particular Revelation. We who are left - This intimates the fewness of those who will be then alive, compared to the multitude of the dead. Believers of all ages and nations make up, as it were, one body; in consideration of which, the believers of that age might put themselves in the place, and speak in the person, of them who were to live till the coming of the Lord. Not that St. Paul hereby asserted (though some seem to have imagined so) that the day of the Lord was at hand.

16. With a shout - Properly, a proclamation made to a great multitude. Above this is, the voice of the archangel; above both, the trumpet of God; the voice of God, somewhat analogous to the sound of a trumpet.

17. Together - In the same moment. In the air - The wicked will remain beneath, while the righteous, being absolved, shall be assessors with their Lord in the judgment. With the Lord - In heaven.

## V

1. But of the precise times when this shall be.
2. For this in general ye do know; and ye can and need know no more.
3. When they - The men of the world say.
4. Ye are not in darkness - Sleeping secure in sin.
6. Awake, and keep awake - Being awakened, let us have all our spiritual senses about us.
7. They usually sleep and are drunken in the night - These things do not love the light.
9. God hath not appointed us to wrath - As he hath the obstinately impenitent.
10. Whether we wake or sleep - Be alive or dead at his coming.
12. Know them that,
    1. labour among you:
    2. Are over you in the Lord:
    3. Admonish you. Know - See, mark, take knowledge of them and their work. Sometimes the same person may both labour, that is, preach; be over, or govern; and admonish the flock by particular application to each: sometimes two or more different persons, according as God variously dispenses his gifts. But O, what a misery is it when a man undertakes this whole work without either gifts or graces for any part of it! Why, then, will he undertake it? for pay? What! will he sell both his own soul and all the souls of the flock? What words can describe such a wretch as this? And yet even this may be "an honourable man!"

13. Esteem them very highly - Literally, more than abundantly, in love - The inexpressible sympathy that is between true pastors and their flock is intimated, not only here, but also in divers other places of this epistle. See

chap. ii, 7, 8. For their work's sake - The principal ground of their vast regard for them. But how are we to esteem them who do not work at all?

14. Warn the disorderly - Them that stand, as it were, out of their rank in the spiritual warfare. Some such were even in that church. The feeble-minded - Literally, them of little soul; such as have no spiritual courage.

15. See that none - Watch over both yourselves and each other. Follow that which is good - Do it resolutely and perseveringly.

16. Rejoice evermore - In uninterrupted happiness in God. Pray without ceasing - Which is the fruit of always rejoicing in the Lord. In everything give thanks - Which is the fruit of both the former. This is Christian perfection. Farther than this we cannot go; and we need not stop short of it. Our Lord has purchased joy, as well as righteousness, for us. It is the very design of the gospel that, being saved from guilt, we should be happy in the love of Christ. Prayer may be said to be the breath of our spiritual life. He that lives cannot possibly cease breathing. So much as we really enjoy of the presence of God, so much prayer and praise do we offer up without ceasing; else our rejoicing is but delusion. Thanksgiving is inseparable from true prayer: it is almost essentially connected with it. He that always prays is ever giving praise, whether in ease or pain, both for prosperity and for the greatest adversity. He blesses God for all things, looks on them as coming from him, and receives them only for his sake; not choosing nor refusing, liking nor disliking, anything, but only as it is agreeable or disagreeable to his perfect will.

18. For this - That you should thus rejoice, pray, give thanks. Is the will of God - Always good, always pointing at our salvation.

19. Quench not the Spirit - Wherever it is, it burns; it flames in holy love, in joy, prayer, thanksgiving. O quench it not, damp it not in yourself or others, either by neglecting to do good, or by doing evil!

20. Despise not prophesyings - That is, preaching; for the apostle is not here speaking of extraordinary gifts. It seems, one means of grace is put for all; and whoever despises any of these, under whatever pretense, will surely (though perhaps gradually and almost insensibly) quench the Spirit.

21. Meantime, prove all things - Which any preacher recommends. (He speaks of practice, not of doctrines.) Try every advice by the touchstone of scripture, and hold fast that which is good - Zealously, resolutely, diligently practice it, in spite of all opposition.

22. And be equally zealous and careful to abstain from all appearance of evil - Observe, those who "heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears," under pretense of proving all things, have no countenance or excuse from this scripture.

23. And may the God of peace sanctify you - By the peace he works in you, which is a great means of sanctification. Wholly - The word signifies wholly and perfectly; every part and all that concerns you; all that is of or about you. And may the whole of you, the spirit and the soul and the body - Just before he said you; now he denominates them from their spiritual state. The spirit - Gal. vi, 8; wishing that it may be preserved whole and entire: then from their natural state, the soul and the body; (for these two make up the whole nature of man, Matt. x, 28;) wishing it may be preserved blameless till the coming of Christ. To explain this a little further: of the three here mentioned, only the two last are the natural constituent parts of man. The first is adventitious, and the supernatural gift of God, to be found in Christians only. That man cannot possibly consist of three parts, appears hence: The soul is either matter or not matter: there is no medium. But if it is matter, it is part of the body: if not matter, it coincides with the Spirit.

24. Who also will do it - Unless you quench the Spirit.

27. I charge you by the Lord - Christ, to whom proper divine worship is here paid. That this epistle - The first he wrote. Be read to all the brethren - That is, in all the churches. They might have concealed it out of modesty, had not this been so solemnly enjoined: but what Paul commands under so strong an adjuration, Rome forbids under pain of excommunication.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS

THIS epistle seems to have been written soon after the former, chiefly on occasion of some things therein which had been misunderstood. Herein he,

1. Congratulates their constancy in the faith, and exhorts them to advance daily in grace and wisdom.
2. Reforms their mistake concerning the coming of our Lord And,
3. Recommends several Christian duties. The parts of it are five:

I. The inscription, Chap. i. 1, 2

II. Thanksgiving and prayer for them, 3-12
III. The doctrine concerning the man of sin,. ii. 1-12 Whence he comforts them against this trial, 13, 14 Adding exhortation and prayer, 15-17
IV. An exhortation to prayer, with a prayer for. iii. 1-5 them, to correct the disorderly, 6-16
V. The conclusion, 17, 18

# 2nd THESSALONIANS

## I

3. It is highly observable, that the apostle wraps up his praise of men in praise to God; giving him the glory. Your faith groweth - Probably he had heard from them since his sending the former letter. Aboundeth - Like water that overflows its banks, and yet increaseth still.

4. Which ye endure - "That ye may be accounted worthy of the kingdom."

5. A manifest token - This is treated of in the sixth and following verses.

6. It is a righteous thing with God - (However men may judge) to transfer the pressure from you to them. And it is remarkable that about this time, at the passover, the Jews raising a tumult, a great number (some say thirty thousand) of them were slain. St. Paul seems to allude to this beginning of sorrows, 1 Thess. ii, 16, which did not end but with their destruction.

8. Taking vengeance - Does God barely permit this, or (as "the Lord" once "rained brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven," Gen. xix, 24) does a fiery stream go forth from him for ever? Who know not God - (The root of all wickedness and misery) who remain in heathen ignorance. And who obey not - This refers chiefly to the Jews, who had heard the gospel.

9. From the glory of his power - Tremble, ye stout-hearted. Everlasting destruction - As there can be no end of their sins, (the same enmity against God continuing,) so neither of their punishment; sin and its punishment running parallel throughout eternity itself. They must of necessity, therefore, be cut off from all good, and all possibility of it. From the presence of the Lord - Wherein chiefly consists the salvation of the righteous. What unspeakable punishment is implied even in falling short of this, supposing that nothing more were implied in his taking vengeance!

10. To be glorified in his saints - For the wonderful glory of Christ shall shine in them.

11. All the good pleasure of his goodness - Which is no less than perfect holiness.

12. That the name - The love and power of our Lord may be glorified - Gloriously displayed in you.

## II

1. Our gathering together to him - In the clouds.

2. Be not shaken in mind - In judgment. Or terrified - As those easily are who are immoderately fond of knowing future things. Neither by any pretended Revelation from the Spirit, nor by pretense of any word spoken by me.

3. Unless the falling away - From the pure faith of the gospel, come first. This began even in the apostolic age. But the man of sin, the son of perdition - Eminently so called, is not come yet. However, in many respects, the Pope has an indisputable claim to those titles. He is, in an emphatical sense, the man of sin, as he increases all manner of sin above measure. And he is, too, properly styled, the son of perdition, as he has caused the death of numberless multitudes, both of his opposers and followers, destroyed innumerable souls, and will himself perish everlastingly. He it is that opposeth himself to the emperor, once his rightful sovereign; and that exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped - Commanding angels, and putting kings under his feet, both of whom are called gods in scripture; claiming the highest power, the highest honour; suffering himself, not once only, to be styled God or vice-God. Indeed no less is implied in his ordinary title, "Most Holy Lord," or, "Most Holy Father." So that he sitteth - Enthroned. In the temple of God - Mentioned Rev. xi, 1. Declaring himself that he is God - Claiming the prerogatives which belong to God alone.

6. And now ye know - By what I told you when I was with you. That which restraineth - The power of the Roman emperors. When this is taken away, the wicked one will be revealed. In his time - His appointed season, and not before.

7. He will surely be revealed; for the mystery - The deep, secret power of iniquity, just opposite to the power of godliness, already worketh. It began with the love of honour, and the desire of power; and is completed in the entire subversion of the gospel of Christ. This mystery of iniquity is not wholly confined to the Romish church, but extends itself to others also. It seems to consist of,

1. Human inventions added to the written word.
2. Mere outside performances put in the room of faith and love.
3. Other mediators besides the man Christ Jesus. The two last branches, together with idolatry and bloodshed, are the direct consequences of the former; namely, the adding to the word of God. Already worketh - In the church. Only he that restraineth - That is, the potentate who successively has Rome in his power. The emperors, heathen or Christian; the kings, Goths or Lombards; the Carolingian or German emperors.

8. And then - When every prince and power that restrains is taken away. Will that wicked one - Emphatically so called, be revealed. Whom the Lord will soon consume with the spirit of his mouth - His immediate power. And destroy - With the very first appearance of his glory.

10. Because they received not the love of the truth - Therefore God suffered them to fall into that "strong delusion."

11. Therefore God shall send them - That is, judicially permit to come upon them, strong delusion.

12. That they all may be condemned - That is, the consequence of which will be, that they all will be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness - That is, who believed not the truth, because they loved sin.

13. God hath from the beginning - Of your hearing the gospel. Chosen you to salvation - Taken you out of the world, and placed you in the way to glory.

14. To which - Faith and holiness. He hath called you by our gospel - That which we preached, accompanied with the power of his Spirit.

15. Hold - Without adding to, or diminishing from, the traditions which ye have been taught - The truths which I have delivered to you. Whether by word or by our epistle - He preached before he wrote. And he had written concerning this in his former epistle.

### III

1. May run - Go on swiftly, without any interruption. And be glorified - Acknowledged as divine, and bring forth much fruit.

2. All men have not faith - And all men who have not are more or less unreasonable and wicked men.

3. Who will stablish you - That cleave to him by faith. And guard you from the evil one - And all his instruments.

4. We trust in the Lord concerning you - Thus only should we trust in any man.

5. Now the Lord - The Spirit, whose proper work this is. Direct - Lead you straight forward. Into the patience of Christ - Of which he set you a pattern.

6. That walketh disorderly - Particularly by not working. Not according to the tradition he received of us - The admonition we gave, both by word of mouth, and in our former epistle.

10. Neither let him eat - Do not maintain him in idleness.

11. Doing nothing, but being busybodies - To which idleness naturally disposes.

12. Work quietly - Letting the concerns of other people alone.

14. Have no company with him - No intimacy, no familiarity, no needless correspondence.

15. Admonish him as a brother - Tell him lovingly of the reason why you shun him.

16. The Lord of peace - Christ. Give you peace by all means - In every way and manner.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

THE mother of Timothy was a Jewess, but his father was a gentile. He was converted to Christianity very early; and while he was yet but a youth, was taken by St. Paul to assist him in the work of the gospel, chiefly in watering the churches which he had planted. He was therefore properly, as was Titus, an itinerant evangelist, a kind of secondary apostle, whose office was, to regulate all things in the churches to which he was sent; and to inspect and reform whatsoever was amiss either in the bishops, deacons, or people. St. Paul had doubtless largely instructed him in private conversation for the due execution of so weighty an office. Yet to fix things more upon his mind, and to give him an opportunity of having recourse to them afterward, and of communicating them to others, as there might be occasion, as also to leave divine directions in writing, for the use of the church and its ministers in all ages; he sent him this excellent pastoral letter, which contains a great variety of important sentiments for their regulation. Though St. Paul styles him his "own son in the faith," yet he does not appear to have been converted by the apostle; but only to have been exceeding

dear to him, who had established him therein; and whom he had diligently and faithfully served, like a son with his father in the gospel. Phil. ii, 22. The epistle contains three parts:

I. The inscription, C.i.1, 2

II. The instruction of Timothy how to behave at Ephesus, wherein,

1. In general, he gives him an injunction to deliver to them that taught the law in a wrong manner, and confirms at the same time the sum of the gospel as exemplified in himself, 3-20
2. In particular,
    1. He prescribes to men, a method of prayer,. C.ii.1-8 To women, good works and modesty, 9-15
    2. He recounts the requisites of a bishop,. C.iii.1-7 The duties of deacons, 8-10 of women, 11-13
    3. He shows what Timothy should teach 14-C.iv.1-6 What he should avoid, 7-11 What follow after, 12-16 How he should treat men and women, C.v.1, 2 Widows, 3-16 Elders, 17-19 Offenders, 20, 21 Himself, 22, 23 Those he doubts of, 24, 25 Servants, C.vi.1, 2
    4. False teachers are reproved, 3-10 Timothy is admonished, quickened, 11, 12 and charged, 13-16 Precepts are prescribed to be enforced on the rich, 17-19

III. The conclusion, 20,

# 1st TIMOTHY

## I

1. Paul an apostle - Familiarity is to be set aside where the things of God are concerned. According to the commandment of God - The authoritative appointment of God the Father. Our saviour - So styled in many other places likewise, as being the grand orderer of the whole scheme of our salvation. And Christ our hope - That is, the author, object, and ground, of all our hope.

2. Grace, mercy, peace - St. Paul wishes grace and peace in his epistles to the churches. To Timotheus he adds mercy, the most tender grace towards those who stand in need of it. The experience of this prepares a man to be a minister of the gospel.

3. Charge some to teach no other doctrine - Than I have taught. Let them put nothing in the place of it, add nothing to it.

4. Neither give heed - So as either to teach or regard them. To fables - Fabulous Jewish traditions. And endless genealogies - Nor those delivered in scripture, but the long intricate pedigrees whereby they strove to prove their descent from such or such a person. Which afford questions - Which lead only to useless and endless controversies.

5. Whereas the end of the commandment - of the whole Christian institution. Is love - And this was particularly the end of the commandment which Timotheus was to enforce at Ephesus, ver. 3, 18. The foundation is faith; the end, love. But this can only subsist in an heart purified by faith, and is always attended with a good conscience.

6. From which - Love and a good conscience. Some are turned aside - An affectation of high and extensive knowledge sets a man at the greatest distance from faith, and all sense of divine things. To vain jangling - And of all vanities, none are more vain than dry, empty disputes on the things of God.

7. Understanding neither the very things they speak, nor the subject they speak of.

8. We grant the whole Mosaic law is good, answers excellent purposes, if a man use it in a proper manner. Even the ceremonial is good, as it points to Christ; and the moral law is holy, just, and good, on its own nature; and of admirable use both to convince unbelievers, and to guide believers in all holiness.

9. The law doth not lie against a righteous man - Doth not strike or condemn him. But against the lawless and disobedient - They who despise the authority of the lawgiver violate the first commandment, which is the foundation of the law, and the ground of all obedience. Against the ungodly and sinners - Who break the second commandment, worshipping idols, or not worshipping the true God. The unholy and profane - Who break the third commandment by taking his name in vain.

10. Manstealers - The worst of all thieves, in comparison of whom, highwaymen and housebreakers are innocent. What then are most traders in negroes, procurers of servants for America, and all who list soldiers by lies, tricks, or enticements?

11. According to the glorious gospel - Which, far from "making void," does effectually "establish, the law."

12. I thank Christ, who hath enabled me, in that he accounted me faithful, having put me into the ministry - The meaning is, I thank him for putting me into the ministry, and enabling me to be faithful therein.

13. A blasphemer - Of Christ. A persecutor - Of his church. A reviler - Of his doctrine and people. But I obtained mercy - He does not say, because I was unconditionally elected; but because I did it in ignorance. Not that his ignorance took away his sin; but it left him capable of mercy; which he would hardly have been, had he acted thus contrary to his own conviction.

14. And the grace - Whereby I obtained mercy. Was exceeding abundant with faith - Opposite to my preceding unbelief. And love - Opposite to my blasphemy, persecution, and oppression.

15. This is a faithful saying - A most solemn preface. And worthy of all acceptation - Well deserving to be accepted, received, embraced, with all the faculties of our whole soul. That Christ - Promised. Jesus - Exhibited. Came into the world to save sinners - All sinners, without exception.

16. For this cause God showed me mercy, that all his longsuffering might be shown, and that none might hereafter despair.

17. The King of eternity - A phrase frequent with the Hebrews. How unspeakably sweet is the thought of eternity to believers!

18. This charge I commit to thee - That thou mayest deliver it to the church. According to the prophecies concerning thee - Uttered when thou wast received as an evangelist, chap. iv, 14; probably by many persons, chap. vi, 12; that, being encouraged by them, thou mightest war the good warfare.

19. Holding fast faith - Which is as a most precious liquor. And a good conscience - Which is as a clean glass. Which - Namely, a good conscience. Some having thrust away - It goes away unwillingly it always says, "Do not hurt me." And they who retain this do not make shipwreck of their faith. Indeed, none can make shipwreck of faith who never had it. These, therefore, were once

true believers: yet they fell not only foully, but finally; for ships once wrecked cannot be afterwards saved.

20. Whom - Though absent. I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme - That by what they suffer they may be in some measure restrained, if they will not repent.

## II

1. I exhort therefore - Seeing God is so gracious. In this chapter he gives directions,
    1. With regard to public prayers
    2. With regard to doctrine. Supplication is here the imploring help in time of need: prayer is any kind of offering up our desires to God. But true prayer is the vehemency of holy zeal, the ardour of divine love, arising from a calm, undisturbed soul, moved upon by the Spirit of God. Intercession is prayer for others. We may likewise give thanks for all men, in the full sense of the word, for that God "willeth all men to be saved," and Christ is the Mediator of all.

2. For all that are in authority - Seeing even the lowest country magistrates frequently do much good or much harm. God supports the power of magistracy for the sake of his own people, when, in the present state of men, it could not otherwise be kept up in any nation whatever. Godliness - Inward religion; the true worship of God. Honesty - A comprehensive word taking in the whole duty we owe to our neighbour.

3. For this - That we pray for all men. Do you ask, "Why are not more converted?" We do not pray enough. Is acceptable in the sight of God our saviour - Who has actually saved us that believe, and willeth all men to be saved. It is strange that any whom he has actually saved should doubt the universality of his grace!

4. Who willeth seriously all men - Not a part only, much less the smallest part. To be saved - Eternally. This is treated of, ver. 5, 6. And, in order thereto, to come - They are not compelled. To the knowledge of the truth - Which brings salvation. This is treated of, ver. 6, 7.

5. For - The fourth verse is proved by the fifth; the first, by the fourth. There is one God - And they who have not him, through the one Mediator, have no God. One mediator also - We could not rejoice that there is a God, were there not a mediator also; one who stands between God and men, to reconcile man to God, and to transact the whole affair of our salvation. This excludes all other mediators, as saints and angels, whom the Papists set up and idolatrously worship as such: just as the heathens of old set up many mediators, to pacify their superior gods. The man - Therefore all men are to apply to this mediator, "who gave himself for all."

6. Who gave himself a ransom for all - Such a ransom, the word signifies, wherein a like or equal is given; as an eye for an eye, or life for life: and this ransom, from the dignity of the person redeeming, was more than equivalent to all mankind. To be testified of in due season - Literally, in his own seasons; those chosen by his own wisdom.

8. I will - A word strongly expressing his apostolical authority. Therefore - This particle connects the eighth with the first verse. That men pray in every place - Public and private. Wherever men are, there prayer should be. Lifting up holy hands - Pure from all known sin. Without wrath - In any kind, against any creature. And every temper or motion of our soul that is not according to love

is wrath. And doubting - Which is contrary to faith. And wrath, or unholy actions, or want of faith in him we call upon, are the three grand hindrances of God's hearing our petitions. Christianity consists of faith and love, embracing truth and grace: therefore the sum of our wishes should be, to pray, and live, and die, without any wrath or doubt.

9. With sobriety - Which, in St. Paul's sense, is the virtue which governs our whole life according to true wisdom. Not with curled hair, not with gold - Worn by way of ornament. Not with pearls - Jewels of any kind: a part is put for the whole. Not with costly raiment - These four are expressly forbidden by name to all women (here is no exception) professing godliness, and no art of man can reconcile with the Christian profession the wilful violation of an express command.

12. To usurp authority over the man - By public teaching.

13. First - So that woman was originally the inferior.

14. And Adam was not deceived - The serpent deceived Eve: Eve did not deceive Adam, but persuaded him. "Thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife," Gen. iii, 17. The preceding verse showed why a woman should not "usurp authority over the man." this shows why she ought not "to teach." She is more easily deceived, and more easily deceives. The woman being deceived transgressed - "The serpent deceived" her, Gen. iii, 13, and she transgressed.

15. Yet she - That is, women in general, who were all involved with Eve in the sentence pronounced, Gen. iii, 16. Shall be saved in childbearing - Carried safe through the pain and danger which that sentence entails upon them for the transgression; yea, and finally saved, if they continue in loving faith and holy wisdom.

## III

1. He desireth a good work - An excellent, but labourious, employment.

2. Therefore - That he may be capable of it. A bishop - Or pastor of a congregation. Must be blameless - Without fault or just suspicion. The husband of one wife - This neither means that a bishop must be married, nor that he may not marry a second wife; which it is just as lawful for him to do as to marry a first, and may in some cases be his bounden duty. But whereas polygamy and divorce on slight occasions were common both among the Jews and heathens, it teaches us that ministers, of all others, ought to stand clear of those sins. Vigilant, prudent - Lively and zealous, yet calm and wise. Of good behaviour - Naturally flowing from that vigilance and prudence.

4. Having his children in subjection with all seriousness - For levity undermines all domestic authority; and this direction, by a parity of reason, belongs to all parents.

6. Lest being puffed up - With this new honour, or with the applause which frequently follows it. He fall into the condemnation of the devil - The same into which the devil fell.

7. He ought also to have a good report - To have had a fair character in time past. From them that are without - That are not Christians. Lest he fall into reproach - By their rehearsing his former life, which might discourage and prove a snare to him.

8. Likewise the deacons must be serious - Men of a grave, decent, venerable behaviour. But where are presbyters? Were this order essentially distinct from that of bishops, could the apostle have passed it over in silence? Not desirous of filthy gain - With what abhorrence does he everywhere speak of this! All that is gained (above food and raiment) by ministering in holy things is filthy

gain indeed; far more filthy than what is honestly gained by raking kennels, or emptying common sewers.

9. Holding fast the faith in a pure conscience - Steadfast in faith, holy in heart and life.

10. Let these be proved first - Let a trial be made how they believe. Then let them minister - Let them be fixed in that office.

11. Faithful in all things - Both to God, their husbands, and the poor.

13. They purchase a good degree - Or step, toward some higher office. And much boldness - From the testimony of a good conscience.

15. That thou mayest know how to behave - This is the scope of the epistle. In the house of God - Who is the master of the family. Which is - As if he had said, By the house of God, I mean the church.

16. The mystery of godliness - Afterwards specified in six articles, which sum up the whole economy of Christ upon earth. Is the pillar and ground - The foundation and support of all the truth taught in his church. God was manifest in the flesh - In the form of a servant, the fashion of a man, for three and thirty years. Justified by the Spirit - Publicly "declared to be the Son of God," by his resurrection from the dead. Seen - Chiefly after his resurrection. By angels - Both good and bad. Preached among the gentiles - This elegantly follows. The angels were the least, the gentiles the farthest, removed from him; and the foundation both of this preaching and of their faith was laid before his assumption. Was believed on in the world - Opposed to heaven, into which he was taken up. The first point is, He was manifested in the flesh; the last, He was taken up into glory.

## IV

1. But the Spirit saith - By St. Paul himself to the Thessalonians, and probably by other contemporary prophets. Expressly - As concerning a thing of great moment, and soon to be fulfilled. That in the latter times - These extend from our Lord's ascension till his coming to judgment. Some - Yea, many, and by degrees the far greater part. Will depart from the faith - The doctrine once delivered to the saints. Giving heed to seducing spirits - Who inspire false prophets.

2. These will depart from the faith, by the hypocrisy of them that speak lies, having their own consciences as senseless and unfeeling as flesh that is seared with an hot iron.

3. Forbidding priests, monks, and nuns to marry, and commanding all men to abstain from such and such meats at such and such times. Which God hath created to be received by them that know the truth - That all meats are now clean. With thanksgiving - Which supposes a pure conscience.

5. It is sanctified by the word of God - Creating all, and giving it to man for food. And by prayer - The children of God are to pray for the sanctification of all the creatures which they use. And not only the Christians, but even the Jews, yea, the very heathens used to consecrate their table by prayer.

7. Like those who were to contend in the Grecian games, exercise thyself unto godliness - Train thyself up in holiness of heart and life, with the utmost labour, vigour, and diligence.

8. Bodily exercise profiteth a little - Increases the health and strength of the body.

10. Therefore - Animated by this promise. We both labour and suffer reproach - We regard neither pleasure, ease, nor honour. Because we trust - For this very thing the world will hate us. In

the living God - Who will give us the life he has promised. Who is the saviour of all men - Preserving them in this life, and willing to save them eternally. But especially - In a more eminent manner. Of them that believe - And so are saved everlastingly.

12. Let no one have reason to despise thee for thy youth. To prevent this, Be a pattern in word - Public and private. In spirit - In your whole temper. In faith - When this is placed in the midst of several other Christian graces, it generally means a particular branch of it; fidelity or faithfulness.

13. Give thyself to reading - Both publicly and privately. Enthusiasts, observe this! Expect no end without the means.

14. Neglect not - They neglect it who do not exercise it to the full. The gift - Of feeding the flock, of power, and love, and sobriety. Which was given thee by prophecy - By immediate direction from God. By the laying on of my hands - 2 Tim. i, 6; while the elders joined also in the solemnity. This presbytery probably consisted of some others, together with Paul and Silas.

15. Meditate - The Bible makes no distinction between this and to contemplate, whatever others do. True meditation is no other than faith, hope, love, joy, melted down together, as it were, by the fire of God's Holy Spirit; and offered up to God in secret. He that is wholly in these, will be little in worldly company, in other studies, in collecting books, medals, or butterflies: wherein many pastors drone away so considerable a part of their lives.

16. Continue in them - In all the preceding advices.

## V

1. Rebuke not - Considering your own youth, with such a severity as would otherwise be proper.

3. honour - That is, maintain out of the public stock.

4. Let these learn to requite their parents - For all their former care, trouble, and expense.

5. Widows indeed - Who have no near relations to provide for them; and who are wholly devoted to God. Desolate - Having neither children, nor grandchildren to relieve her.

6. She that liveth in pleasure - Delicately, voluptuously, in elegant, regular sensuality, though not in the use of any such pleasures as are unlawful in themselves.

7. That they - That is, the widows.

8. If any provide not - Food and raiment. For his own - Mother and grandmother, being desolate widows. He hath - Virtually. Denied the faith - Which does not destroy, but perfect, natural duties. What has this to do with heaping up money for our children, for which it is often so impertinently alleged? But all men have their reasons for laying up money. One will go to hell for fear of want; another acts like a heathen, lest he should be worse than an infidel.

9. Let not a widow be chosen - Into the number of deaconesses, who attended sick women or travelling preachers. Under threescore - Afterwards they were admitted at forty, if they were eminent for holiness. Having been the wife of one husband - That is, having lived in lawful marriage, whether with one or more persons successively.

10. If she hath washed the feet of the saints - Has been ready to do the meanest offices for them.

11. Refuse - Do not choose. For when they are waxed wanton against Christ - To whose more immediate service they had addicted themselves. They want to marry - And not with a single eye

to the glory of God; and so withdraw themselves from that entire service of the church to which they were before engaged.

12. They have rejected their first faith - Have deserted their trust in God, and have acted contrary to the first conviction, namely, that wholly to devote themselves to his service was the most excellent way. When we first receive power to believe, does not the Spirit of God generally point out what are the most excellent things; and at the same time, give us an holy resolution to walk in the highest degree of Christian severity? And how unwise are we ever to sink into anything below it!

14. I counsel therefore the younger women - Widows or virgins, such as are not disposed to live single. To marry, to bear children, to guide the family - Then will they have sufficient employment of their own. And give no occasion of reproach to the adversary - Whether Jew or heathen.

15. Some - Widows. Have turned aside after Satan - Who has drawn them from Christ.

17. Let the elders that rule well - Who approve themselves faithful stewards of all that is committed to their charge. Be counted worthy of double honour - A more abundant provision, seeing that such will employ it all to the glory of God. As it was the most labourious and disinterested men who were put into these offices, so whatever any one had to bestow, in his life or death, was generally lodged in their hands for the poor. By this means the churchmen became very rich in after ages, but as the design of the donors was something else, there is the highest reason why it should be disposed of according to their pious intent. Especially those - Of them. Who labour - Diligently and painfully. In the word and teaching - In teaching the word.

18. Deut. xxv, 4

19. Against an elder - Or presbyter. Do not even receive an accusation, unless by two or three witnesses - By the Mosaic law, a private person might be cited (though not condemned) on the testimony of one witness; but St. Paul forbids an elder to be even cited on such evidence, his reputation being of more importance than that of others.

20. Those - Elders. That sin - Scandalously, and are duly convicted. Rebuke before all - The church.

21. I charge thee before God - Referring to the last judgment, in which we shall stand before God and Christ, with his elect, that is, holy, angels, who are the witnesses of our conversation. The apostle looks through his own labours, and even through time itself, and seems to stand as one already in eternity. That thou observe these things without prejudging - Passing no sentence till the cause is fully heard. Or partiality - For or against any one.

22. Lay hands suddenly on no man - That is, appoint no man to church offices without full trial and examination; else thou wilt be accessary to, and accountable for, his misbehaviour in his office. Keep thy self pure - From the blood of all men.

24. Some men's sins are manifest beforehand - Before any strict inquiry be made. Going before to judgment - So that you may immediately judge them unworthy of any spiritual office. And some they - Their sins. Follow after - More covertly.

25. They that are otherwise - Not so manifest. Cannot be long hid - From thy knowledge. On this account, also, be not hasty in laying on of hands.

## VI

1. Let servants under the yoke - Of heathen masters. Account them worthy of all honour - All the honour due from a servant to a master. Lest the name of God and his doctrine be blasphemed - As it surely will, if they do otherwise.

2. Let them not despise them - Pay them the less honour or obedience. Because they are brethren - And in that respect on a level with them. They that live in a religious community know the danger of this; and that greater grace is requisite to bear with the faults of a brother, than of an infidel, or man of the world. But rather do them service - Serve them so much the more diligently. Because they are joint partakers of the great benefit - Salvation. These things - Paul, the aged, gives young Timotheus a charge to dwell upon practical holiness. Less experienced teachers are apt to neglect the superstructure, whilst they lay the foundation; but of so great importance did St. Paul see it to enforce obedience to Christ, as well as to preach faith in his blood, that, after strongly urging the life of faith on professors, he even adds another charge for the strict observance of it.

3. If any teach otherwise - Than strict practical holiness in all Its branches. And consent not to sound words - Literally, healthful words; words that have no taint of falsehood, or tendency to encourage sin. And the doctrine which is after godliness - Exquisitely contrived to answer all the ends, and secure every interest, of real piety.

4. He is puffed up - Which is the cause of his not consenting to the doctrine which is after inward, practical religion. By this mark we may know them. Knowing nothing - As he ought to know. Sick of questions - Doatinglyy fond of dispute; an evil, but common, disease; especially where practice is forgotten. Such, indeed, contend earnestly for singular phrases, and favourite points of their own. Everything else, however, like the preaching of Christ and his apostles, is all "law," and "bondage," and "carnal reasoning." Strifes of words - Merely verbal controversies. Whereof cometh envy - Of the gifts and success of others. Contention - For the pre-eminence. Such disputants seldom like the prosperity of others, or to be less esteemed themselves. Evil surmisings - It not being their way to think well of those that differ from themselves in opinion.

5. Supposing that gain is godliness - Thinking the best religion is the getting of money: a far more common case than is usually supposed.

6. But godliness with content - The inseparable companion of true, vital religion. Is great gain - Brings unspeakable profit in time, as well as eternity.

7. Neither can we carry anything out - To what purpose, then, do we heap together so many things? O, give me one thing, - a safe and ready passage to my own country!

8. Covering - That is, raiment and an house to cover us. This is all that a Christian needs, and all that his religion allows him to desire.

9. They that desire to be rich - To have more than these; for then they would be so far rich; and the very desire banishes content, and exposes them to ruin. Fall-plunge - A sad gradation! Into temptation - Miserable food for the soul! And a snare - Or trap. Dreadful "covering!" And into many foolish and hurtful desires - Which are sown and fed by having more than we need. Then farewell all hope of content! What then remains, but destruction for the body, and perdition for the soul?

10. Love of money - Commonly called "prudent care" of what a man has. Is the root - The parent of all manner of evils. Which some coveting have erred - Literally, missed the mark. They aimed not at faith, but at something else. And pierced themselves with many sorrows - From a

guilty conscience, tormenting passions, desires contrary to reason, religion, and one another. How cruel are worldly men to themselves!

11. But thou, O man of God - Whatever all the world else do. A man of God is either a prophet, a messenger of God, or a man devoted to God; a man of another world. Flee - As from a serpent, instead of coveting these things. Follow after righteousness - The whole image of God; though sometimes this word is used, not in the general, but in the particular, acceptation, meaning only that single branch of it which is termed justice. Faith - Which is also taken here in the general and full sense; namely, a divine, supernatural sight of God, chiefly in respect of his mercy in Christ. This faith is the foundation of righteousness, the support of godliness, the root of every grace of the Spirit. Love - This St. Paul intermixes with everything that is good: he, as it were, penetrates whatever he treats of with love, the glorious spring of all inward and outward holiness.

12. Fight the good fight of faith - Not about words. Lay hold on eternal life - Just before thee. Thou hast confessed the good confession - Perhaps at his baptism: so likewise, ver. 13; but with a remarkable variation of the expression. Thou hast confessed the good confession before many witnesses - To which they all assented. He witnessed the good confession; but Pilate did not assent to it.

13. I charge thee before God, who quickeneth all things - Who hath quickened thee, and will quicken thee at the great day.

15. Which - Appearing. In his own times - The power, the knowledge, and the Revelation of which, remain in his eternal mind.

16. Who only hath underived, independent immortality. Dwelling in light unapproachable - To the highest angel. Whom no man hath seen, or can see - With bodily eyes. Yet "we shall see him as he is."

17. What follows seems to be a kind of a postscript. Charge the rich in this world - Rich in such beggarly riches as this world affords. Not to be highminded - O who regards this! Not to think better of themselves for their money, or anything it can purchase. Neither to trust in uncertain riches - Which they may lose in an hour; either for happiness or defense. But in the living God - All the rest is dead clay. Who giveth us - As it were holding them out to us in his hand. All things - Which we have. Richly - Freely, abundantly. To enjoy - As his gift, in him and for him. When we use them thus, we do indeed enjoy all things. Where else is there any notice taken of the rich, in all the apostolic writings, save to denounce woes and vengeance upon them?

18. To do good - To make this their daily employ, that they may be rich - May abound in all good works. Ready to distribute - Singly to particular persons. Willing to communicate - To join in all public works of charity.

19. Treasuring up for themselves a good foundation - Of an abundant reward, by the free mercy of God. That they may lay hold on eternal life - This cannot be done by alms-deeds; yet they "come up for a memorial before God," Acts x, 4. And the lack even of this may be the cause why God will withhold grace and salvation from us.

20. Keep that which is committed to thy trust - The charge I have given thee, chap. i, 18. Avoid profane empty babblings - How weary of controversy was this acute disputant! And knowledge falsely so called - Most of the ancient heretics were great pretenders to knowledge.

# NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

THIS epistle was probably wrote by St. Paul, during his second confinement at Rome, not long before his martyrdom. It is, as it were, the swan's dying song. But though it was wrote many years after the former, yet they are both of the same kind, and nearly resemble each other. It has three parts:

I. The inscription, Chap. i. 1, 2

II. An invitation, "Come to me," variously expressed,

1. Having declared his love to Timothy, 3-5 he exhorts him, " Be not ashamed of me." 6-14 And subjoins various examples, 15-18
2. He adds the twofold proposition,
    1. "Be strong,"
    2. "Commit the ministry" to faithful men,. ii. 1, 2 The former is treated of, 3-13 The latter, 14 With farther directions concerning his own behaviour, 15- iv.8
3. "Come quickly." Here St. Paul, 9
    1. Mentions his being left alone, 10-12
    2. Directs to bring his books, 13
    3. Gives a caution concerning Alexander, 14, 15
    4. Observes the inconstancy of men, and the faithfulness of God, 16-18
4. "Come before winter." Salutations, 19-21

III. The concluding blessing, 22

## 2nd TIMOTHY

### I

3. Whom I serve from my forefathers - That is, whom both I and my ancestors served, with a pure conscience - He always worshipped God according to his conscience, both before and after his conversion One who stands on the verge of life is much refreshed by the remembrance of his predecessors, to whom he is going.

4. Being mindful of thy tears - Perhaps frequently shed, as well as at the apostle's last parting with him.

5. Which dwelt - A word not applied to a transient guest, but only to a settled inhabitant. First - Probably this was before Timothy was born, yet not beyond St. Paul's memory.

6. Wherefore - Because I remember this. I remind thee of stirring up - Literally, blowing up the coals into a flame. The gift of God - All the spiritual gifts, which the grace of God has given thee.

7. And let nothing discourage thee, for God hath not given us - That is, the spirit which God hath given us Christians, is not the spirit of fear - Or cowardice. But of power - Banishing fear. And love and sobriety - These animate us in our duties to God, our brethren, and ourselves. Power and sobriety are two good extremes. Love is between, the tie and temperament of both; preventing

the two bad extremes of fearfulness and rashness. More is said concerning power, ver. 8; concerning love, chap. ii, 14, &c.; concerning sobriety, chap. iii, 1, &c.

8. Therefore be not thou ashamed - When fear is banished, evil shame also flees away. Of the testimony of our Lord - The gospel, and of testifying the truth of it to all men. Nor of me - The cause of the servants of God doing his work, cannot be separated from the cause of God himself. But be thou partaker of the afflictions - Which I endure for the gospel's sake. According to the power of God - This which overcomes all things is nervously described in the two next verses.

9. Who hath saved us - By faith. The love of the Father, the grace of our saviour, and the whole economy of salvation, are here admirably described. Having called us with an holy calling - Which is all from God, and claims us all for God. According to his own purpose and grace - That is, his own gracious purpose. Which was given us - Fixed for our advantage, before the world began.

10. By the appearing of our saviour - This implies his whole abode upon earth. Who hath abolished death - Taken away its sting, and turned it into a blessing. And hath brought life and immortality to light - Hath clearly revealed by the gospel that immortal life which he hath purchased for us.

12. That which I have committed to him - My soul. Until that day - Of his final appearing.

13. The pattern of sound words - The model of pure, wholesome doctrine.

14. The good thing - This wholesome doctrine.

15. All who are in Asia - Who had attended me at Rome for a while. Are turned away from me - What, from Paul the aged, the faithful soldier, and now prisoner of Christ! This was a glorious trial, and wisely reserved for that time, when he was on the borders of immortality. Perhaps a little measure of the same spirit might remain with him under whose picture are those affecting words, "The true effigy of Francis Xavier, apostle of the Indies, forsaken of all men, dying in a cottage."

16. The family of Onesiphorus - As well as himself. Hath often refreshed me - Both at Ephesus and Rome.

## II

2. The things - The wholesome doctrine, ver. 13. Commit - Before thou leavest Ephesus. To faithful men, who will be able, after thou art gone, to teach others.

4. No man that warreth entangleth himself - Any more than is unavoidable. In the affairs of this life - With worldly business or cares. That - Minding war only, he may please his captain. In this and the next verse there is a plain allusion to the Roman law of arms, and to that of the Grecian games. According to the former, no soldier was to engage in any civil employment; according to the latter, none could be crowned as conqueror, who did not keep strictly to the rules of the game.

6. Unless he labour first, he will reap no fruit.

8. Of the seed of David - This one genealogy attend to.

9. Is not bound - Not hindered in its course.

10. Therefore - Encouraged by this, that "the word of God be not bound." I endure all things - See the spirit of a real Christian? Who would not wish to be likeminded? Salvation is deliverance from all evil; glory, the enjoyment of all good.

11. Dead with him - Dead to sin, and ready to die for him.

12. If we deny him - To escape suffering for him.

13. If we believe not - That is, though some believe not, God will make good all his promises to them that do believe. He cannot deny himself - His word cannot fail.

14. Remind them - Who are under thy charge. O how many unnecessary things are thus unprofitably, nay hurtfully, contended for.

15. A workman that needeth not to be ashamed - Either of unfaithfulness or unskilfulness. Rightly dividing the word of truth - Duly explaining and applying the whole scripture, so as to give each hearer his due portion. But they that give one part of the gospel to all (the promises and comforts to unawakened, hardened, scoffing men) have real need to be ashamed.

16. They - Who babble thus will grow worse and worse.

17. And their word - If they go on, will be mischievous as well as vain, and will eat as a gangrene.

18. Saying the resurrection is already past - Perhaps asserting that it is only the spiritual passing from death unto life.

19. But the foundation of God - His truth and faithfulness. Standeth fast - Can never be overthrown; being as it were sealed with a seal, which has an inscription on each side: on the one, The Lord knoweth those that are his; on the other, Let every one who nameth the name of the Lord, as his Lord, depart from iniquity. Indeed, they only are his who depart from iniquity. To all others he will say, "I know you not." Matt. vii, 22, 23

20. But in a great house - Such as the church, it is not strange that there are not only vessels of gold and silver, designed for honourable uses, but also of wood and of earth - For less honourable purposes. Yet a vessel even of gold may be put to the vilest use, though it was not the design of him that made it.

21. If a man purge himself from these - Vessels of dishonour, so as to have no fellowship with them.

22. Flee youthful desires - Those peculiarly incident to youth. Follow peace with them - Unity with all true believers. Out of a pure heart-Youthful desires, destroy this purity: righteousness, faith, love, peace, accompany it.

24. A servant of the Lord must not - Eagerly or passionately. Strive - As do the vain wranglers spoken of, verse 23. But be apt to teach - Chiefly by patience and unwearied assiduity.

25. In meekness - He has often need of zeal, always of meekness. If haply God - For it is wholly his work. May give them repentance - The acknowledging of the truth would then quickly follow.

26. Who - At present are not only captives, but asleep; utterly insensible of their captivity.

## III

1. In the last days - The time of the gospel dispensation, commencing at the time of our Lord's death, is peculiarly styled the last days. Grievous - Troublesome and dangerous.

2. For men - Even in the church. Will be - In great numbers, and to an higher degree than ever. Lovers of themselves - Only, not their neighbours, the first root of evil. Lovers of money - The second.

3. Without natural affection - To their own children. Intemperate, fierce - Both too soft, and too hard.

4. Lovers of sensual pleasure - Which naturally extinguishes all love and sense of God.

5. Having a form - An appearance of godliness, but not regarding, nay, even denying and blaspheming, the inward power and reality of it. Is not this eminently fulfilled at this day?

6. Of these - That is, mere formalists.

7. Ever learning - New things. But not the truth of God.

8. Several ancient writers speak of Jannes and Jambres, as the chief of the Egyptian magicians. Men of corrupt minds - Impure notions and wicked inclinations. Void of judgment - Quite ignorant, as well as careless, of true, spiritual religion.

9. They shall proceed no farther - In gaining proselytes.

12. All that are resolved to live godly - Therefore count the cost. Art thou resolved? In Christ - Out of Christ there is no godliness. Shall suffer persecution - More or less. There is no exception. Either the truth of scripture fails, or those that think they are religious, and are not persecuted, in some shape or other, on that very account, deceive themselves.

13. Deceiving and being deceived - He who has once begun to deceive others is both the less likely to recover from his own error, and the more ready to embrace the errors of other men.

14. From whom - Even from me a teacher approved of God.

15. From an infant thou hast known the holy scriptures - Of the Old Testament. These only were extant when Timothy was an infant. Which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith in the Messiah that was to come. How much more are the Old and New Testament together able, in God's hand, to make us more abundantly wise unto salvation! Even such a measure of present salvation as was not known before Jesus was glorified.

16. All scripture is inspired of God - The Spirit of God not only once inspired those who wrote it, but continually inspires, supernaturally assists, those that read it with earnest prayer. Hence it is so profitable for doctrine, for instruction of the ignorant, for the reproof or conviction of them that are in error or sin, for the correction or amendment of whatever is amiss, and for instructing or training up the children of God in all righteousness.

17. That the man of God - He that is united to and approved of God. May be perfect - Blameless himself, and throughly furnished - By the scripture, either to teach, reprove, correct, or train up others.

## IV

1. I charge thee therefore - This is deduced from the whole preceding chapter. At his appearing and his kingdom - That is, at his appearing in the kingdom of glory.

2. Be instant - Insist on, urge these things in season, out of season - That is, continually, at all times and places. It might be translated, with and without opportunity - Not only when a fair occasion is given: even when there is none, one must be made.

3. For they will heap up teachers - Therefore thou hast need of "all longsuffering." According to their own desires - Smooth as they can wish. Having itching ears - Fond of novelty and variety, which the number of new teachers, as well as their empty, soft, or philosophical discourses, pleased. Such teachers, and such hearers, seldom are much concerned with what is strict or to the purpose. Heap to themselves - Not enduring sound doctrine, they will reject the sound preachers, and gather

together all that suit their own taste. Probably they send out one another as teachers, and so are never at a loss for numbers.

5. Watch - An earnest, constant, persevering exercise. The scripture watching, or waiting, implies steadfast faith, patient hope, labouring love, unceasing prayer; yea, the mighty exertion of all the affections of the soul that a man is capable of. In all things - Whatever you are doing, yet in that, and in all things, watch. Do the work of an evangelist - Which was next to that of an apostle.

6. The time of my departure is at hand - So undoubtedly God had shown him. I am ready to be offered up - Literally, to be poured out, as the wine and oil were on the ancient sacrifices.

8. The crown of that righteousness - Which God has imputed to me and wrought in me. Will render to all - This increases the joy of Paul, and encourages Timotheus. Many of these St. Paul himself had gained. That have loved his appearing - Which only a real Christian can do. I say a real Christian, to comply with the mode of the times: else they would not understand, although the word Christian necessarily implies whatsoever is holy, as God is holy. Strictly speaking, to join real or sincere to a word of so complete an import, is grievously to debase its noble signification, and is like adding long to eternity or wide to immensity.

9. Come to me - Both that he might comfort him, and be strengthened by him. Timotheus himself is said to have suffered at Ephesus.

10. Demas - Once my fellowlabourer, Phil. i, 24. Hath forsaken me. Crescens, probably a preacher also, is gone, with my consent, to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, having now left Crete. These either went with him to Rome, or visited him there.

11. Only Luke - Of my fellowlabourers, is with me - But God is with me; and it is enough. Take Mark - Who, though he once "departed from the work," is now again profitable to me.

13. The cloak - Either the toga, which belonged to him as a Roman citizen, or an upper garment, which might be needful as winter came on. Which I left at Troas with Carpus - Who was probably his host there. Especially the parchments - The books written on parchment.

14. The Lord will reward him - This he spoke prophetically.

16. All - My friends and companions. Forsook me - And do we expect to find such as will not forsake us? My first defense - Before the savage emperor Nero.

17. The preaching - The gospel which we preach.

18. And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work - Which is far more than delivering me from death. Yea, and, over and above, preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom - Far better than that of Nero.

20. When I came on, Erastus abode at Corinth - Being chamberlain of the city, Rom. xvi, 23. But Trophimus I have left sick - Not having power (as neither had any of the apostles) to work miracles when he pleased, but only when God pleased.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO TITUS

TITUS was converted from heathenism by St. Paul, and, as it seems, very early; since the apostle accounted him as his brother at his first going into Macedonia: and he managed and settled the churches there, when St. Paul thought not good to go thither himself. He had now left him at Crete,

to regulate the churches; to assist him wherein, he wrote this epistle, as is generally believed, after the First, and before the Second, to Timothy. The tenor and style are much alike in this and in those; and they cast much light on each other, and are worthy the serious attention of all Christian ministers and churches in all ages. This epistle has four parts:

I. The inscription, Chap. i, 1-4

II. The instruction of Titus to this effect

1. Ordain good presbyters, 5-9
2. Such are especially needful at Crete, 10-12
3. Reprove and admonish the Cretans, 13-16
4. Teach aged men and women, ii. 1-5 And young men, being a pattern to them, 6-8
   And servants, urging them by a glorious motive,. 9-15
5. Press obedience to magistrates, and gentleness to all men, iii. 1-2
   Enforcing it by the same motive, 3-7
6. Good works are to be done, foolish questions avoided. heretics shunned, 8-11

III. An invitation of Titus to Nicopolis, with some admonitions, 12-14

IV. The conclusion,

# TITUS

## I

1. Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ - Titles suitable to the person of Paul, and the office he was assigning to Titus. According to the faith - The propagating of which is the proper business of an apostle. A servant of God - According to the faith of the elect. An apostle of Jesus Christ - According to the knowledge of the truth. We serve God according to the measure of our faith: we fulfil our public office according to the measure of our knowledge. The truth that is after godliness - Which in every point runs parallel with and supports the vital, spiritual worship of God; and, indeed, has no other end or scope. These two verses contain the sum of Christianity, which Titus was always to have in his eye. Of the elect of God - Of all real Christians

2. In hope of eternal life - The grand motive and encouragement of every apostle and every servant of God. Which God promised before the world began - To Christ, our Head.

3. And he hath in his own times - At sundry times; and his own times are fittest for his own work. What creature dares ask, "Why no sooner?" Manifested his word - Containing that promise, and the whole "truth which is after godliness." Through the preaching wherewith I am intrusted according to the commandment of God our saviour - And who dares exercise this office on any less authority?

4. My own son - Begot in the same image of God, and repaying a paternal with a filial affection. The common faith - Common to me and all my spiritual children.

5. The things which are wanting - Which I had not time to settle myself. Ordain elders - Appoint the most faithful, zealous men to watch over the rest. Their character follows, Tit i, 6-9. These were

the elders, or bishops, that Paul approved of;-men that had living faith, a pure conscience, a blameless life.

6. The husband of one wife - Surely the Holy Ghost, by repeating this so often, designed to leave the Romanists without excuse.

7. As the steward of God - To whom he intrusts immortal souls. Not selfwilled - Literally, pleasing himself; but all men "for their good to edification." Not passionate - But mild, yielding, tender.

9. As he hath been taught - Perhaps it might be more literally rendered, according to the teaching, or doctrine, of the apostles; alluding to Acts ii, 42.

10. They of the circumcision - The Jewish converts.

11. Stopped - The word properly means, to put a bit into the mouth of an unruly horse.

12. A prophet - So all poets were anciently called; but, besides, Diogenes Laertius says that Epimenides, the Cretan poet, foretold many things. Evil wild beasts - Fierce and savage.

14. Commandments of men - The Jewish or other teachers, whoever they were that turned from the truth.

15. To the pure - Those whose hearts are purified by faith this we allow. All things are pure - All kinds of meat; the Mosaic distinction between clean and unclean meats being now taken away. But to the defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure - The apostle joins defiled and unbelieving, to intimate that nothing can be clean without a true faith: for both the understanding and conscience, those leading powers of the soul, are polluted; consequently, so is the man and all he does.

## II

1. Wholesome - Restoring and preserving spiritual health.

2. Vigilant - As veteran soldiers, not easily to be surprised. Patience - A virtue particularly needful for and becoming them. Serious - Not drolling or diverting on the brink of eternity.

3. In behaviour - The particulars whereof follow. As becometh holiness - Literally, observing an holy decorum. Not slanderers - Or evil-speakers. Not given to much wine - If they use a little for their often infirmities. Teachers - Age and experience call them so to be. Let them teach good only.

4. That they instruct the young women - These Timothy was to instruct himself; Titus, by the elder women. To love their husbands, their children - With a tender, temperate, holy, wise affection. O how hard a lesson.

5. Discreet - Particularly in the love of their children. Chaste - Particularly in the love of their husbands. Keepers at home - Whenever they are not called out by works of necessity, piety, and mercy. Good - Well tempered, sweet, soft, obliging. Obedient to their husbands - Whose will, in all things lawful, is a rule to the wife. That the word of God be not blasphemed - Or evil spoken of; particularly by unbelieving husbands, who lay all the blame on the religion of their wives.

6. To be discreet - A virtue rarely found in youth.

7. Showing thyself a pattern - Titus himself was then young. In the doctrine which thou teachest in public: as to matter, uncorruptness; as to the manner of delivering it, seriousness - Weightiness, solemnity.

8. Wholesome speech - In private conversation.

9. Please them in all things - Wherein it can be done without sin. Not answering again - Though blamed unjustly. This honest servants are most apt to do. Not stealing - Not taking or giving any thing without their master's leave: this fair-spoken servants are apt to do.

10. Showing all good fidelity - Soft, obliging faithfulness That they may adorn the doctrine of God our saviour - More than St. Paul says of kings. How he raises the lowness of his subject! So may they, the lowness of their condition.

11. The saving grace of God - So it is in its nature, tendency, and design. Hath appeared to all men - High and low.

12. Instructing us - All who do not reject it. That, having renounced ungodliness - Whatever is contrary to the fear and love of God. And worldly desires - Which are opposite to sobriety and righteousness. We should live soberly - In all purity and holiness. Sobriety, in the scripture sense, is rather the whole temper of a man, than a single virtue in him. It comprehends all that is opposite to the drowsiness of sin, the folly of ignorance, the unholiness of disorderly passions. Sobriety is no less than all the powers of the soul being consistently and constantly awake, duly governed by heavenly prudence, and entirely conformable to holy affections. And righteously - Doing to all as we would they should do to us. And godly - As those who are consecrated to God both in heart and life.

13. Looking - With eager desire. For that glorious appearing - Which we hope for. Of the great God, even our saviour Jesus Christ - So that, if there be (according to the Arian scheme) a great God and a little God, Christ is not the little God, but the great one.

14. Who gave himself for us - To die in our stead. That he might redeem us - Miserable bondslaves, as well from the power and the very being, as from the guilt, of all our sins.

15. Let no man despise thee - That is, let none have any just cause to despise thee. Yet they surely will. Men who know not God will despise a true minister of his word.

## III

1. Remind them - All the Cretan Christians. To be subject - Passively, not resisting. To principalities - Supreme. And powers - Subordinate governors. And to obey - Them actively, so far as conscience permits.

2. To speak evil - Neither of them nor any man. Not to be quarrelsome - To assault none. To be gentle - When assaulted. Toward all men - Even those who are such as we were.

3. For we - And as God hath dealt with us, so ought we to deal with our neighbour. Were without understanding - Wholly ignorant of God. And disobedient - When he was declared to us.

4. When the love of God appeared - By the light of his Spirit to our inmost soul.

5. Not by works - In this important passage the apostle presents us with a delightful view of our redemption. Herein we have,

1. The cause of it; not our works or righteousness, but "the kindness and love of God our saviour."
2. The effects; which are,

(1.) Justification; "being justified," pardoned and accepted through the alone merits of Christ, not from any desert in us, but according to his own mercy, "by his grace," his free, unmerited goodness.

(2.) Sanctification, expressed by the laver of regeneration, (that is, baptism, the thing signified, as well as the outward sign,) and the renewal of the Holy Ghost; which purifies the soul, as water cleanses the body, and renews it in the whole image of God.

3. The consummation of all; - that we might become heirs of eternal life, and live now in the joyful hope of it.

8. Be careful to excel in good works - Though the apostle does not lay these for the foundation, yet he brings them in at their proper place, and then mentions them, not slightly, but as affairs of great importance. He desires that all believers should be careful - Have their thoughts upon them: use their best contrivance, their utmost endeavours, not barely to practice, but to excel, to be eminent and distinguished in them: because, though they are not the ground of our reconciliation with God, yet they are amiable and honourable to the Christian profession. And profitable to men - Means of increasing the everlasting happiness both of ourselves and others.

10. An heretic (after a first and second admonition) reject - Avoid, leave to himself. This is the only place, in the whole scripture, where this word heretic occurs; and here it evidently means, a man that obstinately persists in contending about "foolish questions," and thereby occasions strife and animosities, schisms and parties in the church. This, and this alone, is an heretic in the scripture sense; and his punishment likewise is here fixed. Shun, avoid him, leave him to himself. As for the Popish sense, "A man that errs in fundamentals," although it crept, with many other things, early into the church, yet it has no shadow of foundation either in the Old or New Testament.

11. Such an one is perverted - In his heart, at least. And sinneth, being self-condemned - Being convinced in his own conscience that he acts wrong.

12. When I shall send Artemas or Tychicus - To succeed thee in thy office. Titus was properly an evangelist, who, according to the nature of that office, had no fixed residence; but presided over other elders, wherever he travelled from place to place, assisting each of the apostles according to the measure of his abilities. Come to me to Nicopolis - Very probably not the Nicopolis in Macedonia, as the vulgar subscription asserts: (indeed, none of those subscriptions at the end of St. Paul's epistles are of any authority:) rather it was a town of the same name which lay upon the sea-coast of Epirus. For I have determined to winter there - Hence it appears, he was not there yet; if so, he would have said, to winter here. Consequently, this letter was not written from thence.

13. Send forward Zenas the lawyer - Either a Roman lawyer or an expounder of the Jewish law.

14. And let ours - All our brethren at Crete. Learn - Both by thy admonition and example. Perhaps they had not before assisted Zenas and Apollos as they ought to have done.

## NOTES ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

ONESIMUS, a servant to Philemon, an eminent person in Colosse, ran away from his master to Rome. Here he was converted to Christianity by St. Paul, who sent him back to his master with

this letter. It seems, Philemon not only pardoned, but gave him his liberty; seeing Ignatius makes mention of him, as succeeding Timotheus at Ephesus. The letter has three parts

I. The inscription, 1-3

II. After commending Philemon's faith and love,. 4-7 He desires him to receive Onesimus again,. 8-21 And to prepare a lodging for himself, 22

III. The conclusion, 23-23

# PHILEMON

## I

1. This single epistle infinitely transcends all the wisdom of the world. And it gives us a specimen how Christians ought to treat of secular affairs from higher principles. Paul a prisoner of Christ - To whom, as such, Philemon could deny nothing. And Timotheus - This was written before the second epistle to Timothy, ver. xxii.

2. To Apphia - His wife, to whom also the business in part belonged. And the church in thy house - The Christians who meet there.

5. Hearing - Probably from Onesimus.

6. I pray that the communication of thy faith may become effectual - That is, that thy faith may be effectually communicated to others, who see and acknowledge thy piety and charity.

7. The saints - To whom Philemon's house was open, verse ii.

8. I might be bold in Christ - Through the authority he hath given me.

9. Yet out of love I rather entreat thee - In how handsome a manner does the apostle just hint, and immediately drop, the consideration of his power to command, and tenderly entreat Philemon to hearken to his friend, his aged friend, and now prisoner for Christ! With what endearment, in the next verse, does he call Onesimus his son, before he names his name! And as soon as he had mentioned it, with what fine address does he just touch on his former faults, and instantly pass on to the happy change that was now made upon him! So disposing Philemon to attend to his request, and the motives wherewith he was going to enforce it.

10. Whom I have begotten in my bonds - The son of my age.

11. Now profitable - None should be expected to be a good servant before he is a good man. He manifestly alludes to his name, Onesimus, which signifies profitable.

12. Receive him, that is, my own bowels - Whom I love as my own soul. Such is the natural affection of a father in Christ toward his spiritual children.

13. To serve me in thy stead - To do those services for me which thou, if present, wouldest gladly have done thyself.

14. That thy benefit might not be by constraint - For Philemon could not have refused it.

15. God might permit him to be separated (a soft word) for a season, that thou mightest have him for ever - Both on earth and in heaven.

16. In the flesh - As a dutiful servant. In the Lord - As a fellow- Christian.

17. If thou accountest me a partner - So that thy things are mine, and mine are thine.

19. I will repay it - If thou requirest it. Not to say, that then owest me thyself - It cannot be expressed, how great our obligation is to those who have gained our souls to Christ. Beside - Receiving Onesimus.

20. Refresh my bowels in Christ - Give me the most exquisite and Christian pleasure.

22. Given to you - Restored to liberty.

## NOTES ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

IT is agreed by the general tenor of antiquity that this epistle was written by St. Paul, whose other epistles were sent to the gentile converts; this only to the Hebrews. But this improper inscription was added by some later hand. It was sent to the Jewish Hellenist Christians, dispersed through various countries. St. Paul's method and style are easily observed therein. He places, as usual, the proposition and division before the treatise, chap. ii, 17; he subjoins the exhortatory to the doctrinal part, quotes the same scriptures, chap. i, 6; ii, 8; x, 30, 38, 6; and uses the same expressions as elsewhere. But why does he not prefix his name, which, it is plain from chap. xiii, 19 was dear to them to whom he wrote? Because he prefixes no inscription, in which, if at all, the name would have been mentioned. The ardour of his spirit carries aim directly upon his subject, (just like St. John in his First Epistle,) and throws back his usual salutation and thanksgiving to the conclusion. This epistle of St. Paul, and both those of St. Peter, (one may add, that of St. James and of St. Jude also,) were written both to the same persons, dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, and other countries, and nearly at the same time. St. Paul suffered at Rome, three years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Therefore this epistle likewise, was written while the temple was standing. St. Peter wrote a little before his martyrdom, and refers to the epistles of St. Paul; this in particular. The scope of it is, to confirm their faith in Christ; and this he does by demonstrating his glory. All the parts of it are full of the most earnest and pointed admonitions and exhortations; and they go on in one tenor, the particle therefore everywhere connecting the doctrine and the use. The sum is, The glory of Christ appears,

I. From comparing with him the prophets and angels, i. 1-14 Therefore we ought to give heed to him, ii. 1-4

II. From his passion and consummation. Here we may observe,

1. The proposition and sum, 5-9
2. The treatise itself. We have a perfect author of salvation, who suffered for our sake, that he might be, (1.) a merciful, and (2.) a faithful, (3.) high priest,. 10-13 These three are particularly explained, his passion and consummation being continually interwoven

1. He has the virtues of an high priest
   a. He is faithful, iii.1 Therefore be ye not unfaithful iv.13
   b. He is merciful, 15 Therefore come to him with confidence v.3
2. He is called of God an high priest. Here,
   a. The sum is proposed, 4-10 With a summary exhortation 11- vi. 20
   b. The point is copiously,

1. Explained. We have a great high priest,
    1. Such as is described in the hundred and tenth Psalm After the order of Melchisedec, vii. 1-19 Established by an oath, 20-22 For ever, 23-28
    2. Therefore peculiarly excellent-Heavenly, viii. 1-6 Of the new covenant, 7-13 By whom we have an entrance into the sanctuary ix. 1 x. 18
2. Applied. Therefore,
    1. Believe, hope, love 19-25 These three are farther inculcated,
        a. Faith, with patience, 26-39 Which, after the example of the ancients,. xi.1 xii.1 And of Christ himself, 2, 3 Is to be exercised, 4-11 Cheerfully, peaceably, holily, 12-17
        b. Hope, 18-20
        c. Love, C.xiii. 1-6
    2. In order to grow in these graces, make use of The remembrance of your former, 7-16 The vigilance of your present, pastors, 17-19 To this period, and to the whole epistle, answers The prayer, the doxology, and the mild conclusion, 20-25 There are many comparisons in this epistle, which may be nearly reduced to two heads:
        1. The prophets, the angels, Moses, Joshua, Aaron, are great; but Jesus Christ is infinitely greater
        2. The ancient believers enjoyed high privileges; but Christian believers enjoy far higher. To illustrate this, examples both of happiness and misery are everywhere interspersed: so that in this epistle there is a kind of recapitulation of the whole Old Testament. In this also Judaism is abrogated, and Christianity carried to its height.

# HEBREWS

## I

1. God, who at sundry times - The creation was revealed in the time of Adam; the last judgment, in the time of Enoch: and so at various times, and in various degrees, more explicit knowledge was given. In divers manners - In visions, in dreams, and by Revelations of various kinds. Both these are opposed to the one entire and perfect Revelation which he has made to us by Jesus Christ. The very number of the prophets showed that they prophesied only "in part." Of old - There were no prophets for a large tract of time before Christ came, that the great Prophet might be the more earnestly expected. Spake - A part is put for the whole; implying every kind of divine communication. By the prophets - The mention of whom is a virtual declaration that the apostle received the whole Old Testament, and was not about to advance any doctrine in contradiction to it. Hath in these last

times - Intimating that no other Rev. is to be expected. Spoken - All things, and in the most perfect manner. By his Son - Alone. The Son spake by the apostles. The majesty of the Son of God is proposed,

1. Absolutely, by the very name of Son, verse 1, and by three glorious predicates, - "whom he hath appointed," "by whom he made," who "sat down;" whereby he is described from the beginning to the consummation of all things, ver. 2, 3
2. Comparatively to angels, ver. 4. The proof of this proposition immediately follows: the name of Son being proved, ver. 5; his being "heir of all things," ver. 6-9; his making the worlds, ver. 10- 12 his sitting at God's right hand, ver. 13, &c.

2. Whom he hath appointed heir of all things - After the name of Son, his inheritance is mentioned. God appointed him the heir long before he made the worlds, Eph. iii, 11; Prov. viii, 22, &c. The Son is the firstborn, born before all things: the heir is a term relating to the creation which followed, ver. 6. By whom he also made the worlds - Therefore the Son was before all worlds. His glory reaches from everlasting to everlasting, though God spake by him to us only "in these last days."

3. Who sat down - The third of these glorious predicates, with which three other particulars are interwoven, which are mentioned likewise, and in the same order, Colossians i, 15, 17, 20. Who, being - The glory which he received in his exaltation at the right hand of the Father no angel was capable of; but the Son alone, who likewise enjoyed it long before. The brightness of his glory - Glory is the nature of God revealed in its brightness. The express image - Or stamp. Whatever the Father is, is exhibited in the Son, as a seal in the stamp on wax. Of his person - Or substance. The word denotes the unchangeable perpetuity of divine life and power. And sustaining all things - Visible and invisible, in being. By the word of his power - That is, by his powerful word. When he had by himself - Without any Mosaic rites or ceremonies. Purged our sins - In order to which it was necessary he should for a time divest himself of his glory. In this chapter St. Paul describes his glory chiefly as he is the Son of God; afterwards, ver. 6, &c., the glory of the man Christ Jesus. He speaks, indeed, briefly of the former before his humiliation, but copiously after his exaltation; as from hence the glory he had from eternity began to be evidently seen. Both his purging our sins, and sitting on the right hand of God, are largely treated of in the seven following chapters. Sat down - The priests stood while they ministered: sitting, therefore, denotes the consummation of his sacrifice. This word, sat down, contains the scope, the theme, and the sum, of the epistle.

4. This verse has two clauses, the latter of which is treated of, ver. 5; the former, ver. 13. Such transpositions are also found in the other epistles of St. Paul, but in none so frequently as in this. The Jewish doctors were peculiarly fond of this figure, and used it much in all their writings. The apostle therefore, becoming all things to all men, here follows the same method. All the inspired writers were readier in all the figures of speech than the most experienced orators. Being - By his exaltation, after he had been lower than them, chap. ii, 9. So much higher than the angels - It was extremely proper to observe this, because the Jews gloried in their law, as it was delivered by the ministration of angels. How much more may we glory in the gospel, which was given, not by the ministry of angels, but of the very Son of God! As he hath by inheritance a more excellent name - Because he is the Son of God, he inherits that name, in right whereof he inherits all things His inheriting that name is more ancient than all worlds; his inheriting all things, as ancient as all things. Than they - This denotes an immense pre-eminence. The angels do not inherit all things, but are themselves a portion of the Son's inheritance, whom they worship as their Lord.

5. Thou art my Son - God of God, Light of Light. This day have I begotten thee - I have begotten thee from eternity, which, by its unalter able permanency of duration, is one continued, unsuccessive day. I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son - I will own myself to be his Father, and him to be my Son, by eminent tokens of my peculiar love The former clause relates to his natural Sonship, by an eternal, inconceivable generation; the other, to his Father's acknowledgment and treatment of him as his incarnate Son. Indeed this promise related immediately to Solomon, but in a far higher sense to the Messiah. Psalm ii, 7; 2 Sam. vii, 14

6. And again - That is, in another scripture. He - God. Saith, when he bringeth in his first-begotten - This appellation includes that of Son, together with the rights of primogeniture, which the first-begotten Son of God enjoys, in a manner not communicable to any creature. Into the world - Namely, at his incarnation. He saith, Let all the angels of God worship him - So much higher was he, when in his lowest estate, than the highest angel. Psalm xcvii, 7.

7. Who maketh his angels - This implies, they are only creatures, whereas the Son is eternal, ver. 8; and the Creator himself, ver. 10. Spirits and a flame of fire - Which intimates not only their office, but also their nature; which is excellent indeed, the metaphor being taken from the most swift, subtle, and efficacious things on earth; but nevertheless infinitely below the majesty of the Son. Psalm civ, 4.

8. O God - God, in the singular number, is never in scripture used absolutely of any but the supreme God. Thy reign, of which the scepter is the ensign, is full of justice and equity. Psalm xlv, 6, 7.

9. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity - Thou art infinitely pure and holy. Therefore God - Who, as thou art Mediator, is thy God. Hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness - With the Holy Ghost, the fountain of joy. Above thy fellows - Above all the children of men.

10. Thou - The same to whom the discourse is addressed in the preceding verse. Psalm cii, 25, 26

12. As a mantle - With all ease. They shall be changed - Into new heavens and a new earth. But thou art eternally the same.

13. Psalm cx, 1.

14. Are they not all - Though of various orders. Ministering spirits, sent forth - Ministering before God, sent forth to men. To attend on them - In numerous offices of protection, care, and kindness. Who - Having patiently continued in welldoing, shall inherit everlasting salvation.

## II

In this and the two following chapters the apostle subjoins an exhortation, answering each head of the preceding chapter.

1. Lest we should let them slip - As water out of a leaky vessel. So the Greek word properly signifies.

2. In giving the law, God spoke by angels; but in proclaiming the gospel, by his Son. Steadfast - Firm and valid. Every transgression - Commission of sin. Every disobedience - Omission of duty.

3. So great a salvation - A deliverance from so great wickedness and misery, into so great holiness and happiness. This was first spoken of (before he came it was not known) by Him who

is the Lord - of angels as well as men. And was confirmed to us - Of this age, even every article of it. By them that had heard him - And had been themselves also both eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.

4. By signs and wonders - While he lived. And various miracles and distributions of the Holy Ghost - Miraculous gifts, distributed after his exaltation. According to his will - Not theirs who received them.

5. This verse contains a proof of the third; the greater the salvation is, and the more glorious the Lord whom we despise, the greater will be our punishment. God hath not subjected the world to come - That is, the dispensation of the Messiah; which being to succeed the Mosaic was usually styled by the Jews, the world to come, although it is still in great measure to come Whereof we now speak - Of which I am now speaking. In this last great dispensation the Son alone presides.

6. What is man - To the vast expanse of heaven, to the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained! This psalm seems to have been composed by David, in a clear, moonshiny, and starlight night, while he was contemplating the wonderful fabric of heaven; because in his magnificent description of its luminaries, he takes no notice of the sun, the most glorious of them all. The words here cited concerning dominion were doubtless in some sense applicable to Adam; although in their complete and highest sense, they belong to none but the second Adam. Or the son of man, that thou visitest him - The sense rises: we are mindful of him that is absent; but to visit, denotes the care of a present God. Psalm viii, 4.

7. Thou hast made him - Adam. A little lower than the angels - The Hebrew is, a little lower than (that is, next to) God. Such was man as he came out of the hands of his Creator: it seems, the highest of all created beings. But these words are also in a farther sense, as the apostle here shows, applicable to the Son of God. It should be remembered that the apostles constantly cited the Septuagint translation, very frequently without any variation. It was not their business, in writing to the Jews, who at that time had it in high esteem, to amend or alter this, which would of consequence have occasioned disputes without end.

8. Now this putting all things under him, implies that there is nothing that is not put under him. But it is plain, this is not done now, with regard to man in general.

9. It is done only with regard to Jesus, God-Man, who is now crowned with glory and honour - As a reward for his having suffered death. He was made a little lower than the angels - Who cannot either suffer or die. That by the grace of God, he might taste death - An expression denoting both the reality of his death, and the shortness of its continuance. For every man - That ever was or will be born into the world.

10. In this verse the apostle expresses, in his own words, what he expressed before in those of the Psalmist. It became him - It was suitable to all his attributes, both to his justice, goodness, and wisdom. For whom - As their ultimate end. And by whom - As their first cause. Are all things, in bringing many adopted sons to glory - To this very thing, that they are sons, and are treated as such To perfect the captain - Prince, leader, and author of their salvation, by his atoning sufferings for them. To perfect or consummate implies the bringing him to a full and glorious end of all his troubles, chap. v, 9. This consummation by sufferings intimates,

1. the glory of Christ, to whom, being consummated, all things are made subject.
2. The preceding sufferings. Of these he treats expressly, ver. 11- 18; having before spoken of his glory, both to give an edge to his exhortation, and to remove the scandal of sufferings and death. A fuller consideration of both these points he

interweaves with the following discourse on his priesthood. But what is here said of our Lord's being made perfect through sufferings, has no relation to our being saved or sanctified by sufferings. Even he himself was perfect, as God and as man, before ever be suffered. By his sufferings, in his life and death, he was made a perfect or complete sin-offering. But unless we were to be made the same sacrifice, and to atone for sin, what is said of him in this respect is as much out of our sphere as his ascension into heaven. It is his atonement, and his Spirit carrying on "the work of faith with power" in our hearts, that alone can sanctify us. Various afflictions indeed may be made subservient to this; and so far as they are blessed to the weaning us from sin, and causing our affections to be set on things above, so far they do indirectly help on our sanctification.

11. For - They are nearly related to each other. He that sanctifieth - Christ, chap. xiii, 12. And all they that are sanctified - That are brought to God; that draw near or come to him, which are synonymous terms. Are all of one - Partakers of one nature, from one parent, Adam.

12. I will declare thy name to my brethren - Christ declares the name of God, gracious and merciful, plenteous in goodness and truth, to all who believe, that they also may praise him. In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee - As the precentor of the choir. This he did literally, in the midst of his apostles, on the night before his passion. And as it means, in a more general sense, setting forth the praise of God, he has done it in the church by his word and his Spirit; he still does, and will do it throughout all generations. Psalm xxii, 22.

13. And again - As one that has communion with his brethren in sufferings, as well as in nature, he says, I will put my trust in him - To carry me through them all. And again - With a like acknowledgment of his near relation to them, as younger brethren, who were yet but in their childhood, he presents all believers to God, saying, Behold I and the children whom thou hast given me. Isaiah viii, 17, 18

14. Since then these children partake of flesh and blood - Of human nature with all its infirmities. He also in like manner took part of the same; that through his own death he might destroy the tyranny of him that had, by God's permission, the power of death with regard to the ungodly. Death is the devil's servant and serjeant, delivering to him those whom he seizes in sin. That is, the devil - The power was manifest to all; but who exerted it, they saw not.

15. And deliver them, as many as through fear of death were all their lifetime, till then, subject to bondage - Every man who fears death is subject to bondage; is in a slavish, uncomfortable state. And every man fears death, more or less, who knows not Christ: death is unwelcome to him, if he knows what death is. But he delivers all true believers from this bondage.

16. For verily he taketh not hold of angels - He does not take their nature upon him. But he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham - He takes human nature upon him. St. Paul says the seed of Abraham, rather than the seed of Adam, because to Abraham was the promise made.

17. Wherefore it behoved him - It was highly fit and proper, yea, necessary, in order to his design of redeeming them. To be made in all things - That essentially pertain to human nature, and in all sufferings and temptations. Like his brethren - This is a recapitulation of all that goes before: the sum of all that follows is added immediately. That he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest-Merciful toward sinners; faithful toward God. A priest or high priest is one who has a right of approaching God, and of bringing others to him. Faithful is treated of, chap. iii, 2, &c., with its use; merciful, chap. iv, 14, &c., with the use also; High Priest, chap. v, 4, &c., chap. vii, 1, &c. The

use is added from chap. x, 19. In things pertaining to God, to expiate the sins of the people - Offering up their sacrifices and prayers to God; deriving God's grace, peace, and blessings upon them.

18. For in that he hath suffered being tempted himself he is able to succor them that are tempted - That is, he has given a manifest, demonstrative proof that he is able so to do.

## III

1. The heavenly calling - God calls from heaven, and to heaven, by the gospel. Consider the Apostle - The messenger of God, who pleads the cause of God with us. And High Priest - Who pleads our cause with God. Both are contained in the one word Mediator. He compares Christ, as an Apostle, with Moses; as a Priest, with Aaron. Both these offices, which Moses and Aaron severally bore, he bears together, and far more eminently. Of our profession - The religion we profess.

2. His house - The church of Israel, then the peculiar family of God. Num. xii, 7.

3. He that hath builded it hath more glory than the house - Than the family itself, or any member of it.

4. Now Christ, he that built not only this house, but all things, is God - And so infinitely greater than Moses or any creature.

5. And Moses verily - Another proof of the pre-eminence of Christ above Moses. Was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of the things which were afterwards to be spoken - That is, which was a full confirmation of the things which he afterward spake concerning Christ.

6. But Christ was faithful as a Son; whose house we are, while we hold fast, and shall be unto the end, if we hold fast our confidence in God, and glorying in his promises; our faith and hope.

7. Wherefore - Seeing he is faithful, be not ye unfaithful. Psalm xcv, 7, &c.

8. As in the provocation - When Israel provoked me by their strife and murmurings. In the day of temptation - When at the same time they tempted me, by distrusting my power and goodness. Exod. xvii, 7.

9. Where your fathers - That hard-hearted and stiff-necked generation. So little cause had their descendants to glory in them. Tempted me - Whether I could and would help them. Proved me - Put my patience to the proof, even while they saw my glorious works both of judgment and mercy, and that for forty years.

10. Wherefore - To speak after the manner of men. I was grieved - Displeased, offended with that generation, and said, They always err in their hearts - They are led astray by their stubborn will and vile affections. And - For this reason, because wickedness has blinded their understanding. They have not known my ways - By which I would have led them like a flock. Into my rest - In the promised land.

12. Take heed, lest there be in any of you - As there was in them. An evil heart of unbelief - Unbelief is the parent of all evil, and the very essence of unbelief lies in departing from God, as the living God - The fountain of all our life, holiness, happiness.

13. But, to prevent it, exhort one another, while it is called Today - This today will not last for ever. The day of life will end soon, and perhaps the day of grace yet sooner.

14. For we are made partakers of Christ - And we shall still partake of him and all his benefits, if we hold fast our faith unto the end. If - But not else; and a supposition made by the Holy Ghost is equal to the, strongest assertion. Both the sentiment and the manner of expression are the same as ver. 6.

16. Were they not all that came out of Egypt - An awful consideration! The whole elect people of God (a very few excepted) provoked God presently after their great deliverance, continued to grieve his Spirit for forty years, and perished in their sin!

19. So we see they could not enter in - Though afterward they desired it.

## IV

2. But the word which they heard did not profit them - So far from it, that it increased their damnation. It is then only when it is mixed with faith, that it exerts its saving power.

3. For we only that have believed enter into the rest - The proposition is, There remains a rest for us. This is proved, ver. 3- 11, thus: That psalm mentions a rest: yet it does not mean,

1. God's rest from creating; for this was long before the time of Moses. Therefore in his time another rest was expected, of which they who then heard fell short Nor is it,
2. The rest which Israel obtained through Joshua; for the Psalmist wrote after him. Therefore it is,
3. The eternal rest in heaven. As he said - Clearly showing that there is a farther rest than that which followed the finishing of the creation. Though the works were finished - Before: whence it is plain, God did not speak of resting from them.

4. For, long after he had rested from his works, he speaks again. Gen. ii, 2.

5. In this psalm, of a rest yet to come.

7. After so long a time - It was above four hundred years from the time of Moses and Joshua to David. As it was said before - St. Paul here refers to the text he had just cited.

8. The rest - All the rest which God had promised.

9. Therefore - Since he still speaks of another day, there must remain a farther, even an eternal, rest for the people of God.

10. For they do not yet so rest. Therefore a fuller rest remains for them.

11. Lest any one should fall - Into perdition.

12. For the word of God - Preached, ver. 2, and armed with threatenings, ver. 3. Is living and powerful - Attended with the power of the living God, and conveying either life or death to the hearers. Sharper than any two-edged sword - Penetrating the heart more than this does the body. Piercing - Quite through, and laying open. The soul and spirit, joints and marrow - The inmost recesses of the mind, which the apostle beautifully and strongly expresses by this heap of figurative words. And is a discerner - Not only of the thoughts, but also of the intentions.

13. In his sight - It is God whose word is thus "powerful:" it is God in whose sight every creature is manifest; and of this his word, working on the conscience, gives the fullest conviction. But all things are naked and opened - Plainly alluding to the sacrifices under the law which were first

flayed, and then (as the Greek word literally means) cleft asunder through the neck and backbone; so that everything both without and within was exposed to open view.

14. Having therefore a great high priest - Great indeed, being the eternal Son of God, that is passed through the heavens - As the Jewish high priest passed through the veil into the holy of holies, carrying with him the blood of the sacrifices, on the yearly day of atonement; so our great high priest went once for all through the visible heavens, with the virtue of his own blood, into the immediate presence God.

15. He sympathizes with us even in our innocent infirmities, wants, weaknesses, miseries, dangers. Yet without sin - And, therefore, is indisputably able to preserve us from it in all our temptations.

16. Let us therefore come boldly - Without any doubt or fear. Unto the throne of God, our reconciled Father, even his throne of grace - Grace erected it, and reigns there, and dispenses all blessings in a way of mere, unmerited favour.

## V

1. For every high priest being taken from among men - Is, till he is taken, of the same rank with them. And is appointed - That is, is wont to be appointed. In things pertaining to God - To bring God near to men, and men to God. That he may offer both gifts - Out of things inanimate, and animal sacrifices.

2. Who can have compassion - In proportion to the offense: so the Greek word signifies. On the ignorant - Them that are in error. And the wandering - Them that are in sin. Seeing himself also is compassed with infirmity - Even with sinful infirmity; and so needs the compassion which he shows to others.

4. The apostle begins here to treat of the priesthood of Christ. The sum of what he observes concerning it is, Whatever is excellent in the Levitical priesthood is in Christ, and in a more eminent manner; and whatever is wanting in those priests is in him. And no one taketh this honour - The priesthood. To himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron - And his posterity, who were all of them called at one and the same time. But it is observable, Aaron did not preach at all; preaching being no part of the priestly office.

5. So also Christ glorified not himself to be an high priest - That is, did not take this honour to himself, but received it from him who said, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee - Not, indeed, at the same time; for his generation was from eternity. Psalm ii, 7.

6. Psalm cx, 4.

7. The sum of the things treated of in the seventh and following chapters is contained, ver. 7-10; and in this sum is admirably comprised the process of his passion, with its inmost causes, in the very terms used by the evangelists. Who in the days of his flesh - Those two days, in particular, wherein his sufferings were at the height. Having offered up prayers and supplications - Thrice. With strong crying and tears - In the garden. To him that was able to save him from death - Which yet he endured, in obedience to the will of his Father. And being heard in that which he particularly feared - When the cup was offered him first, there was set before him that horrible image of a painful, shameful, accursed death, which moved him to pray conditionally against it: for, if he had

desired it, his heavenly Father would have sent him more than twelve legions of angels to have delivered him. But what he most exceedingly feared was the weight of infinite justice; the being "bruised" and "put to grief" by the hand of God himself. Compared with this, everything else was a mere nothing; and yet, so greatly did he ever thirst to be obedient to the righteous will of his Father, and to "lay down" even "his life for the sheep," that he vehemently longed to be baptized with this baptism, Luke xii, 50. Indeed, his human nature needed the support of Omnipotence; and for this he sent up strong crying and tears: but, throughout his whole life, he showed that it was not the sufferings he was to undergo, but the dishonour that sin had done to so holy a God, that grieved his spotless soul. The consideration of its being the will of God tempered his fear, and afterwards swallowed it up; and he was heard not so that the cup should pass away, but so that he drank it without any fear.

8. Though he were a Son - This is interposed. lest any should be offended at all these instances of human weakness. In the garden, how frequently did he call God his Father! Matt. xxvi, 39, &c. And hence it most evidently appears that his being the Son of God did not arise merely from his resurrection. Yet learned he - The word learned, premised to the word suffered, elegantly shows how willingly he learned. He learned obedience, when be began to suffer; when he applied himself to drink that cup: obedience in suffering and dying.

9. And being perfected - By sufferings, chap. ii, 10; brought through all to glory. He became the author - The procuring and efficient cause. Of eternal salvation to all that obey him - By doing and suffering his whole will.

10. Called - The Greek word here properly signifies surnamed. His name is, "the Son of God." The Holy Ghost seems to have concealed who Melchisedec was, on purpose that he might be the more eminent type of Christ. This only we know, - that he was a priest, and king of Salem, or Jerusalem.

11. Concerning whom - The apostle here begins an important digression, wherein he reproves, admonishes, and exhorts the Hebrews. We - Preachers of the gospel. Have many things to say, and hard to be explained - Though not so much from the subject- matter, as from your slothfulness in considering, and dulness in apprehending, the things of God.

12. Ye have need that one teach you again which are the first principles of religion. Accordingly these are enumerated in the first verse of the ensuing chapter. And have need of milk - The first and plainest doctrines.

13. Every one that useth milk - That neither desires, nor can digest, anything else: otherwise strong men use milk; but not milk chiefly, and much less that only. Is unexperienced in the word of righteousness - The sublimer truths of the gospel. Such are all who desire and can digest nothing but the doctrine of justification and imputed righteousness.

14. But strong meat - These sublimer truths relating to "perfection," chap. vi, 1. Belong to them of full age, who by habit - Habit here signifies strength of spiritual understanding, arising from maturity of spiritual age. By, or in consequence of, this habit they exercise themselves in these things with ease, readiness, cheerfulness, and profit.

## VI

1. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ - That is, saying no more of them for the present. Let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works - From open sins, the very first thing to be insisted on. And faith in God - The very next point. So St. Paul in his very first sermon at Lystra, Acts xiv, 15, "Turn from those vanities unto the living God." And when they believed, they were to be baptized with the baptism, not of the Jews, or of John, but of Christ. The next thing was, to lay hands upon them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: after which they were more fully instructed, touching the resurrection, and the general judgment; called eternal, because the sentence then pronounced is irreversible, and the effects of it remain for ever.

3. And this we will do - We will go on to perfection; and so much the more diligently, because,

4. It is impossible for those who were once enlightened - With the light of the glorious love of God in Christ. And have tasted the heavenly gift - Remission of sins, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. And been made partakers of the Holy Ghost - Of the witness and the fruit of the Spirit.

5. And have tasted the good word of God - Have had a relish for, and a delight in it. And the powers of the world to come - Which every one tastes, who has an hope full of immortality. Every child that is naturally born, first sees the light, then receives and tastes proper nourishment, and partakes of the things of this world. In like manner, the apostle, comparing spiritual with natural things, speaks of one born of the Spirit, as seeing the light, tasting the sweetness, and partaking of the things "of the world to come."

6. And have fallen away - Here is not a supposition, but a plain relation of fact. The apostle here describes the case of those who have cast away both the power and the form of godliness; who have lost both their faith, hope, and love, ver. 10, &c., and that wilfully, chap. x, 26. Of these wilful total apostates he declares, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance. (though they were renewed once,) either to the foundation, or anything built thereon. Seeing they crucify the Son of God afresh - They use him with the utmost indignity. And put him to an open shame - Causing his glorious name to be blasphemed.

8. That which beareth thorns and briers - Only or chiefly. Is rejected - No more labour is bestowed upon it. Whose end is to be burned - As Jerusalem was shortly after.

9. But, beloved - in this one place he calls them so. he never uses this appellation, but in exhorting. We are persuaded of you things that accompany salvation - We are persuaded you are now saved from your sins; and that ye have that faith, love, and holiness, which lead to final salvation. Though we thus speak - To warn you, lest you should fall from your present steadfastness.

10. For - Ye give plain proof of your faith and love, which the righteous God will surely reward.

11. But we desire you may show the same diligence unto the end - And therefore we thus speak. To the full assurance of hope - Which you cannot expect, if you abate your diligence. The full assurance of faith relates to present pardon; the full assurance of hope, to future glory. The former is the highest degree of divine evidence that God is reconciled to me in the Son of his love; the latter is the same degree of divine evidence (wrought in the soul by the same immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost) of persevering grace, and of eternal glory. So much, and no more, as faith every moment "beholds with open face," so much does hope see to all eternity But this assurance of faith and hope is not an opinion, not a bare construction of scripture, but is given immediately by the power of the Holy Ghost; and what none can have for another, but for himself only.

12. Inherited the promises - The promised rest; paradise.

13. For - Ye have abundant encouragement, seeing no stronger promise could be made than that great promise which God made to Abraham, and in him to us.

14. Gen. xxii, 17.

15. After he had waited - Thirty years. He obtained the promise - Isaac, the pledge of all the promises.

16. Men generally swear by him who is infinitely greater than themselves, and an oath for confirmation, to confirm what is promised or asserted, usually puts an end to all contradiction. This shows that an oath taken in a religious manner is lawful even under the gospel: otherwise the apostle would never have mentioned it with so much honour, as a proper means to confirm the truth

17. God interposed by an oath - Amazing condescension! He who is greatest of all acts as if he were a middle person; as if while he swears, he were less than himself, by whom he swears! Thou that hearest the promise, dost thou not yet believe?

18. That by two unchangeable things - His promise and his oath, in either, much more in both of which, it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation - Swallowing up all doubt and fear. Who have fled - After having been tossed by many storms. To lay hold on the hope set before us - On Christ, the object of our hope, and the glory we hope for through him.

19. Which hope in Christ we have as an anchor of the soul - Entering into heaven itself, and fixed there. Within the veil - Thus he slides back to the priesthood of Christ.

20. A forerunner used to be less in dignity than those that are to follow him. But it is not so here; for Christ who is gone before us is infinitely superior to us. What an honour is it to believers, to have so glorious a forerunner, now appearing in the presence of God for them.

## VII

1. The sum of this chapter is, Christ, as appears from his type, Melchisedec, who was greater than Abraham himself, from whom Levi descended, has a priesthood altogether excellent, new, firm, perpetual. Gen. xiv, 18, &c.

2. Being first - According to the meaning of his own name. King of righteousness, then - According to the name of his city. King of peace - So in him, as in Christ, righteousness and peace were joined. And so they are in all that believe in him.

3. Without father, without mother, without pedigree - Recorded, without any account of his descent from any ancestors of the priestly order. Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life - Mentioned by Moses. But being - In all these respects. Made like the Son of God - Who is really without father, as to his human nature; without mother, as to his divine; and in this also, without pedigree - Neither descended from any ancestors of the priestly order. Remaineth a priest continually - Nothing is recorded of the death or successor of Melchisedec. But Christ alone does really remain without death, and without successor.

4. The greatness of Melchisedec is described in all the preceding and following particulars. But the most manifest proof of it was, that Abraham gave him tithes as to a priest of God and a superior; though he was himself a patriarch, greater than a king, and a progenitor of many kings.

5. The sons of Levi take tithes of their brethren - Sprung from Abraham as well as themselves. The Levites therefore are greater than they; but the priests are greater than the Levites, the patriarch Abraham than the priests, and Melchisedec than him.

6. He who is not from them - The Levites Blessed - Another proof of his superiority. Even him that had the promises - That was so highly favoured of God. When St. Paul speaks of Christ, he says, "the promise;" promises refer to other blessings also.

7. The less is blessed - Authoritatively, of the greater.

8. And here - In the Levitical priesthood. But there - In the case of Melchisedec. He of whom it is testified that he liveth - Who is not spoken of as one that died for another to succeed him; but is represented only as living, no mention being made either of his birth or death.

9. And even Levi, who received tithes - Not in person, but in his successors, as it were, paid tithes - In the person of Abraham.

11. The apostle now demonstrates that the Levitical priesthood must yield to the priesthood of Christ, because Melchisedec, after whose order he is a priest,

1. Is opposed to Aaron, ver. 11-14.
2. Hath no end of life, ver. 15-19, but "remaineth a priest continually." If now perfection were by the Levitical priesthood - If this perfectly answered all God's designs and man's wants For under it the people received the law - Whence some might infer, that perfection was by that priesthood. What farther need was there, that another priest - Of a new order, should be set up? From this single consideration it is plain, that both the priesthood and the law, which were inseparably connected, were now to give way to a better priesthood and more excellent dispensation.

12. For - One of these cannot be changed without the other.

13. But the priesthood is manifestly changed from one order to another, and from one tribe to another. For he of whom these things are spoken - Namely, Jesus. Pertaineth to another tribe - That of Judah. Of which no man was suffered by the law to attend on, or minister at, the altar.

14. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah - Whatever difficulties have arisen since, during so long a tract of time, it was then clear beyond dispute.

15. And it is still far more evident, that - Both the priesthood and the law are changed, because the priest now raised up is not only of another tribe, but of a quite different order.

16. Who is made - A priest. Not after the law of a carnal commandment - Not according to the Mosaic law, which consisted chiefly of commandments that were carnal, compared to the spirituality of the gospel. But after the power of an endless life - Which he has in himself, as the eternal Son of God.

18. For there is implied in this new and everlasting priesthood, and in the new dispensation connected therewith, a disannulling of the preceding commandment - An abrogation of the Mosaic law. For the weakness and unprofitableness thereof - For its insufficiency either to justify or to sanctify.

19. For the law - Taken by itself, separate from the gospel. Made nothing perfect - Could not perfect its votaries, either in faith or love, in happiness or holiness. But the bringing in of a better hope - Of the gospel dispensation, which gives us a better ground of confidence, does. By which we draw nigh to God - Yea, so nigh as to be one spirit with him. And this is true perfection.

20. And - The greater solemnity wherewith he was made priest, farther proves the superior excellency of his priesthood.

21. The Lord swear and will not repent - Hence also it appears, that his is an unchangeable priesthood.

22. Of so much better a covenant - Unchangeable, eternal. Was Jesus made a surety - Or mediator. The word covenant frequently occurs in the remaining part of this epistle. The original word means either a covenant or a last will and testament. St. Paul takes it sometimes in the former, sometimes in the latter, sense; sometimes he includes both.

23. They were many priests - One after another.

24. He continueth for ever - In life and in his priesthood. That passeth not away - To any successor.

25. Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost - From all the guilt, power, root, and consequence of sin. Them who come - By faith. To God through him - As their priest. Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession - That is, he ever lives and intercedes. He died once; he intercedes perpetually.

26. For such an high priest suited us - Unholy, mischievous, defiled sinners: a blessed paradox! Holy - With respect to God. Harmless - With respect to men. Undefiled - With any sin in himself. Separated from sinners - As well as free from sin. And so he was when he left the world. And made - Even in his human nature. Higher than the heavens - And all their inhabitants.

27. Who needeth not to offer up sacrifices daily - That is, on every yearly day of expiation; for he offered once for all: not for his own sins, for he then offered up himself "without spot to God."

28. The law maketh men high priests that have infirmity - That are both weak, mortal, and sinful. But the oath which was since the law - Namely, in the time of David. Maketh the son, who is consecrated for ever - Who being now free, both from sin and death, from natural and moral infirmity, remaineth a priest for ever.

## VIII

1. We have such an high priest - Having finished his description of the type in Melchisedec, the apostle begins to treat directly of the excellency of Christ's priesthood, beyond the Levitical. Who is set down - Having finished his oblation. At the right hand of the Majesty - Of God.

2. A minister - Who represents his own sacrifice, as the high priest did the blood of those sacrifices once a year. Of the sanctuary - Heaven, typified by the holy of holies. And of the true tabernacle - Perhaps his human nature, of which the old tabernacle was a type. Which the Lord hath fixed - Forever. Not man - As Moses fixed the tabernacle.

4. But if he were on earth - If his priesthood terminated here. He could not be a priest - At all, consistently with the Jewish institutions. There being other priests - To whom alone this office is allotted.

5. Who serve - The temple, which was not yet destroyed. After the pattern and shadow of heavenly things - Of spiritual, evangelical worship, and of everlasting glory. The pattern - Somewhat like the strokes pencilled out upon a piece of fine linen, which exhibit the figures of leaves and flowers, but have not yet received their splendid colours and curious shades. And shadow - Or

shadowy representation, which gives you some dim and imperfect idea of the body, but not the fine features, not the distinguishing air; none of those living graces which adorn the real person. Yet both the pattern and shadow lead our minds to something nobler than themselves: the pattern, to that holiness and glory which complete it; the shadow, to that which occasions it. Exod. xxv, 40.

6. And now he hath obtained a more excellent ministry - His priesthood as much excels theirs, as the promises of the gospel (whereof he is a surety) excels those of the law. These better promises are specified, ver. 10, xi, those in the law were mostly temporal promises.

7. For if the first had been faultless - If that dispensation had answered all God's designs and man's wants, if it had not been weak and unprofitable unable to make anything perfect, no place would have been for a second.

8. But there is; for finding fault with them - Who were under the old covenant he saith, I make a new covenant with the house of Israel - With all the Israel of God, in all ages and nations. It is new in many respects, though not as to the substance of it:

1. Being ratified by the death of Christ.
2. Freed from those burdensome rites and ceremonies.
3. Containing a more full and clear account of spiritual religion.
4. Attended with larger influences of the Spirit
5. Extended to all men. And,
6. Never to be abolished. Jer. xxxi, 31, &c.

9. When I took them by the hand - With the care and tenderness of a parent. And just while this was fresh in their memory, they obeyed; but presently after they shook off the yoke. They continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not - So that covenant was soon broken in pieces.

10. This is the covenant I will make after those days - After the Mosaic dispensation is abolished. I will put my laws in their minds - I will open their eyes, and enlighten their understanding, to see the true, full, spiritual meaning thereof. And write them on their hearts - So that they shall inwardly experience whatever I have commanded. And I will be to them a God - Their all- sufficient portion, and exceeding great reward. And they shall be to me a people - My treasure, my beloved, loving, and obedient children.

11. And they who are under this covenant (though in other respects they will have need to teach each other to their lives' end, yet) shall not need to teach every one his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me - All real Christians. From the least to the greatest - In this order the saving knowledge of God ever did and ever will proceed; not first to the greatest, and then to the least. But "the Lord shall save the tents," the poorest, "of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David," the royal seed, "and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem," the nobles and the rich citizens, "do not magnify themselves," Zech. xii, 7.

12. For I will justify them, which is the root of all true knowledge of God. This, therefore, is God's method. First, a sinner is pardoned: then he knows God, as gracious and merciful then God's laws are written on his heart: he is God's, and God is his.

13. In saying, A new covenant, he hath antiquated the first - Hath shown that it is disannulled, and out of date. Now that which is antiquated is ready to vanish away - As it did quickly after, when the temple was destroyed.

**IX**

1. The first covenant had ordinances of outward worship, and a worldly - a visible, material sanctuary, or tabernacle. Of this sanctuary he treats, ver. 2-5. Of those ordinances, ver. 6-10.

2. The first - The outward tabernacle. In which was the candlestick, and the table - The shewbread, shown continually before God and all the people, consisting of twelve loaves, according to the number of the tribes, was placed on this table in two rows, six upon one another in each row. This candlestick and bread seem to have typified the light and life which are more largely dispensed under the gospel by Him who is the Light of the world, and the Bread of life.

3. The second veil divided the holy place from the most holy, as the first veil did the holy place from the courts.

4. Having the golden censer - Used by the high priest only, on the great day of atonement. And the ark, or chest, of the covenant - So called from the tables of the covenant contained therein. Wherein was the manna - The monument of God's care over Israel. And Aaron's rod - The monument of the regular priesthood. And the tables of the covenant - The two tables of stone, on which the ten commandments were written by the finger of God the most venerable monument of all.

5. And over it were the cherubim of glory - Over which the glory of God used to appear. Some suppose each of these had four faces, and so represented the Three-One God, with the manhood assumed by the Second Person. With out-spread wings shadowing the mercy-seat - Which was a lid or plate of gold, covering the ark.

6. Always - Every day. Accomplishing their services - Lighting the lamps, changing the shewbread, burning incense, and sprinkling the blood of the sin offerings.

7. Errors - That is, sins of ignorance, to which only those atonements extended.

8. The Holy Ghost evidently showing - By this token. That the way into the holiest - Into heaven. Was not made manifest - Not so clearly revealed. While the first tabernacle, and its service, were still subsisting - And remaining in force.

9. Which - Tabernacle, with all its furniture and services. Is a figure - Or type, of good things to come Which cannot perfect the worshipper - Neither the priest nor him who brought the offering. As to his conscience - So that he should be no longer conscious of the guilt or power of sin. Observe, the temple was as yet standing.

10. They could not so perfect him, with all their train of precepts relating to meats and drinks, and carnal, gross, external ordinances; and were therefore imposed only till the time of reformation - Till Christ came.

11. An high priest of good things to come - Described, ver. 15. Entered through a greater, that is, a more noble, and perfect tabernacle - Namely, his own body. Not of this creation - Not framed by man, as that tabernacle was.

12. The holy place - Heaven. For us - All that believe.

13. If the ashes of an heifer - Consumed by fire as a sin-offering, being sprinkled on them who were legally unclean. Purified the flesh - Removed that legal uncleanness, and re-admitted them to the temple and the congregation. Num. xix, 17, 18, 19.

14. How much more shall the blood of Christ. - The merit of all his sufferings. Who through the eternal Spirit - The work of redemption being the work of the whole Trinity. Neither is the Second Person alone concerned even in the amazing condescension that was needful to complete it. The Father delivers up the kingdom to the Son; and the Holy Ghost becomes the gift of the

Messiah, being, as it were, sent according to his good pleasure. Offered himself - Infinitely more precious than any created victim, and that without spot to God. Purge our conscience - Our inmost soul. From dead works - From all the inward and outward works of the devil, which spring from spiritual death in the soul, and lead to death everlasting. To serve the living God - In the life of faith, in perfect love and spotless holiness.

15. And for this end he is the Mediator of a new covenant, that they who are called - To the engagements and benefits thereof. Might receive the eternal inheritance promised to Abraham: not by means of legal sacrifices, but of his meritorious death. For the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant - That is, for the redemption of transgressors from the guilt and punishment of those sins which were committed in the time of the old covenant. The article of his death properly divides the old covenant from the new.

16. I say by means of death; for where such a covenant is, there must be the death of him by whom it is confirmed - Seeing it is by his death that the benefits of it are purchased. It seems beneath the dignity of the apostle to play upon the ambiguity of the Greek word, as the common translation supposes him to do.

17. After he is dead - Neither this, nor after men are dead is a literal translation of the words. It is a very perplexed passage.

18. Whence neither was the first - The Jewish covenant, originally transacted without the blood of an appointed sacrifice.

19. He took the blood of calves - Or heifers. And of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop - All these circumstances are not particularly mentioned in that chapter of Exodus, but are supposed to be already known from other passages of Moses. And the book itself - Which contained all he had said. And sprinkled all the people - Who were near him. The blood was mixed with water to prevent its growing too stiff for sprinkling; perhaps also to typify that blood and water, John xix, 34. Exod. xxiv, 7, 8

20. Saying, This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined me to deliver unto you - By this it is established. Exod. xxiv, 8.

21. And in like manner he ordered the tabernacle - When it was made, and all its vessels, to be sprinkled with blood once a year.

22. And almost all things - For some were purified by water or fire. Are according to the law purified with blood - Offered or sprinkled. And according to the law, there is no forgiveness of sins without shedding of blood - All this pointed to the blood of Christ effectually cleansing from all sin, and intimated, there can be no purification from it by any other means.

23. Therefore - That is, it plainly appears from what has been said. It was necessary - According to the appointment of God. That the tabernacle and all its utensils, which were patterns, shadowy representations, of things in heaven, should be purified by these - Sacrifices and sprinklings. But the heavenly things themselves - Our heaven-born spirits: what more this may mean we know not yet. By better sacrifices than these - That is, by a better sacrifice, which is here opposed to all the legal sacrifices, and is expressed plurally, because it includes the signification of them all, and is of so much more eminent virtue.

24. For Christ did not enter into the holy place made with hands - He never went into the holy of holies at Jerusalem, the figure of the true tabernacle in heaven, chap. viii, 2. But into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us - As our glorious high priest and powerful intercessor.

26. For then he must often have suffered from the foundation of the world - This supposes,

1. That by suffering once he atoned for all the sins which had been committed from the foundation of the world.
2. That he could not have atoned for them without suffering. At the consummation of the ages - The sacrifice of Christ divides the whole age or duration of the world into two parts, and extends its virtue backward and forward, from this middle point wherein they meet to abolish both the guilt and power of sin.

27. After this, the judgment - Of the great day. At the moment of death every man's final state is determined. But there is not a word in scripture of a particular judgment immediately after death.

28. Christ having once died to bear the sins - The punishment due to them. Of many - Even as many as are born into the world. Will appear the second time - When he comes to judgment. Without sin - Not as he did before, bearing on himself the sins of many, but to bestow everlasting salvation.

## X

1. From all that has been said it appears, that the law, the Mosaic dispensation, being a bare, unsubstantial shadow of good things to come, of the gospel blessings, and not the substantial, solid image of them, can never with the same kind of sacrifices, though continually repeated, make the comers thereunto perfect, either as to justification or sanctification. How is it possible, that any who consider this should suppose the attainments of David, or any who were under that dispensation, to be the proper measure of gospel holiness; and that Christian experience is to rise no higher than Jewish?

2. They who had been once perfectly purged, would have been no longer conscious either of the guilt or power of their sins.

3. There is a public commemoration of the sins both of the last and of all the preceding years; a clear proof that the guilt thereof is not perfectly purged away.

4. It is impossible the blood of goats should take away sins - Either the guilt or the power of them.

5. When he cometh into the world - In the fortieth psalm the Messiah's coming into the world is represented. It is said, into the world, not into the tabernacle, chap. ix, 1; because all the world is interested in his sacrifice. A body hast thou prepared for me - That I may offer up myself. Psalm xl, 6, &c.

7. In the volume of the book - In this very psalm it is written of me. Accordingly I come to do thy will - By the sacrifice of myself.

8. Above when he said, Sacrifice thou hast not chosen - That is, when the Psalmist pronounced those words in his name.

9. Then said he - in that very instant he subjoined. Lo, I come to do Thy will - To offer a more acceptable sacrifice; and by this very act he taketh away the legal, that he may establish the evangelical, dispensation.

10. By which will - Of God, done and suffered by Christ. We are sanctified - Cleansed from guilt, and consecrated to God.

11. Every priest standeth - As a servant in an humble posture.

12. But he - The virtue of whose one sacrifice remains for ever. Sat down - As a son, in majesty and honour.

13. Psalm cx, 1.

14. He hath perfected them for ever - That is, has done all that was needful in order to their full reconciliation with God.

15. In this and the three following verses, the apostle winds up his argument concerning the excellency and perfection of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ. He had proved this before by a quotation from Jeremiah; which he here repeats, describing the new covenant as now completely ratified, and all the blessings of it secured to us by the one offering of Christ, which renders all other expiatory sacrifices, and any repetition of his own, utterly needless.

16. Jer. xxxi, 33, &c.

19. Having finished the doctrinal part of his epistle, the apostle now proceeds to exhortation deduced from what has been treated of chap. v, 4, which he begins by a brief recapitulation. Having therefore liberty to enter,

20. By a living way - The way of faith, whereby we live indeed. Which he hath consecrated - Prepared, dedicated, and established for us. Through the veil, that is, his flesh - As by rending the veil in the temple, the holy of holies became visible and accessible; so by wounding the body of Christ, the God of heaven was manifested, and the way to heaven opened.

22. Let us draw near - To God. With a true heart - In godly sincerity. Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience - So as to condemn us no longer And our bodies washed with pure water - All our conversation spotless and holy, which is far more acceptable to God than all the legal sprinklings and washings.

23. The profession of our hope - The hope which we professed at our baptism.

25. Not forsaking the assembling ourselves - In public or private worship. As the manner of some is - Either through fear of persecution, or from a vain imagination that they were above external ordinances. But exhorting one another - To faith, love, and good works. And so much the more, as ye see the day approaching - The great day is ever in your eye.

26. For when we - Any of us Christians. Sin wilfully - By total apostasy from God, termed "drawing back," ver. 38. After having received the experimental knowledge of the gospel truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins - None but that which we obstinately reject.

28. He that, in capital cases, despised (presumptuously transgressed) the law of Moses died without mercy - Without any delay or mitigation of his punishment.

29. Of how much sorer punishment is he worthy, who - By wilful, total apostasy. It does not appear that this passage refers to any other sin. Hath, as it were, trodden underfoot the Son of God - A lawgiver far more honourable than Moses. And counted the blood wherewith the better covenant was established, an unholy, a common, worthless thing. By which he hath been sanctified - Therefore Christ died for him also, and he was at least justified once. And done despite to the Spirit of grace - By rejecting all his motions.

30. The Lord will judge his people - Yea, far more rigorously than the heathens, if they rebel against him. Deut. xxxii, 35, &c.

31. To fall into the hands - Of his avenging justice.

32. Enlightened - With the knowledge of God and of his truth.

34. For ye sympathized with all your suffering brethren, and with me in particular; and received joyfully the loss of your own goods.

35. Cast not away therefore this your confidence - Your faith and hope; which none can deprive you of but yourselves.

36. The promise - Perfect love; eternal life.

37. He that cometh - To reward every man according to his works.

38. Now the just - The justified person. Shall live - In God's favour, a spiritual and holy life. By faith - As long as he retains that gift of God. But if he draw back - If he make shipwreck of his faith My soul hath no pleasure in him - That is, I abhor him; I cast him off. Hab. ii, 3, &c.

39. We are not of them who draw back to perdition - Like him mentioned ver. 38. But of them that believe - To the end, so as to attain eternal life.

## XI

1. The definition of faith given in this verse, and exemplified in the various instances following, undoubtedly includes justifying faith, but not directly as justifying. For faith justifies only as it refers to, and depends on, Christ. But here is no mention of him as the object of faith; and in several of the instances that follow, no notice is taken of him or his salvation, but only of temporal blessings obtained by faith. And yet they may all be considered as evidences of the power of justifying faith in Christ, and of its extensive exercise in a course of steady obedience amidst difficulties and dangers of every kind. Now faith is the subsistence of things hoped for, the evidence or conviction of things not seen - Things hoped for are not so extensive as things not seen. The former are only things future and joyful to us; the latter are either future, past, or present, and those either good or evil, whether to us or others. The subsistence of things hoped for - Giving a kind of present subsistence to the good things which God has promised: the divine supernatural evidence exhibited to, the conviction hereby produced in, a believer of things not seen, whether past, future, or spiritual; particularly of God and the things of God.

2. By it the elders - Our forefathers. This chapter is a kind of summary of the Old Testament, in which the apostle comprises the designs, labours, sojournings, expectations, temptations, martyrdoms of the ancients. The former of them had a long exercise of their patience; the latter suffered shorter but sharper trials. Obtained a good testimony - A most comprehensive word. God gave a testimony, not only of them but to them: and they received his testimony as if it had been the things themselves of which he testified, ver. 4, 5, 39. Hence they also gave testimony to others, and others testified of them.

3. By faith we understand that the worlds - Heaven and earth and all things in them, visible and invisible. Where made - Formed, fashioned, and finished. By the word - The sole command of God, without any instrument or preceding matter. And as creation is the foundation and specimen of the whole divine economy, so faith in the creation is the foundation and specimen of all faith. So that things which are seen - As the sun, earth, stars. Were made of things which do not appear - Out of the dark, unapparent chaos, Gen. i, 2. And this very chaos was created by the divine power; for before it was thus created it had no existence in nature.

4. By faith - In the future Redeemer. Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice - The firstlings of his flock, implying both a confession of what his own sins deserved, and a desire of sharing in the great atonement. Than Cain - Whose offering testified no such faith, but a bare acknowledgment

of God the Creator. By which faith he obtained both righteousness and a testimony of it: God testifying - Visibly that his gifts were accepted; probably by sending fire from heaven to consume his sacrifice, a token that justice seized on the sacrifice instead of the sinner who offered it. And by it - By this faith. Being dead, he yet speaketh - That a sinner is accepted only through faith in the great sacrifice.

5. Enoch was not any longer found among men, though perhaps they sought for him as they did for Elijah, 2 Kings ii, 17. He had this testimony - From God in his own conscience.

6. But without faith - Even some divine faith in God, it is impossible to please him. For he that cometh to God - in prayer, or another act of worship, must believe that he is.

7. Noah being warned of things not seen as yet - Of the future deluge. Moved with fear, prepared an ark, by which open testimony he condemned the world - Who neither believed nor feared.

8. Gen. xii, 1-4

9. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise - The promise was made before, Gen. xii, 7. Dwelling in tents - As a sojourner With Isaac and Jacob - Who by the same manner of living showed the same faith Jacob was born fifteen years before the death of Abraham. The joint heirs of the same promise - Having all the same interest therein. Isaac did not receive this inheritance from Abraham, nor Jacob from Isaac, but all of them from God. Gen. xvii, 8

10. He looked for a city which hath foundations - Whereas a tent has none. Whose builder and former is God - Of which God is the sole contriver, former, and finisher.

11. Sarah also herself - Though at first she laughed at the promise, Gen. xviii, 12. Gen. xxi, 2.

12. As it were dead - Till his strength was supernaturally restored, which continued for many years after.

13. All these - Mentioned ver. 7-11. Died in faith - In death faith acts most vigourously. Not having received the promises - The promised blessings. Embraced - As one does a dear friend when he meets him.

14. They who speak thus show plainly that they seek their own country - That they keep in view, and long for, their native home.

15. If they had been mindful of - Their earthly country, Ur of the Chaldeans, they might have easily returned.

16. But they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly - This is a full convincing proof that the patriarchs had a Revelation and a promise of eternal glory in heaven. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: seeing he hath prepared for them a city - Worthy of God to give.

17. By faith Abraham - When God made that glorious trial of him. Offered up Isaac - The will being accepted as if he had actually done it. Yea, he that had received the promises - Particularly that grand promise, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Offered up - This very son; the only one he had by Sarah. Gen. xxii, 1,&c.

18. In Isaac shall thy seed be called - From him shall the blessed seed spring. Gen. xxi, 12.

19. Accounting that God was able even to raise him from the dead - Though there had not been any instance of this in the world. From whence also - To speak in a figurative way. He did receive him - Afterwards, snatched from the jaws of death.

20. Blessed - Gen. xxvii, 27, 39; prophetically foretold the particular blessings they should partake of. Jacob and Esau - Preferring the elder before the younger.

21. Jacob when dying - That is, when near death. Bowing down on the top of his staff - As he sat on the side of his bed. Gen. xlviii, 16; Gen. xlvii, 31

22. Concerning his bones - To be carried into the land of promise.

23. They saw - Doubtless with a divine presage of things to come.

24. Refused to be called - Any longer.

26. The reproach of Christ - That which he bore for believing in the Messiah to come, and acting accordingly. For he looked off - From all those perishing treasures, and beyond all those temporal hardships Unto the recompence of reward - Not to an inheritance in Canaan; he had no warrant from God to look for this, nor did he ever attain it; but what his believing ancestors looked for, - a future state of happiness in heaven.

27. By faith he left Egypt - Taking all the Israelites with him. Not then fearing the wrath of the king - As he did many years before, Exod. ii, 14. Exod. xiv, 15, &c.

28. The pouring out of the blood - Of the paschal lamb, which was sprinkled on the door-posts, lest the destroying angel should touch the Israelites. Exod. xii, 12-18.

29. They - Moses, Aaron, and the Israelites. Passed the Red Sea - It washed the borders of Edom, which signifies red. Thus far the examples are cited from Genesis and Exodus; those that follow are from the former and the latter Prophets.

30. By the faith of Joshua.

31. Rahab - Though formerly one not of the fairest character.

32. After Samuel, the prophets are properly mentioned. David also was a prophet; but he was a king too. The prophets - Elijah, Elisha, &c., including likewise the believers who lived with them.

33, 34. David, in particular, subdued kingdoms. Samuel (not excluding the rest) wrought righteousness. The prophets, in general, obtained promises, both for themselves, and to deliver to others. Prophets also stopped the mouths of lions, as Daniel; and quenched the violence of fire, as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. To these examples, whence the nature of faith clearly appears, those more ancient ones are subjoined, (by a transposition, and in an inverted order,) which receive light from these. Jephthah escaped the edge of the sword; Samson out of weakness was made strong; Barak became valiant in fight; Gideon put to flight armies of the aliens. Faith animates to the most heroic enterprises, both civil and military. Faith overcomes all impediments effects the greatest things; attains to the very best; and inverts, by its miraculous power the very course of nature. 2 Sam. viii, 1,&c.; 1 Sam. viii, 9,&c.; 1 Sam. xiii, 3,&c.; Dan. vi, 22; Dan. iii, 27; Jude xii, 3; Jude xv, 19,&c.; Jude xvi, 28,&c.; Jude iv, 14,&c.; Jude vii, 21.

35. Women - Naturally weak. Received their dead - Children. Others were tortured - From those who acted great things the apostle rises higher, to those who showed the power of faith by suffering. Not accepting deliverance - On sinful terms. That they might obtain a better resurrection - An higher reward, seeing the greater their sufferings the greater would be their glory. 1 Kings xvii, 22; 2 Kings iv, 35

36. And others - The apostle seems here to pass on to recent examples.

37. They were sawn asunder - As, according to the tradition of the Jews, Isaiah was by Manasseh. Were tempted - Torments and death are mentioned alternately. Every way; by threatenings, reproaches, tortures, the variety of which cannot be expressed; and again by promises and allurements.

38. Of whom the world was not worthy - It did not deserve so great a blessing. They wandered - Being driven out from men.

39. And all these - Though they obtained a good testimony, ver. 2, yet did not receive the great promise, the heavenly inheritance.

40. God having provided some better thing for us - Namely, everlasting glory. That they might not be perfected without us - That is, that we might all be perfected together in heaven.

## XII

1. Wherefore, being encompassed with a cloud - A great multitude, tending upward with a holy swiftness. Of witnesses - Of the power of faith. Let us lay aside every weight - As all who run a race take care to do. Let us throw off whatever weighs us down, or damps the vigour of our Soul. And the sin which easily besetteth us - As doth the sin of our constitution, the sin of our education, the sin of our profession.

2. Looking - From all other things. To Jesus - As the wounded Israelites to the brazen serpent. Our crucified Lord was prefigured by the lifting up of this; our guilt, by the stings of the fiery serpents; and our faith, by their looking up to the miraculous remedy. The author and finisher of our faith - Who begins it in us, carries it on, and perfects it. Who for the joy that was set before him - Patiently and willingly endured the cross, with all the pains annexed thereto. And is set down - Where there is fulness of joy.

3. Consider - Draw the comparison and think. The Lord bore all this; and shall his servants bear nothing? Him that endured such contradiction from sinners - Such enmity and opposition of every kind Lest ye be weary - Dull and languid, and so actually faint in your course.

4. Unto blood - Unto wounds and death.

5. And yet ye seem already to have forgotten the exhortation - Wherein God speaketh to you with the utmost tenderness. Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord - Do not slight or make little of it; do not impute any affliction to chance or second causes but see and revere the hand of God in it. Neither faint when thou art rebuked of him - But endure it patiently and fruitfully. Pro iii, 11, &c.

6. For - All springs from love; therefore neither despise nor faint.

7. Whom his father chasteneth not - When he offends.

8. Of which all sons are partakers - More or less.

9. And we reverenced them - We neither despised nor fainted under their correction. Shall we not much rather - Submit with reverence and meekness To the Father of spirits - That we may live with him for ever. Perhaps these expressions, fathers of our flesh, and Father of spirits, intimate that our earthly fathers are only the parents of our bodies, our souls not being originally derived from them, but all created by the immediate power of God; perhaps, at the beginning of the world.

10. For they verily for a few days - How few are even all our day on earth! Chastened us as they thought good - Though frequently they erred therein, by too much either of indulgence or severity. But he always, unquestionably, for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness - That is, of himself and his glorious image.

11. Now all chastening - Whether from our earthly or heavenly Father, Is for the present grievous, yet it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness - Holiness and happiness. To them that are exercised thereby - That receive this exercise as from God, and improve it according to his will.

12. Wherefore lift up the hands - Whether your own or your brethren's. That hang down - Unable to continue the combat. And the feeble knees - Unable to continue the race. Isaiah xxxv, 3.

13. And make straight paths both for your own and for their feet - Remove every hindrance, every offense. That the lame - They who are weak, scarce able to walk. Be not turned out of the way - Of faith and holiness.

14. Follow peace with all men - This second branch of the exhortation concerns our neighbours; the third, God. And holiness - The not following after all holiness, is the direct way to fall into sin of every kind.

15. Looking diligently, lest any one - If he do not lift up the hands that hang down. Fall from the grace of God: lest any root of bitterness - Of envy, anger, suspicion. Springing up - Destroy the sweet peace; lest any, not following after holiness, fall into fornication or profaneness. In general, any corruption, either in doctrine or practice, is a root of bitterness, and may pollute many.

16. Esau was profane for so slighting the blessing which went along with the birth-right.

17. He was rejected - He could not obtain it. For he found no place for repentance - There was no room for any such repentance as would regain what he had lost. Though he sought it - The blessing of the birth-right. Diligently with tears - He sought too late. Let us use the present time.

18. For - A strong reason this why they ought the more to regard the whole exhortation drawn from the priesthood of Christ: because both salvation and vengeance are now nearer at hand. Ye are not come to the mountain that could be touched - That was of an earthy, material nature.

19. The sound of a trumpet - Formed, without doubt, by the ministry of angels, and preparatory to the words, that is, the Ten Commandments, which were uttered with a loud voice, Deut. v, 22.

20. For they could not bear - The terror which seized them, when they heard those words proclaimed, If even a beast, &c. Exod. xix, 12, &c.

21. Even Moses - Though admitted to so near an intercourse with God, who "spake to him as a man speaketh to his friend." At other times he acted as a mediator between God and the people. But while the ten words were pronounced, he stood as one of the hearers, Exod. xix, 25; Exod. xx, 19.

22. But ye - Who believe in Christ. Are come - The apostle does not here speak of their coming to the church militant, but of that glorious privilege of New Testament believers, their communion with the church triumphant. But this is far more apparent to the eyes of celestial spirits than to ours which are yet veiled. St. Paul here shows an excellent knowledge of the heavenly economy, worthy of him who had been caught up into the third heaven. To mount Sion - A spiritual mountain. To the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem - All these glorious titles belong to the New Testament church. And to an innumerable company - Including all that are afterwards mentioned.

23. To the general assembly - The word properly signifies a stated convention on some festival occasion. And church - The whole body of true believers, whether on earth or in paradise. Of the first-born-The first-born of Israel were enrolled by Moses; but these are enrolled in heaven, as citizens there. It is observable, that in this beautiful gradation, these first-born are placed nearer to God than the angels. See Jam i, 18. And to God the Judge of all - Propitious to you, adverse to your enemies. And to the spirits - The separate souls. Of just men - It seems to mean, of New Testament believers. The number of these, being not yet large, is mentioned distinct from the innumerable company of just men whom their Judge hath acquitted. These are now made perfect in an higher sense than any who are still alive. Accordingly, St. Paul, while yet on earth, denies that he was thus made perfect, Phil. iii, 12.

24. To Jesus, the mediator - Through whom they had been perfected. And to the blood of sprinkling - To all the virtue of his precious blood shed for you, whereby ye are sprinkled from an

evil conscience. This blood of sprinkling was the foundation of our Lord's mediatorial office. Here the gradation is at the highest point. Which speaketh better things than that of Abel - Which cried for vengeance.

25. Refuse not - By unbelief. Him that speaketh - And whose speaking even now is a prelude to the final scene. The same voice which spake both by the law and in the gospel, when heard from heaven, will shake heaven and earth. For if they escaped not - His vengeance. Much more shall not we - Those of us who turn from him that speaketh from heaven - That is, who came from heaven to speak to us.

26. Whose voice then shook the earth - When he spoke from mount Sinai. But now - With regard to his next speaking. He hath promised - It is a joyful promise to the saints, though dreadful to the wicked. Yet once more I will shake, not only the earth, but also the heaven - These words may refer in a lower sense to the dissolution of the Jewish church and state; but in their full sense they undoubtedly look much farther, even to the end of all things. This universal shaking began at the first coming of Christ. It will be consummated at his second coming. Haggai ii, 6.

27. The things which are shaken - Namely, heaven and earth. As being made - And consequently liable to change. That the things which are not shaken may remain - Even "the new heavens and the new earth," Rev. xxi, 1.

28. Therefore let us, receiving - By willing and joyful faith. A kingdom - More glorious than the present heaven and earth. Hold fast the grace, whereby we may serve God - In every thought, word, and work. With reverence - Literally, with shame. Arising from a deep consciousness of our own unworthiness. And godly fear - A tender, jealous fear of offending, arising from a sense of the gracious majesty of God.

29. For our God is a consuming fire - in the strictness of his justice, and purity of his holiness.

## XIII

1. Brotherly love is explained in the following verses.

2. Some - Abraham and Lot. Have entertained angels unawares - So may an unknown guest, even now, be of more worth than he appears, and may have angels attending him, though unseen. Gen. xviii, 2; Gen. xix, 1.

3. Remember - In your prayers, and by your help. Them that are in bonds, as being bound with them - Seeing ye are members one of another. And them that suffer, as being yourselves in the body - And consequently liable to the same.

4. Marriage is honourable in, or for all sorts of men, clergy as well as laity: though the Romanists teach otherwise. And the bed undefiled - Consistent with the highest purity; though many spiritual writers, so called, say it is only licensed whoredom. But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge - Though they frequently escape the sentence of men.

5. He - God. Hath said - To all believers, in saying it to Jacob, Joshua, and Solomon. Gen. xxviii, 15; Josh. i, 5; 1 Chr xxviii, 20.

6. Psalm cxviii, 6.

7. Remember them - Who are now with God, considering the happy end of their conversation on earth.

8. Men may die; but Jesus Christ, yea, and his gospel, is the same from everlasting to everlasting.

9. Be not carried about with various doctrines - Which differ from that one faith in our one unchangeable Lord. Strange - To the ears and hearts of all that abide in him. For it is good - It is both honourable before God and pleasant and profitable That the heart be stablished with grace - Springing from faith in Christ. Not with meats - Jewish ceremonies, which indeed can never stablish the heart.

10. On the former part of this verse, the fifteenth and sixteenth depend; on the latter, the intermediate verses. We have an altar - The cross of Christ. Whereof they have no right to eat - To partake of the benefits which we receive therefrom. Who serve the tabernacle - Who adhere to the Mosaic law.

11. For - According to their own law, the sin-offerings were wholly consumed, and no Jew ever ate thereof. But Christ was a sin-offering. Therefore they cannot feed upon him, as we do, who are freed from the Mosaic law.

12. Wherefore Jesus also - Exactly answering those typical sin- offerings. Suffered without the gate - Of Jerusalem, which answered to the old camp of Israel. That he might sanctify - Reconcile and consecrate to God. The people - Who believe in him. By his own blood - Not those shadowy sacrifices, which are now of no farther use.

13. Let us then go forth without the camp - Out of the Jewish dispensation. Bearing his reproach - All manner of shame, obloquy, and contempt for his sake.

14. For we have here - On earth No continuing city - All things here are but for a moment; and Jerusalem itself was just then on the point of being destroyed.

15. The sacrifice - The altar is mentioned, ver. 10; now the sacrifices:

1. Praise;
2. Beneficence; with both of which God is well pleased.

17. Obey them that have the rule over you - The word implies also, that lead or guide you; namely, in truth and holiness. And submit yourselves - Give up (not your conscience or judgment, but) your own will, in all things purely indifferent. For they watch over your souls - With all zeal and diligence, they guard and caution you against all danger. As they that must give account - To the great Shepherd, for every part of their behaviour toward you. How vigilant then ought every pastor to be! How careful of every soul committed to his charge! That they may do this - Watch over you. With joy and not with groans - He is not a good shepherd, who does not either rejoice over them, or groan for them. The groans of other creatures are heard: how much more shall these come up in the ears of God! Whoever answers this character of a Christian pastor may undoubtedly demand this obedience.

20. The everlasting covenant - The Christian covenant, which is not temporary, like the Jewish, but designed to remain for ever. By the application of that blood, by which this covenant was established, may he make you, in every respect, inwardly and outwardly holy!

22. Suffer the word of exhortation - Addressed to you in this letter, which, though longer than my usual letters, is yet contained in few words, considering the copiousness of the subject.

23. If he come - To me.

25. - Grace be with you all - St. Paul's usual benediction. God apply it to our hearts!

# NOTES ON THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES

THIS is supposed to have been written by James the son of Alpheus the brother (or kinsman) of our Lord. It is called a General Epistle, because written not to a particular person or church, but to all the converted Israelites. Herein the apostle reproves that antinomian spirit, which had even then infected many, who had perverted the glorious doctrine of justification by faith into an occasion of licentiousness. He likewise comforts the true believers under their sufferings, and reminds them of the judgments that were approaching. It has three parts:

I. The inscription, Chap. i. 1

II. The exhortation,

1. To patience, enduring outward, conquering inward, temptations, 2-15
2. Considering the goodness of God, 16-18 to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath And these three are,
    1. Proposed, 19-21
    2. Treated of at large.
        a. Let hearing be joined with practice, 22-26 Particularly with bridling the tongue, 26 With mercy and purity, 27 Without respect of persons, ii. 1-13 And so faith universally with works, 14-26
        b. Let the speech be modest, iii. 1-12
        c. Let anger, with all the other passions, be restrained, 13- iv.1- 17
    3. To patience again.
        a. Confirmed by the coming of the judge, in which draws near The calamity of the wicked, v.1-6 The deliverance of the righteous, 7-12
        b. Nourished by prayer, 13-18

III. The conclusion, 19

## JAMES

### I

1. A servant of Jesus Christ - Whose name the apostle mentions but once more in the whole epistle, chap. ii, 1. And not at all in his whole discourse, Acts xv, 14, &c.; or Acts xxi, 20-25. It might have seemed, if he mentioned him often, that he did it out of vanity, as being the brother of the Lord. To the twelve tribes - Of Israel; that is, those of them that believe. Which are scattered abroad - In various countries. Ten of the tribes were scattered ever since the reign of Hosea; and great part of the rest were now dispersed through the Roman empire: as was foretold, Deut. xxviii, 25, &c.xxx, 4. Greeting - That is, all blessings, temporal and eternal.

2. My brethren, count it all joy - Which is the highest degree of patience, and contains all the rest. When ye fall into divers temptations - That is, trials.

4. Let patience have its perfect work - Give it full scope, under whatever trials befall you. That ye may be perfect and entire - Adorned with every Christian grace. And wanting nothing - Which God requires in you.

5. If any want - The connection between the first and following verses, both here and in the fourth chapter, will be easily discerned by him who reads them, while he is suffering wrongfully. He will then readily perceive, why the apostle mentions all those various affections of the mind. Wisdom - To understand, whence and why temptations come, and how they are to be improved. Patience is in every pious man already. Let him exercise this, and ask for wisdom. The sum of wisdom, both in the temptation of poverty and of riches, is described in the ninth and tenth verses. Who giveth to all - That ask aright. And upbraideth not - Either with their past wickedness, or present unworthiness.

6. But let him ask in faith - A firm confidence in God. St. James also both begins and ends with faith, chap. v, 15; the hindrances of which he removes in the middle part of his epistle. He that doubteth is like a wave of the sea - Yea, such are all who have not asked and obtained wisdom. Driven with the wind - From without. And tossed - From within, by his own unstableness.

8. A doubleminded man - Who has, as it were, two souls; whose heart is not simply given up to God. Is unstable - Being without the true wisdom; perpetually disagrees both with himself and others, chap. iii, 16.

9. Let the brother - St James does not give this appellation to the rich. Of low degree - Poor and tempted. Rejoice - The most effectual remedy against doublemindedness. In that he is exalted - To be a child of God, and an heir of glory.

10. But the rich, in that he is made low - Is humbled by a deep sense of his true condition. Because as the flower - Beautiful, but transient. He shall pass away - Into eternity.

11. For the sun arose and withered the grass - There is an unspeakable beauty and elegance, both in the comparison itself, and in the very manner of expressing it, intimating both the certainty and the suddenness of the event. So shall the rich fade away in his ways - In the midst of his various pleasures and employments.

12. Happy is the man that endureth temptation - Trials of various kinds. He shall receive the crown - That fadeth not away. Which the Lord hath promised to them that love him - And his enduring proves his love. For it is love only that "endureth all things."

13. But let no man who is tempted - To sin. Say, I am tempted of God - God thus tempteth no man.

14. Every man is tempted, when - In the beginning of the temptation. He is drawn away - Drawn out of God, his strong refuge. By his own desire - We are therefore to look for the cause of every sin, in, not out of ourselves. Even the injections of the devil cannot hurt before we make them our own. And every one has desires arising from his own constitution, tempers, habits, and way of life. And enticed - In the progress of the temptation, catching at the bait: so the original word signifies.

15. Then desire having conceived - By our own will joining therewith. Bringeth forth actual sin - It doth not follow that the desire itself is not sin. He that begets a man is himself a man. And sin being perfected - Grown up to maturity, which it quickly does. Bringeth forth death - Sin is born big with death.

16. Do not err - It is a grievous error to ascribe the evil and not the good which we receive to God.

17. No evil, but every good gift - Whatever tends to holiness. And every perfect gift - Whatever tends to glory. Descendeth from the Father of lights - The appellation of Father is here used with peculiar propriety. It follows, "he begat us." He is the Father of all light, material or spiritual, in the kingdom of grace and of glory. With whom is no variableness - No change in his understanding. Or shadow of turning - in his will. He infallibly discerns all good and evil; and invariably loves one, and hates the other. There is, in both the Greek words, a metaphor taken from the stars, particularly proper where the Father of lights is mentioned. Both are applicable to any celestial body, which has a daily vicissitude of day and night, and sometimes longer days, sometimes longer nights. In God is nothing of this kind. He is mere light. If there Is any such vicissitude, it is in ourselves, not in him.

18. Of his own will - Most loving, most free, most pure, just opposite to our evil desire, ver. 15. Begat he us - Who believe. By the word of truth - The true word, emphatically so termed; the gospel. That we might be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures - Christians are the chief and most excellent of his visible creatures; and sanctify the rest. Yet he says, A kind of - For Christ alone is absolutely the first- fruits.

19. Let every man be swift to hear - This is treated of from ver. 21 to the end of the next chapter. Slow to speak - Which is treated of in the third chapter. Slow to wrath - Neither murmuring at God, nor angry at his neighbour. This is treated of in the third, and throughout the fourth and fifth chapters.

20. The righteousness of God here includes all duties prescribed by him, and pleasing to him.

21. Therefore laying aside - As a dirty garment. All the filthiness and superfluity of wickedness - For however specious or necessary it may appear to worldly wisdom, all wickedness is both vile, hateful, contemptible, and really superfluous. Every reasonable end may be effectually answered without any kind or degree of it. Lay this, every known sin, aside, or all your hearing is vain. With meekness - Constant evenness and serenity of mind. Receive - Into your ears, your heart, your life. The word - Of the gospel. Ingrafted - In believers, by regeneration, ver. 18 and by habit, Heb. v, 14. Which is able to save your souls - The hope of salvation nourishes meekness.

23. Beholding his face in a glass - How exactly does the scripture glass show a man the face of his soul!

24. He beheld himself, and went away - To other business. And forgot - But such forgetting does not excuse.

25. But he that looketh diligently - Not with a transient glance, but bending down, fixing his eyes, and searching all to the bottom. Into the perfect law - Of love as established by faith. St. James here guards us against misunderstanding what St. Paul says concerning the "yoke and bondage of the law." He who keeps the law of love is free, John viii, 31, &c. He that does not, is not free, but a slave to sin, and a criminal before God, ver. 10. And continueth therein - Not like him who forgot it, and went away. This man - There is a peculiar force in the repetition of the word. Shall be happy - Not barely in hearing, but doing the will of God.

26. If any one be ever so religious - Exact in the outward offices of religion. And bridleth not his tongue - From backbiting, talebearing, evilspeaking, he only deceiveth his own heart, if he fancies he has any true religion at all.

27. The only true religion in the sight of God, is this, to visit - With counsel, comfort, and relief. The fatherless and widows - Those who need it most. In their affliction - In their most helpless and hopeless state. And to keep himself unspotted from the world - From the maxims, tempers, and

customs of it. But this cannot be done, till we have given our hearts to God, and love our neighbour as ourselves.

**II**

1. My brethren - The equality of Christians, intimated by this name, is the ground of the admonition. Hold not the faith of our common Lord, the Lord of glory - Of which glory all who believe in him partake. With respect of persons - That is, honour none merely for being rich; despise none merely for being poor.

2. With gold rings - Which were not then so common as now.

3. Ye look upon him - With respect.

4. Ye distinguish not - To which the most respect is due, to the poor or to the rich. But are become evil-reasoning Judges - You reason ill, and so judge wrong: for fine apparel is no proof of worth in him that wears it.

5. Hearken - As if he had said, Stay, consider, ye that judge thus. Does not the presumption lie rather in favour of the poor man? Hath not God chosen the poor - That is, are not they whom God hath chosen, generally speaking, poor in this world? who yet are rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom - Consequently, the most honourable of men: and those whom God so highly honours, ought not ye to honour likewise?

6. Do not the rich often oppress you - By open violence; often drag you - Under colour of law.

7. Do not they blaspheme that worthy name - Of God and of Christ. The apostle speaks chiefly of rich heathens: but are Christians, so called, a whit behind them?

8. If ye fulfil the royal law - The supreme law of the great King which is love; and that to every man, poor as well as rich, ye do well. Lev. xix, 18.

9. Being convicted - By that very law. Exod. xxiii, 3.

10. Whosoever keepeth the whole law, except in one point, he is guilty of all - Is as liable to condemnation as if he had offended in every point.

11. For it is the same authority which establishes every commandment.

12. So speak and act - In all things. As they that shall be judged - Without respect of persons. By the law of liberty - The gospel; the law of universal love, which alone is perfect freedom. For their transgressions of this, both in word and deed, the wicked shall be condemned; and according to their works, done in obedience to this, the righteous will be rewarded.

13. Judgment without mercy shall be to him - In that day. Who hath showed no mercy - To his poor brethren. But the mercy of God to believers, answering to that which they have shown, will then glory over judgment.

14. From chap. i, 22, the apostle has been enforcing Christian practice. He now applies to those who neglect this, under the pretense of faith. St. Paul had taught that "a man is justified by faith without the works of the law." This some began already to wrest to their own destruction. Wherefore St. James, purposely repeating (ver. 21, 23, 25) the same phrases, testimonies, and examples, which St. Paul had used, Rom. iv, 3, Heb. xi, 17, 31, refutes not the doctrine of St. Paul, but the error of those who abused it. There is, therefore, no contradiction between the apostles: they both delivered the truth of God, but in a different manner, as having to do with different kinds of men. On another

occasion St. James himself pleaded the cause of faith, Acts xv, 13-21; and St. Paul himself strenuously pleads for works, particularly in his latter epistles. This verse is a summary of what follows. What profiteth it? is enlarged on, ver. 15-17; though a man say, ver. 18, 19 can that faith save him? ver. 20. It is not, though he have faith; but, though he say he have faith. Here, therefore, true, living faith is meant: but in other parts of the argument the apostle speaks of a dead, imaginary faith. He does not, therefore, teach that true faith can, but that it cannot, subsist without works: nor does he oppose faith to works; but that empty name of faith, to real faith working by love. Can that faith "which is without works" save him? No more than it can profit his neighbour.

17. So likewise that faith which hath not works is a mere dead, empty notion; of no more profit to him that hath it, than the bidding the naked be clothed is to him.

18. But one - Who Judges better. Will say - To such a vain talker. Show me, if thou canst, thy faith without thy works.

19. Thou believest there is one God - I allow this: but this proves only that thou hast the same faith with the devils. Nay, they not only believe, but tremble - At the dreadful expectation of eternal torments. So far is that faith from either justifying or saving them that have it.

20. But art than willing to know - Indeed thou art not: thou wouldest fain be ignorant of it. O empty man - Empty of all goodness. That the faith which is without works is dead - And so is not properly faith, as a dead carcase is not a man.

21. Was not Abraham justified by works - St. Paul says he was justified by faith, Rom. iv, 2, &c.: yet St. James does not contradict him; for he does not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that which Abraham received many years before Isaac was born, Gen. xv, 6. St. James, of that which he did not receive till he had offered up Isaac on the altar. He was justified, therefore, in St. Paul's sense, (that is, accounted righteous,) by faith, antecedent to his works. He was justified in St. James's sense, (that is, made righteous,) by works, consequent to his faith. So that St. James's justification by works is the fruit of St Paul's justification by faith.

22. Thou seest that faith - For by faith Abraham offered him, Heb. xi, 17. Wrought together with his works - Therefore faith has one energy and operation; works, another: and the energy and operation of faith are before works, and together with them. Works do not give life to faith, but faith begets works, and then is perfected by them. And by works was faith made perfect - Here St. James fixes the sense wherein he uses the word justified; so that no shadow of contradiction remains between his assertion and St. Paul's. Abraham returned from that sacrifice perfected in faith, and far higher in the favour of God. Faith hath not its being from works, (for it is before them,) but its perfection. That vigour of faith which begets works is then excited and increased thereby, as the natural heat of the body begets motion, whereby itself is then excited and increased. See 1 John iii, 22.

23. And the scripture - Which was afterwards written. Was hereby eminently fulfilled, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness - This was twice fulfilled, - when Abraham first believed, and when he offered up Isaac. St. Paul speaks of the former fulfilling; St. James, of the latter. And he was called the Friend of God - Both by his posterity, 2 Chron. xx, 7; and by God himself, Isaiah xli, 8 so pleasing to God were the works be wrought in faith. Gen. xv, 6

24. Ye see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only - St. Paul, on the other hand, declares, "A man is justified by faith," and not by works, Rom. iii, 28. And yet there is no contradiction between the apostles: because,

1. They do not speak of the same faith: St. Paul speaking of living faith; St. James here, of dead faith.
2. They do not speak of the same works: St. Paul speaking of works antecedent to faith; St. James, of works subsequent to it.

25. After Abraham, the father of the Jews, the apostle cites Rahab, a woman, and a sinner of the gentiles; to show, that in every nation and sex true faith produces works, and is perfected by them; that is, by the grace of God working in the believer, while he is showing his faith by his works.

## III

1. Be not many teachers - Let no more of you take this upon you than God thrusts out; seeing it is so hard not to offend in speaking much. Knowing that we - That all who thrust themselves into the office. Shall receive greater condemnation - For more offenses. St. James here, as in several of the following verses, by a common figure of speech, includes himself: we shall receive, - we offend, - we put bits, - we curse - None of which, as common sense shows, are to be interpreted either of him or of the other apostles.

2. The same is able to bridle the whole body - That is, the whole man. And doubtless some are able to do this, and so are in this sense perfect.

3. We - That is, men.

5. Boasteth great things - Hath great influence.

6. A world of iniquity - Containing an immense quantity of all manner of wickedness. It defileth - As fire by its smoke. The whole body - The whole man. And setteth on fire the course of nature - All the passions, every wheel of his soul.

7. Every kind - The expression perhaps is not to be taken strictly. Reptiles - That is, creeping things.

8. But no man can tame the tongue - Of another; no, nor his own, without peculiar help from God.

9. Men made after the likeness of God - Indeed we have now lost this likeness; yet there remains from thence an indelible nobleness, which we ought to reverence both in ourselves and others.

13. Let him show his wisdom as well as his faith by his works; not by words only.

14. If ye have bitter zeal - True Christian zeal is only the flame of love. Even in your hearts - Though it went no farther. Do not lie against the truth - As if such zeal could consist with heavenly wisdom.

15. This wisdom - Which is consistent with such zeal. Is earthly - Not heavenly; not from the Father of Lights. Animal - Not spiritual; not from the Spirit of God. Devilish - Not the gift of Christ, but such as Satan breathes into the soul.

17. But the wisdom from above is first pure - From all that is earthly, natural, devilish. Then peaceable - True peace attending purity, it is quiet, inoffensive. Gentle - Soft, mild, yielding, not rigid. Easy to be entreated - To be persuaded, or convinced; not stubborn, sour, or morose. Full of good fruits - Both in the heart and in the life, two of which are immediately specified. Without

partiality - Loving all, without respect of persons; embracing all good things, rejecting all evil. And without dissimulation - Frank, open.

18. And the principle productive of this righteousness is sown, like good seed, in the peace of a believer's mind, and brings forth a plentiful harvest of happiness, (which is the proper fruit of righteousness,) for them that make peace - That labour to promote this pure and holy peace among all men.

## IV

1. From whence come wars and fightings - Quarrels and wars among you, quite opposite to this peace? Is it not from your pleasures - Your desires of earthly pleasures. Which war - Against your souls. In your members - Here is the first seat of the war. Hence proceeds the war of man with man, king with king, nation with nation.

2. Ye kill - In your heart, for "he that hateth his brother is a murderer." Ye fight and war - That is, furiously strive and contend. Ye ask not - And no marvel; for a man full of evil desire, of envy or hatred, cannot pray.

3. But if ye do ask, ye receive not, because ye ask amiss - That is, from a wrong motive.

4. Ye adulterers and adulteresses - Who have broken your faith with God, your rightful spouse. Know ye not that the friendship or love of the world - The desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life, or courting the favour of worldly men, is enmity against God? Whosoever desireth to be a friend of the world - Whosoever seeks either the happiness or favour of it, does thereby constitute himself an enemy of God; and can he expect to obtain anything of him?

5. Do you think that the scripture saith in vain - Without good ground. St. James seems to refer to many, not any one particular scripture. The spirit of love that dwelleth in all believers lusteth against envy - Gal. v, 17; is directly opposite to all those unloving tempers which necessarily flow from the friendship of the world.

6. But he giveth greater grace - To all who shun those tempers. Therefore it - The scripture. Saith, God resisteth the proud - And pride is the great root of all unkind affections. Prov. iii, 34

7. Therefore by humbly submitting yourselves to God, resist the devil - The father of pride and envy.

8. Then draw nigh to God in prayer, and he will draw nigh unto you, will hear you; which that nothing may hinder, cleanse your hands - Cease from doing evil. And purify your hearts - From all spiritual adultery. Be no more double minded, vainly endeavouring to serve both God and mammon.

9. Be afflicted - For your past unfaithfulness to God.

11. Speak not evil one of another - This is a grand hindrance of peace. O who is sufficiently aware of it! He that speaketh evil of another does in effect speak evil of the law, which so strongly prohibits it. Thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge - Of it; thou settest thyself above, and as it were condemnest, it.

12. There is one lawgiver that is able - To execute the sentence he denounces. But who art thou - A poor, weak, dying worm.

13. Come now, ye that say - As peremptorily as if your life were in your own hands.

15. Instead of your saying - That is, whereas ye ought to say.

17. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not - That knows what is right, and does not practice it. To him it is sin - This knowledge does not prevent, but increase, his condemnation.

## V

1. Come now, ye rich - The apostle does not speak this so much for the sake of the rich themselves, as of the poor children of God, who were then groaning under their cruel oppression. Weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you - Quickly and unexpectedly. This was written not long before the siege of Jerusalem; during which, as well as after it, huge calamities came on the Jewish nation, not only in Judea, but through distant countries. And as these were an awful prelude of that wrath which was to fall upon them in the world to come, so this may likewise refer to the final vengeance which will then be executed on the impenitent.

2. The riches of the ancients consisted much in large stores of corn, and of costly apparel.

3. The canker of them - Your perishing stores and motheaten garments. Will be a testimony against you - Of your having buried those talents in the earth, instead of improving them according to your Lord's will. And will eat your flesh as fire - Will occasion you as great torment as if fire were consuming your flesh. Ye have laid up treasure in the last days - When it is too late; when you have no time to enjoy them.

4. The hire of your labourers crieth - Those sins chiefly cry to God concerning which human laws are silent. Such are luxury, unchastity, and various kinds of injustice. The labourers themselves also cry to God, who is just coming to avenge their cause. Of sabaoth - Of hosts, or armies.

5. Ye have cherished your hearts - Have indulged yourselves to the uttermost. As in a day of sacrifice - Which were solemn feast- days among the Jews.

6. Ye have killed the just - Many just men; in particular, "that Just One," Acts iii, 14. They afterwards killed James, surnamed the Just, the writer of this epistle. He doth not resist you - And therefore you are secure. But the Lord cometh quickly, ver. 8.

7. The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit - Which will recompense his labour and patience. Till he receives the former rain - Immediately after sowing. And the latter - Before the harvest.

8. Stablish your hearts - In faith and patience. For the coming of the Lord - To destroy Jerusalem. Is nigh - And so is his last coming to the eye of a believer.

9. Murmur not one against another - Have patience also with each other. The judge standeth before the door - Hearing every word, marking every thought.

10. Take the prophets for an example - Once persecuted like you, even for speaking in the name of the Lord. The very men that gloried in having prophets yet could not bear their message: nor did either their holiness or their high commission screen them from suffering.

11. We count them happy that endured - That suffered patiently. The more they once suffered, the greater is their present happiness. Ye have seen the end of the Lord - The end which the Lord gave him.

12. Swear not - However provoked. The Jews were notoriously guilty of common swearing, though not so much by God himself as by some of his creatures. The apostle here particularly forbids these oaths, as well as all swearing in common conversation. It is very observable, how solemnly the apostle introduces this command: above all things, swear not - As if he had said, Whatever you forget, do not forget this. This abundantly demonstrates the horrible iniquity of the crime. But he does not forbid the taking a solemn oath before a magistrate. Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay - Use no higher asseverations in common discourse; and let your word stand firm. Whatever ye say, take care to make it good.

14. Having anointed him with oil - This single conspicuous gift, which Christ committed to his apostles, Mark vi, 13, remained in the church long after the other miraculous gifts were withdrawn. Indeed, it seems to have been designed to remain always; and St. James directs the elders, who were the most, if not the only, gifted men, to administer at. This was the whole process of physic in the Christian church, till it was lost through unbelief. That novel invention among the Romanists, extreme unction, practiced not for cure, but where life is despaired of, bears no manner of resemblance to this.

15. And the prayer offered in faith shall save the sick - From his sickness; and if any sin be the occasion of his sickness, it shall be forgiven him.

16. Confess your faults - Whether ye are sick or in health. To one another - He does not say, to the elders: this may, or may not, be done; for it is nowhere commanded. We may confess them to any who can pray in faith: he will then know how to pray for us, and be more stirred up so to do. And pray one for another, that ye may be healed - Of all your spiritual diseases.

17. Elijah was a man of like passions - Naturally as weak and sinful as we are. And he prayed - When idolatry covered the land.

18. He prayed again - When idolatry was abolished.

19. As if he had said, I have now warned you of those sins to which you are most liable; and, in all these respects, watch not only over yourselves, but every one over his brother also. labour, in particular, to recover those that are fallen. If any one err from the truth - Practically, by sin.

20. He shall save a soul - Of how much more value than the body! ver. 14. And hide a multitude of sins - Which shall no more, how many soever they are, be remembered to his condemnation.

## NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF ST. PETER

THERE is a wonderful weightiness, and yet liveliness and sweetness, in the epistles of St. Peter. His design in both is, to stir up the minds of those to whom he writes, by way of remembrance, 2 Pet. iii, 1, and to guard them, not only against error, but also against doubting, chap. v, 12. This he does by reminding them of that glorious grace which God had vouchsafed them through the gospel, by which believers are inflamed to bring forth the fruits of faith, hope, love, and patience. The parts of this epistle are three: -

I. The inscription, Chap. i. 1, 2

II. The stirring up of them to whom he writes:

1. As born of God. Here he recites and interweaves alternately both the benefits of God toward believers, and the duties of believers toward God:
    1. God hath regenerated us to a living hope, to an eternal inheritance, 3-12 Therefore hope to the end, 13
    2. As obedient children bring forth the fruit of faith to your heavenly Father, 14-21
    3. Being purified by the Spirit, love with a pure heart, 22, C.ii.10
2. As strangers in the world, abstain from fleshly desires, 11 And show your faith by,
    1. A good conversation, 12
        a. In particular, Subjects, 13-17 Servants, after the example of Christ, 18-25 Wives, iii. 1-6 Husbands, 7
        b. In general, all, 8-15
    2. A good profession,
        a. By readiness to give an answer to every one, 15-22
        b. By shunning evil company, iv.1-6 (This part is enforced by what Christ both did and suffered, from his passion to his coming to judgment.)
        c. By the exercise of Christian virtues, and by a due use of miraculous gifts, 7-11
3. As fellow-heirs of glory, sustain adversity, let each do this,
    1. In general, as a Christian, 12-19
    2. In his own particular state, v. 1-11 The title beloved divides the second part from the first, ii 11 and the third from the second, iv. 12

III. The conclusion, 12-14

# 1st PETER

## I

1. To the sojourners - Upon earth, the Christians, chiefly those of Jewish extraction. Scattered - Long ago driven out of their own land. Those scattered by the persecution mentioned Acts viii, 1, were scattered only through Judea and Samaria, though afterwards some of them travelled to Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch. Through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia - He names these five provinces in the order wherein they occurred to him, writing from the east. All these countries lie in the Lesser Asia. The Asia here distinguished from the other provinces is that which was usually called the Proconsular Asia being a Roman province.

2. According to the foreknowledge of God - Speaking after the manner of men. Strictly speaking, there is no foreknowledge, no more than afterknowledge, with God: but all things are known to him as present from eternity to eternity. This is therefore no other than an instance of the divine condescension to our low capacities. Elect - By the free love and almighty power of God taken out of, separated from, the world. Election, in the scripture sense, is God's doing anything that our merit or power have no part in. The true predestination, or fore-appointment of God is,

1. He that believeth shall be saved from the guilt and power of sin.
2. He that endureth to the end shall be saved eternally.

3. They who receive the precious gift of faith, thereby become the sons of God; and, being sons, they shall receive the Spirit of holiness to walk as Christ also walked. Throughout every part of this appointment of God, promise and duty go hand in hand. All is free gift; and yet such is the gift, that the final issue depends on our future obedience to the heavenly call. But other predestination than this, either to life or death eternal, the scripture knows not of. Moreover, it is.
   1. Cruel respect of persons; an unjust regard of one, and an unjust disregard of another. It is mere creature partiality, and not infinite justice.
   2. It is not plain scripture doctrine, if true; but rather, inconsistent with the express written word, that speaks of God's universal offers of grace; his invitations, promises, threatenings, being all general.
   3. We are bid to choose life, and reprehended for not doing it.
   4. It is inconsistent with a state of probation in those that must be saved or must be lost.
   5. It is of fatal consequence; all men being ready, on very slight grounds, to fancy themselves of the elect number. But the doctrine of predestination is entirely changed from what it formerly was. Now it implies neither faith, peace, nor purity. It is something that will do without them all. Faith is no longer, according to the modern predestinarian scheme, a divine "evidence of things not seen," wrought in the soul by the immediate power of the Holy Ghost; not an evidence at all; but a mere notion. Neither is faith made any longer a means of holiness; but something that will do without it. Christ is no more a saviour from sin; but a defense, a countenancer of it. He is no more a fountain of spiritual life in the soul of believers, but leaves his elect inwardly dry, and outwardly unfruitful; and is made little more than a refuge from the image of the heavenly; even from righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Through sanctification of the Spirit - Through the renewing and purifying influences of his Spirit on their souls. Unto obedience - To engage and enable them to yield themselves up to all holy obedience, the foundation of all which is, the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ - The atoning blood of Christ, which was typified by the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifices under the law; in allusion to which it is called "the blood of sprinkling."

3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ - His Father, with respect to his divine nature; his God, with respect to his human. Who hath regenerated us to a living hope - An hope which implies true spiritual life, which revives the heart, and makes the soul lively and vigourous. By the resurrection of Christ - Which is not only a pledge of ours, but a part of the purchase- price. It has also a close connection with our rising from spiritual death, that as he liveth, so shall we live with him. He was acknowledged to be the Christ, but usually called Jesus till his resurrection; then he was also called Christ.

4. To an inheritance - For if we are sons, then heirs. Incorruptible - Not like earthly treasures. Undefiled - Pure and holy, incapable of being itself defiled, or of being enjoyed by any polluted soul. And that fadeth not away - That never decays in its value, sweetness, or beauty, like all the enjoyments of this world, like the garlands of leaves or flowers, with which the ancient conquerors

were wont to be crowned. Reserved in heaven for you - Who "by patient continuance in welldoing, seek for glory and honour and immortality."

5. Who are kept - The inheritance is reserved; the heirs are kept for it. By the power of God - Which worketh all in all, which guards us against all our enemies. Through faith - Through which alone salvation is both received and retained. Ready to be revealed - That Rev. is made in the last day. It was more and more ready to be revealed, ever since Christ came.

6. Wherein - That is, in being so kept. Ye even now greatly rejoice, though now for a little while - Such is our whole life, compared to eternity. If need be - For it is not always needful. If God sees it to be the best means for your spiritual profit. Ye are in heaviness - Or sorrow; but not in darkness; for they still retained both faith, 1 Pe i, 5, hope, and love; yea, at this very time were rejoicing with joy unspeakable, 1 Pe i, 8.

7. That the trial of your faith - That is, your faith which is tried. Which is much more precious than gold - For gold, though it bear the fire, yet will perish with the world. May be found - Though it doth not yet appear. Unto praise - From God himself. And honour - From men and angels. And glory - Assigned by the great Judge.

8. Having not seen - In the flesh.

9. Receiving - Now already. Salvation - From all sin into all holiness, which is the qualification for, the forerunner and pledge of, eternal salvation.

10. Of which salvation - So far beyond all that was experienced under the Jewish dispensation. The very prophets who prophesied long ago of the grace of God toward you - Of his abundant, overflowing grace to be bestowed on believers under the Christian dispensation. Inquired - Were earnestly inquisitive. And searched diligently - Like miners searching after precious ore, after the meaning of the prophecies which they delivered.

11. Searching what time - What particular period. And what manner of time - By what marks to be distinguished. The glories that were to follow - His sufferings; namely, the glory of his resurrection, ascension, exaltation, and the effusion of his Spirit; the glory of the last judgment, and of his eternal kingdom; and also the glories of his grace in the hearts and lives of Christians.

12. To whom - So searching. It was revealed, that not for themselves, but for us they ministered - They did not so much by those predictions serve themselves, or that generation, as they did us, who now enjoy what they saw afar off. With the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven - Confirmed by the inward, powerful testimony of the Holy Ghost, as well as the mighty effusion of his miraculous gifts. Which things angels desire to look into - A beautiful gradation; prophets, righteous men, kings, desired to see and hear what Christ did and taught. What the Holy Ghost taught concerning Christ the very angels long to know.

13. Wherefore - Having such encouragement. Gird up the loins of your mind - As persons in the eastern countries were wont, in travelling or running, to gird up their long garments, so gather ye up all your thoughts and affections, and keep your mind always disencumbered and prepared to run the race which is set before you. Be watchful - As servants that wait for their Lord. And hope to the end - Maintain a full expectation of all the grace - The blessings flowing from the free favour of God. Which shall be brought to you at the final Revelation of Jesus Christ - And which are now brought to you by the Revelation of Christ in you.

14. Your desires - Which ye had while ye were ignorant of God.

16. Lev. xi, 44.

17. Who judgeth according to every man's work - According to the tenor of his life and conversation. Pass the time of your sojourning - Your short abode on earth. In humble, loving fear - The proper companion and guard of hope.

18. Your vain conversation - Your foolish, sinful way of life.

19. Without blemish - In himself. Without spot - From the world.

21. Who through him believe - For all our faith and hope proceed from the power of his resurrection. In God that raised Jesus, and gave him glory - At his ascension. Without Christ we should only dread God; whereas through him we believe, hope, and love.

22. Having purified your souls by obeying the truth through the Spirit, who bestows upon you freely, both obedience and purity of heart, and unfeigned love of the brethren, go on to still higher degrees of love. Love one another fervently - With the most strong and tender affection; and yet with a pure heart - Pure from any spot of unholy desire or inordinate passion.

23. Which liveth - Is full of divine virtue. And abideth the same for ever.

24. All flesh - Every human creature is transient and withering as grass. And all the glory of it - His wisdom, strength, wealth, righteousness. As the flower - The most short-lived part of it. The grass - That is, man. The flower - That is, his glory. Is fallen off - As it were, while we are speaking. Isaiah xl, 6, &c.

## II

1. Wherefore laying aside - As inconsistent with that pure love. All dissimulation - Which is the outward expression of guile in the heart.

2. Desire - Always, as earnestly as new born babes do, chap. i, 3. The milk of the word - That word of God which nourishes the soul as milk does the body, and which is sincere, pure from all guile, so that none are deceived who cleave to it. That you may grow thereby - In faith, love, holiness, unto the full stature of Christ.

3. Since ye have tasted - Sweetly and experimentally known.

4. To whom coming - By faith. As unto a living stone - Living from eternity; alive from the dead. There is a wonderful beauty and energy in these expressions, which describe Christ as a spiritual foundation, solid, firm, durable; and believers as a building erected upon it, in preference to that temple which the Jews accounted their highest glory. And St. Peter speaking of him thus, shows he did not judge himself, but Christ, to be the rock on which the church was built. Rejected indeed by men - Even at this day, not only by Jews, Turks, heathens, infidels; but by all Christians, so called, who live in sin, or who hope to be saved by their own works. But chosen of God - From all eternity, to be the foundation of his church. And precious - In himself, in the sight of God, and in the eyes of all believers.

5. Ye - Believers. As living stones - Alive to God through him. Are built up - In union with each other. A spiritual house - Being spiritual yourselves, and an habitation of God through the Spirit. An holy priesthood - Consecrated to God, and "holy as he is holy." To offer up - Your souls and bodies, with all your thoughts, words, and actions, as spiritual sacrifices to God.

6. He that believeth shall not be confounded - In time or in eternity. Isaiah xxviii, 16.

7. To them who believe, he is become the head of the corner - The chief corner stone, on which the whole building rests. Unbelievers too will at length find him such to their sorrow, Matt. xxi, 44. Psalm cxviii, 22.

8. Who stumble, whereunto also they were appointed - They who believe not, stumble, and fall, and perish for ever; God having appointed from all eternity, "he that believeth not shall be damned."

9. But ye - Who believe in Christ Are - In a higher sense than ever the Jews were. A chosen or elect race, a royal priesthood - "Kings and priests unto God," Rev. i, 6. As princes, ye have power with God, and victory over sin, the world, and the devil: as priests, ye are consecrated to God, for offering spiritual sacrifices. Ye Christians are as one holy nation, under Christ your King. A purchased people - Who are his peculiar property. That ye may show forth - By your whole behaviour, to all mankind. The virtues - The excellent glory, the mercy, wisdom, and power of him, Christ, who hath called you out of the darkness of ignorance, error, sin, and misery.

10. Who in time past were not a people - Much less the people of God; but scattered individuals of many nations. The former part of the verse particularly respects the gentiles; the latter, the Jews.

11. Here begins the exhortation drawn from the second motive. Sojourners: pilgrims - The first word properly means, those who are in a strange house; the second, those who are in a strange country. You sojourn in the body; you are pilgrims in this world. Abstain from desires of anything in this house, or in this country.

12. Honest - Not barely unblamable, but virtuous in every respect. But our language sinks under the force, beauty, and copiousness of the original expressions. That they by your good works which they shall behold - See with their own eyes. May glorify God - By owning his grace in you, and following your example. In the day of visitation - The time when he shall give them fresh offers of his mercy.

13. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man - To every secular power. Instrumentally these are ordained by men; but originally all their power is from God.

14. Or to subordinate governors, or magistrates.

15. The ignorance - Of them who blame you, because they do not know you: a strong motive to pity them.

16. As free - Yet obeying governors, for God's sake.

17. honour all men - As being made in the image of God, bought by his Son, and designed for his kingdom. honour the king - Pay him all that regard both in affection and action which the laws of God and man require.

18. Servants - Literally, household servants. With all fear - Of offending them or God. Not only to the good - Tender, kind. And gentle - Mild, easily forgiving.

19. For conscience toward God - From a pure desire of pleasing him. Grief - Severe treatment.

21. Hereunto are ye - Christians. Called - To suffer wrongfully. Leaving you an example - When he went to God. That ye might follow his steps - Of innocence and patience.

22, 23. In all these instances the example of Christ is peculiarly adapted to the state of servants, who easily slide either into sin or guile, reviling their fellowservants, or threatening them, the natural result of anger without power. He committed himself to him that judgeth righteously - The only solid ground of patience in affliction. Isaiah liii, 4, 6, 7, 9.

22, 23. In all these instances the example of Christ is peculiarly adapted to the state of servants, who easily slide either into sin or guile, reviling their fellowservants, or threatening them, the natural

result of anger without power. He committed himself to him that judgeth righteously - The only solid ground of patience in affliction.

24. Who himself bore our sins - That is, the punishment due to them. In his afflicted, torn, dying body on the tree - The cross, whereon chiefly slaves or servants were wont to suffer. That we being dead to sin - Wholly delivered both from the guilt and power of it: indeed, without an atonement first made for the guilt, we could never have been delivered from the power. Might live to righteousness - Which is one only. The sins we had committed, and he bore, were manifold.

25. The bishop - The kind observer, inspector, or overseer of your souls.

## III

1. If any - He speaks tenderly. Won - Gained over to Christ.

2. Joined with a loving fear of displeasing them.

3. Three things are here expressly forbidden: curling the hair, wearing gold, (by way of ornament,) and putting on costly or gay apparel. These, therefore, ought never to be allowed, much less defended, by Christians.

4. The hidden man of the heart - Complete inward holiness, which implies a meek and quiet spirit. A meek spirit gives no trouble willingly to any: a quiet spirit bears all wrongs without being troubled. In the sight of God - Who looks at the heart. All superfluity of dress contributes more to pride and anger than is generally supposed. The apostle seems to have his eye to this by substituting meekness and quietness in the room of the ornaments he forbids. "I do not regard these things," is often said by those whose hearts are wrapped up in them: but offer to take them away, and you touch the very idol of their soul. Some, indeed only dress elegantly that they may be looked on; that is, they squander away their Lord's talent to gain applause: thus making sin to beget sin, and then plead one in excuse of the other.

5. The adorning of those holy women, who trusted in God, and therefore did not act thus from servile fear, was,

1. Their meek subjection to their husbands:
2. Their quiet spirit, "not afraid," or amazed: and
3. Their unblamable behaviour, "doing" all things "well."

6. Whose children ye are - In a spiritual as well as natural sense, and entitled to the same inheritance, while ye discharge your conjugal duties, not out of fear, but for conscience' sake. Gen. xviii, 12.

7. Dwell with the woman according to knowledge - Knowing they are weak, and therefore to be used with all tenderness. Yet do not despise them for this, but give them honour - Both in heart, in word, and in action; as those who are called to be joint-heirs of that eternal life which ye and they hope to receive by the free grace of God. That your prayers be not hindered - On the one part or the other. All sin hinders prayer; particularly anger. Anything at which we are angry is never more apt to come into our mind than when we are at prayer; and those who do not forgive will find no forgiveness from God.

8. Finally - This part of the epistle reaches to chap. iv, 11. The apostle seems to have added the rest afterwards. Sympathizing - Rejoicing and sorrowing together. Love all believers as brethren.

Be pitiful - Toward the afflicted. Be courteous - To all men. Courtesy is such a behaviour toward equals and inferiors as shows respect mixed with love.

9. Ye are called to inherit a blessing - Therefore their railing cannot hurt you; and, by blessing them, you imitate God, who blesses you.

10. For he that desireth to love life, and to see good days - That would make life amiable and desirable. Psalm xxxiv, 12, &c.

11. Let him seek - To live peaceably with all men. And pursue it - Even when it seems to flee from him.

12. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous - For good. Anger appears in the whole face; love, chiefly in the eyes.

13. Who is he that will harm you - None can.

14. But if ye should suffer - This is no harm to you, but a good. Fear ye not their fear - The very words of the Septuagint, Isaiah viii, 12, 13. Let not that fear be in you which the wicked feel.

15. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts - Have an holy fear, and a full trust in his wise providence. The hope - Of eternal life. With meekness - For anger would hurt your cause as well as your soul. And fear - A filial fear of offending God, and a jealousy over yourselves, lest ye speak amiss.

16. Having a good conscience - So much the more beware of anger, to which the very consciousness of your innocence may betray you. Join with a good conscience meekness and fear, and you obtain a complete victory. Your good conversation in Christ - That is, which flows from faith in him.

17. It is infinitely better, if it be the will of God, ye should suffer. His permissive will appears from his providence.

18. For - This is undoubtedly best, whereby we are most conformed to Christ. Now Christ suffered once - To suffer no more. For sins - Not his own, but ours. The just for the unjust - The word signifies, not only them who have wronged their neighbours, but those who have transgressed any of the commands of God; as the preceding word, just, denotes a person who has fulfilled, not barely social duties, but all kind of righteousness. That he might bring us to God - Now to his gracious favour, hereafter to his blissful presence, by the same steps of suffering and of glory. Being put to death in the flesh - As man. But raised to life by the Spirit - Both by his own divine power, and by the power of the Holy Ghost.

19. By which Spirit he preached - Through the ministry of Noah. To the spirits in prison - The unholy men before the flood, who were then reserved by the justice of God, as in a prison, till he executed the sentence upon them all; and are now also reserved to the judgment of the great day.

20. When the longsuffering of God waited - For an hundred and twenty years; all the time the ark was preparing: during which Noah warned them all to flee from the wrath to come.

21. The antitype whereof - The thing typified by the ark, even baptism, now saveth us - That is, through the water of baptism we are saved from the sin which overwhelms the world as a flood: not, indeed, the bare outward sign, but the inward grace; a divine consciousness that both our persons and our actions are accepted through him who died and rose again for us.

22. Angels and authorities and powers - That is, all orders both of angels and men.

## IV

1. Arm yourselves with the same mind - Which will be armour of proof against all your enemies. For he that hath suffered in the flesh - That hath so suffered as to be thereby made inwardly and truly conformable to the sufferings of Christ. Hath ceased from sin - Is delivered from it.

2. That ye may no longer live in the flesh - Even in this mortal body. To the desires of men - Either your own or those of others. These are various; but the will of God is one.

3. Revellings, banquetings - Have these words any meaning now? They had, seventeen hundred years ago. Then the former meant, meetings to eat; meetings, the direct end of which was, to please the taste: the latter, meetings to drink: both of which Christians then ranked with abominable idolatries.

4. The same - As ye did once. Speaking evil of you - As proud, singular, silly, wicked and the like.

5. Who shall give account - Of this, as well as all their other ways. To him who is ready - So faith represents him now.

6. For to this end was the gospel preached - Ever since it was given to Adam. To them that are now dead - In their several generations. That they might be judged - That though they were judged. In the flesh according to the manner of men - With rash, unrighteous judgment. They might live according to the will and word of God, in the Spirit; the soul renewed after his image.

7. But the end of all things - And so of their wrongs, and your sufferings. Is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer - Temperance helps watchfulness, and both of them help prayer. Watch, that ye may pray; and pray, that ye may watch.

8. Love covereth a multitude of sins - Yea, "love covereth all things." He that loves another, covers his faults, how many soever they be. He turns away his own eyes from them; and, as far as is possible, hides them from others. And he continually prays that all the sinner's iniquities may be forgiven and his sins covered. Meantime the God of love measures to him with the same measure into his bosom.

9. One to another - Ye that are of different towns or countries. Without murmuring - With all cheerfulness. Prov. x, 12.

10. As every one hath received a gift - Spiritual or temporal, ordinary or extraordinary, although the latter seems primarily intended. So minister it one to another - Employ it for the common good. As good stewards of the manifold grace of God - The talents wherewith his free love has intrusted you.

11. If any man speak, let him - In his whole conversation, public and private. Speak as the oracles of God - Let all his words be according to this pattern, both as to matter and manner, more especially in public. By this mark we may always know who are, so far, the true or false prophets. The oracles of God teach that men should repent, believe, obey. He that treats of faith and leaves out repentance, or does not enjoin practical holiness to believers, does not speak as the oracles of God: he does not preach Christ, let him think as highly of himself as he will. If any man minister - Serve his brother in love, whether in spirituals or temporals. Let him minister as of the ability which God giveth - That is, humbly and diligently, ascribing all his power to God, and using it with his might. Whose is the glory - of his wisdom, which teaches us to speak. And the might - Which enables us to act.

12. Wonder not at the burning which is among you - This is the literal meaning of the expression. It seems to include both martyrdom itself, which so frequently was by fire, and all the other sufferings joined with, or previous to, it; which is permitted by the wisdom of God for your trial. Be not surprised at this.

13. But as ye partake of the sufferings of Christ - chap. 1, while ye suffer for his sake, rejoice in hope of more abundant glory. For the measure of glory answers the measure of suffering; and much more abundantly.

14. If ye are reproached for Christ - Reproaches and cruel mockings were always one part of their sufferings. The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you - The same Spirit which was upon Christ, Luke iv, 18. He is here termed, the Spirit of glory, conquering all reproach and shame, and the Spirit of God, whose Son, Jesus Christ is. On their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified - That is, while they are blaspheming Christ, you glorify him in the midst of your sufferings, chap. 16.

15. Let none of you deservedly suffer, as an evildoer - In any kind.

16. Let him glorify God - Who giveth him the honour so to suffer, and so great a reward for suffering.

17. The time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God - God first visits his church, and that both in justice and mercy. What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel - How terribly will he visit them! The judgments which are milder at the beginning, grow more and more severe. But good men, having already sustained their part, are only spectators of the miseries of the wicked.

18. If the righteous scarcely be saved - Escape with the utmost difficulty. Where shall the ungodly - The man who knows not God. And the open sinner appear - In that day of vengeance. The salvation here primarily spoken of is of a temporal nature. But we may apply the words to eternal things, and then they are still more awful. Prov. xi, 31.

19. Let them that suffer according to the will of God - Both for a good cause, and in a right spirit. Commit to him their souls - (Whatever becomes of the body) as a sacred depositum. In well doing - Be this your care, to do and suffer well: He will take care of the rest. As unto a faithful Creator - In whose truth, love, and power, ye may safely trust.

## V

1. I who am a fellow-elder - So the first though not the head of the apostles appositely and modestly styles himself. And a witness of the sufferings of Christ - Having seen him suffer, and now suffering for him.

2. Feed the flock - Both by doctrine and discipline. Not by constraint - Unwillingly, as a burden. Not for filthy gain - Which, if it be the motive of acting, is filthy beyond expression. O consider this, ye that leave one flock and go to another, merely because there is more gain, a large salary! Is it not astonishing that men can see no harm in this? that it is not only practiced, but avowed, all over the nation?

3. Neither as lording over the heritage - Behaving in a haughty, domineering manner, as though you had dominion over their conscience. The word translated heritage, is, literally, the portions.

There is one flock under the one chief Shepherd; but many portions of this, under many pastors. But being examples to the flock - This procures the most ready and free obedience.

5. Ye younger, be subject to the elder - In years. And be all - Elder or younger. Subject to each other - Let every one be ready, upon all occasions, to give up his own will. Be clothed with humility-Bind it on, (so the word signifies,) so that no force may be able to tear it from you. James iv, 6; Prov. iii, 34

6. The hand of God - Is in all troubles.

7. Casting all your care upon him - In every want or pressure.

8. But in the mean time watch. There is a close connection between this, and the duly casting our care upon him. How deeply had St. Peter himself suffered for want of watching! Be vigilant - As if he had said, Awake, and keep awake. Sleep no more: be this your care. As a roaring lion - Full of rage. Seeking - With all subtilty likewise. Whom he may devour or swallow up - Both soul and body.

9. Be the more steadfast, as ye know the same kind of afflictions are accomplished in - That is, suffered by, your brethren, till the measure allotted them is filled up.

10. Now the God of all grace - By which alone the whole work is begun, continued, and finished in your soul. After ye have suffered a while - A very little while compared with eternity. Himself - Ye have only to watch and resist the devil: the rest God will perform. Perfect - That no defect may remain. Stablish - That nothing may overthrow you. Strengthen - That ye may conquer all adverse power. And settle you - As an house upon a rock. So the apostle, being converted, does now "strengthen his brethren."

12. As I suppose - As I judge, upon good grounds, though not by immediate inspiration. I have written - That is, sent my letter by him. Adding my testimony - To that which ye before heard from Paul, that this is the true gospel of the grace of God.

13. The church that is at Babylon - Near which St. Peter probably was, when he wrote this epistle. Elected together with you - Partaking of the same faith with you. Mark - It seems the evangelist. My son - Probably converted by St. Peter. And he had occasionally served him, "as a son in the gospel."

## NOTES ON THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF ST. PETER

THE parts of this epistle, written not long before St. Peter's death, and the destruction of Jerusalem, with the same design as the former, are likewise three:

I. The inscription, Chap. i.1, 2

II. A farther stirring up of the minds of true believers, in which,

1. He exhorts them, having received the precious gift, to give all diligence to "grow in grace," 3-11
2. To this he incites them,
    1. From the firmness of true teachers, 12-21
    2. From the wickedness of false teachers, ii.1-22
3. He guards them against impostors,

1. By confuting their error iii.1-9
2. By describing the great day, adding suitable exhortations, 10-14

III. The conclusion, in which he,
1. Declares his agreement with St Paul, 15, 16
2. Repeats the sum of the epistle, 17

# 2nd PETER

## I

1. To them that have obtained - Not by their own works, but by the free grace of God. Like precious faith with us - The apostles. The faith of those who have not seen, being equally precious with that of those who saw our Lord in the flesh. Through the righteousness - Both active and passive. Of our God and saviour - It is this alone by which the justice of God is satisfied, and for the sake of which he gives this precious faith.

2. Through the divine, experimental knowledge of God and of Christ.

3. As his divine power has given us all things - There is a wonderful cheerfulness in this exordium, which begins with the exhortation itself. That pertain to life and godliness - To the present, natural life, and to the continuance and increase of spiritual life. Through that divine knowledge of him - Of Christ. Who hath called us by - His own glorious power, to eternal glory, as the end; by Christian virtue or fortitude, as the means.

4. Through which - Glory and fortitude. He hath given us exceeding great, and inconceivably precious promises - Both the promises and the things promised, which follow in their due season, that, sustained and encouraged by the promises, we may obtain all that he has promised. That, having escaped the manifold corruption which is in the world - From that fruitful fountain, evil desire. Ye may become partakers of the divine nature - Being renewed in the image of God, and having communion with them, so as to dwell in God and God in you.

5. For this very reason - Because God hath given you so great blessings. Giving all diligence - It is a very uncommon word which we render giving. It literally signifies, bringing in by the by, or over and above: implying, that good works the work; yet not unless we are diligent. Our diligence is to follow the gift of God, and is followed by an increase of all his gifts. Add to - And in all the other gifts of God. Superadd the latter, without losing the former. The Greek word properly means lead up, as in dance, one of these after the other, in a beautiful order. Your faith, that "evidence of things not seen," termed before "the knowledge of God and of Christ," the root of all Christian graces. Courage - Whereby ye may conquer all enemies and difficulties, and execute whatever faith dictates. In this most beautiful connection, each preceding grace leads to the following; each following, tempers and perfects the preceding. They are set down in the order of nature, rather than the order of time. For though every grace bears a relation to every other, yet here they are so nicely ranged, that those which have the closest dependence on each other are placed together. And to your courage knowledge - Wisdom, teaching how to exercise it on all occasions.

6. And to your knowledge temperance; and to your temperance patience - Bear and forbear; sustain and abstain; deny yourself and take up your cross daily. The more knowledge you have, the more renounce your own will; indulge yourself the less. "Knowledge puffeth up," and the great boasters of knowledge (the Gnostics) were those that "turned the grace of God into wantonness." But see that your knowledge be attended with temperance. Christian temperance implies the voluntary abstaining from all pleasure which does not lead to God. It extends to all things inward and outward: the due government of every thought, as well as affection. "It is using the world," so to use all outward, and so to restrain all inward things, that they may become a means of what is spiritual; a scaling ladder to ascend to what is above. Intemperance is to abuse the world. He that uses anything below, looking no higher, and getting no farther, is intemperate. He that uses the creature only so as to attain to more of the Creator, is alone temperate, and walks as Christ himself walked. And to patience godliness - Its proper support: a continual sense of God's presence and providence, and a filial fear of, and confidence in, him; otherwise your patience may be pride, surliness, stoicism; but not Christianity.

7. And to godliness brotherly kindness - No sullenness, sternness, moroseness: "sour godliness," so called, is of the devil. Of Christian godliness it may always be said, "Mild, sweet, serene, and tender is her mood, Nor grave with sternness, nor with lightness free: Against example resolutely good, Fervent in zeal, and warm in charity." And to brotherly kindness love - The pure and perfect love of God and of all mankind. The apostle here makes an advance upon the preceding article, brotherly kindness, which seems only to relate to the love of Christians toward one another.

8. For these being really in you - Added to your faith. And abounding - Increasing more and more, otherwise we fall short. Make you neither slothful nor unfruitful - Do not suffer you to be faint in your mind, or without fruit in your lives. If there is less faithfulness, less care and watchfulness, since we were pardoned, than there was before, and less diligence, less outward obedience, than when we were seeking remission of sin, we are both slothful and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ, that is, in the faith, which then cannot work by love.

9. But he that wanteth these - That does not add them to his faith. Is blind - The eyes of his understanding are again closed. He cannot see God, or his pardoning love. He has lost the evidence of things not seen. Not able to see afar off - Literally, purblind. He has lost sight of the precious promises: perfect love and heaven are equally out of his sight. Nay, he cannot now see what himself once enjoyed. Having, as it were, forgot the purification from his former sins - Scarce knowing what he himself then felt, when his sins were forgiven.

10. Wherefore - Considering the miserable state of these apostates. Brethren - St. Peter nowhere uses this appellation in either of his epistles, but in this important exhortation. Be the more diligent - By courage, knowledge, temperance, &c. To make your calling and election firm - God hath called you by his word and his Spirit; he hath elected you, separated you from the world, through sanctification of the Spirit. O cast not away these inestimable benefits! If ye are thus diligent to make your election firm, ye shall never finally fall.

11. For if ye do so, an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom - Ye shall go in full triumph to glory.

12. Wherefore - Since everlasting destruction attends your sloth, everlasting glory your diligence, I will not neglect always to remind you of these things - Therefore he wrote another, so soon after the former, epistle. Though ye are established in the present truth - That truth which I am now declaring.

13. In this tabernacle - Or tent. How short is our abode in the body! How easily does a believer pass out of it!

14. Even as the Lord Jesus showed me - In the manner which had foretold, John xxi, 18, &c. It is not improbable, he had also showed him that the time was now drawing nigh.

15. That ye may be able - By having this epistle among you.

16. These things are worthy to be always had in remembrance For they are not cunningly devised fables - Like those common among the heathens. While we made known to you the power and coming - That is, the powerful coming of Christ in glory. But if what they advanced of Christ was not true, if it was of their own invention, then to impose such a lie on the world as it was, in the very nature of things, above all human power to defend, and to do this at the expense of life and all things only to enrage the whole world, Jews and gentiles, against them, was no cunning, but was the greatest folly that men could have been guilty of. But were eyewitnesses of his majesty - At his transfiguration, which was a specimen of his glory at the last day.

17. For he received divine honour and inexpressible glory - Shining from heaven above the brightness of the sun. When there came such a voice from the excellent glory - That is, from God the Father. Matt. xvii, 5.

18. And we - Peter, James, and John. St. John was still alive. Being with him in the holy mount - Made so by that glorious manifestation, as mount Horeb was of old, Exod. iii, 4, 5.

19. And we - St. Peter here speaks in the name of all Christians. Have the word of prophecy - The words of Moses, Isaiah, and all the prophets, are one and the same word, every way consistent with itself. St. Peter does not cite any particular passage, but speaks of their entire testimony. More confirmed - By that display of his glorious majesty. To which word ye do well that ye take heed, as to a lamp which shone in a dark place - Wherein there was neither light nor window. Such anciently was the whole world, except that little spot where this lamp shone. Till the day should dawn - Till the full light of the gospel should break through the darkness. As is the difference between the light of a lamp and that of the day, such is that between the light of the Old Testament and of the New. And the morning star - Jesus Christ, Rev. xxii, 16. Arise in your hearts - Be revealed in you.

20. Ye do well, as knowing this, that no scripture prophecy is of private interpretation - It is not any man's own word. It is God, not the prophet himself, who thereby interprets things till then unknown.

21. For prophecy came not of old by the will of man - Of any mere man whatever. But the holy men of God - Devoted to him, and set apart by him for that purpose, spake and wrote. Being moved - Literally, carried. They were purely passive therein.

## II

1. But there were false prophets also - As well as true. Among the people - Of Israel. Those that spake even the truth, when God had not sent them; and also those that were truly sent of him, and yet corrupted or softened their message, were false prophets. As there shall be false - As well as true. Teachers among you, who will privately briny in - Into the church. Destructive heresies - They first, by denying the Lord, introduced destructive heresies, that is, divisions; or they occasioned

first these divisions, and then were given up to a reprobate mind, even to deny the Lord that bought them. Either the heresies are the effect of denying the Lord, or the denying the Lord was the consequence of the heresies. Even denying - Both by their doctrine and their works. The Lord that bought them - With his own blood. Yet these very men perish everlastingly. Therefore Christ bought even them that perish.

2. The way of truth will be evil spoken of - By those who blend all false and true Christians together.

3. They will make merchandise of you - Only use you to gain by you, as merchants do their wares. Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not - Was long ago determined, and will be executed speedily. All sinners are adjudged to destruction; and God's punishing some proves he will punish the rest.

4. Cast them down to hell - The bottomless pit, a place of unknown misery. Delivered them - Like condemned criminals to safe custody, as if bound with the strongest chains in a dungeon of darkness, to be reserved unto the judgment of the great day. Though still those chains do not hinder their often walking up and down seeking whom they may devour.

5. And spared not the old, the antediluvian, world, but he preserved Noah the eighth person - that is, Noah and seven others, a preacher as well as practicer, of righteousness. Bringing a flood on the world of the ungodly - Whose numbers stood them in no stead.

9. It plainly appears, from these instances, that the Lord knoweth, hath both wisdom and power and will, to deliver the godly out of all temptations, and to punish the ungodly.

10. Chiefly them that walk after the flesh - Corrupt nature; particularly in the lust of uncleanness. And despise government - The authority of their governors. Dignities - Persons in authority.

11. Whereas angels - When they appear before the Lord, Job i, 6, Job ii, 1, to give an account of what they have seen and done on the earth.

12. Savage as brute beasts - Several of which in the present disordered state of the world, seem born to be taken and destroyed.

13. They count it pleasure to riot in the day time - They glory in doing it in the face of the sun. They are spots in themselves, blemishes to any church. Sporting themselves with their own deceivings - Making a jest of those whom they deceive and even jesting while they are deceiving their own souls.

15. The way of Balaam the son of Bosor - So the Chaldeans pronounced what the Jews termed Beor; namely, the way of covetousness. Who loved - Earnestly desired, though he did not dare to take, the reward of unrighteousness - The money which Balak would have given him for cursing Israel.

16. The beast - Though naturally dumb.

17. Fountains and clouds promise water: so do these promise, but do not perform.

18. They ensnare in the desires of the flesh - Allowing them to gratify some unholy desire. Those who were before entirely escaped from the spirit, custom, and company of them that live in error - In sin.

19. While they promise them liberty - From needless restraints and scruples; from the bondage of the law. Themselves are slaves of corruption - Even sin, the vilest of all bondage.

20. For if after they - Who are thus ensnared. Have escaped the pollutions of the world - The sins which pollute all who know not God. Through the knowledge of Christ - That is, through faith

in him, chap. i, 3. They are again entangled therein, and overcome, their last state is worse than the first - More inexcusable, and causing a greater damnation.

21. The commandment - The whole law of God, once not only delivered to their ears, but written in their hearts.

22. The dog, the sow - Such are all men in the sight of God before they receive his grace, and after they have made shipwreck of the faith. Prov. xxvi, 11.

## III

2, 3. Be the more mindful thereof, because ye know scoffers will come first - Before the Lord comes. Walking after their own evil desires - Here is the origin of the error, the root of libertinism. Do we not see this eminently fulfilled?

4. Saying, Where is the promise of his coming - To judgment (They do not even deign to name him.) We see no sign of any such thing. For ever since the fathers - Our first ancestors. Fell asleep, all things - Heaven. water, earth. Continue as they were from the beginning of the creation - Without any such material change as might make us believe they will ever end.

5. For this they are willingly ignorant of - They do not care to know or consider. That by the almighty word of God - Which bounds the duration of all things, so that it cannot be either longer or shorter. Of old - Before the flood. The aerial heavens were, and the earth - Not as it is now, but standing out of the water and in the water - Perhaps the interior globe of earth was fixed in the midst of the great deep, the abyss of water; the shell or exterior globe standing out of the water, covering the great deep. This, or some other great and manifest difference between the original and present constitution of the terraqueous globe, seems then to have been so generally known, that St. Peter charges their ignorance of it totally upon their wilfulness.

6. Through which - Heaven and earth, the windows of heaven being opened, and the fountains of the great deep broken up. The world that then was - The whole antediluvian race. Being overflowed with water, perished - And the heavens and earth themselves, though they did not perish, yet underwent a great change. So little ground have these scoffers for saying that all things continue as they were from the creation.

7. But the heavens and the earth, that are now - Since the flood. Are reserved unto fire at the day wherein God will judge the world, and punish the ungodly with everlasting destruction.

8. But be not ye ignorant - Whatever they are. Of this one thing - Which casts much light on the point in hand. That one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day - Moses had said, Psalm xc, 4, "A thousand years in thy sight are as one day;" which St. Peter applies with regard to the last day, so as to denote both his eternity, whereby he exceeds all measure of time in his essence and in his operation; his knowledge, to which all things past or to come are present every moment; his power, which needs no long delay, in order to bring its work to perfection; and his longsuffering, which excludes all impatience of expectation, and desire of making haste. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years - That is, in one day, in one moment he can do the work of a thousand years. Therefore he "is not slow:" he is always equally ready to fulfil his promise. And a thousand years are as one day - That is, no delay is long to God. A thousand years are as one day to the eternal God. Therefore "he is longsuffering:" he gives us space for repentance, without

any inconvenience to himself. In a word, with God time passes neither slower nor swifter than is suitable to him and his economy; nor can there be any reason why it should be necessary for him either to delay or hasten the end of all things. How can we comprehend this? If we could comprehend it, St. Peter needed not to have added, with the Lord.

9. The Lord is not slow - As if the time fixed for it were past. Concerning his promise - Which shall surely be fulfilled in its season. But is longsuffering towards us - Children of men. Not willing that any soul, which he hath made should perish.

10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief - Suddenly, unexpectedly. In which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise - Surprisingly expressed by the very sound of the original word. The elements shall melt with fervent heat - The elements seem to mean, the sun, moon, and stars; not the four, commonly so called; for air and water cannot melt, and the earth is mentioned immediately after. The earth and all the works - Whether of nature or art. That are therein shall be burned up - And has not God already abundantly provided for this?

1. By the stores of subterranean fire which are so frequently bursting out at Aetna, Vesuvius, Hecla, and many other burning mountains.
2. By the ethereal (vulgarly called electrical) fire, diffused through the whole globe; which, if the secret chain that now binds it up were loosed, would immediately dissolve the whole frame of nature.
3. By comets, one of which, if it touch the earth in its course toward the sun, must needs strike it into that abyss of fire; if in its return from the sun, when it is heated, as a great man computes, two thousand times hotter than a red-hot cannonball, it must destroy all vegetables and animals long before their contact, and soon after burn it up.

11. Seeing then that all these things are dissolved - To the eye of faith it appears as done already. All these things - Mentioned before; all that are included in that scriptural expression, "the heavens and the earth;" that is, the universe. On the fourth day God made the stars, Gen. i, 16, which will be dissolved together with the earth. They are deceived, therefore, who restrain either the history of the creation, or this description of the destruction, of the world to the earth and lower heavens; imagining the stars to be more ancient than the earth, and to survive it. Both the dissolution and renovation are ascribed, not to the one heaven which surrounds the earth, but to the heavens in general, ver. 10, 13, without any restriction or limitation. What persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation - With men. And godliness - Toward your Creator.

12. Hastening on - As it were by your earnest desires and fervent prayers. The coming of the day of God - Many myriads of days he grants to men: one, the last, is the day of God himself.

13. We look for new heavens and a new earth - Raised as it were out of the ashes of the old; we look for an entire new state of things. Wherein dwelleth righteousness - Only righteous spirits. How great a mystery!

14. labour that whenever he cometh ye may be found in peace - May meet him without terror, being sprinkled with his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit, so as to be without spot and blameless. Isaiah lxv, 17; Isaiah lxvi, 22.

15. And account the longsuffering of the Lord salvation - Not only designed to lead men to repentance, but actually conducing thereto: a precious means of saving many more souls. As our beloved brother Paul also hath written to you - This refers not only to the single sentence preceding,

but to all that went before. St. Paul had written to the same effect concerning the end of the world, in several parts of his epistles, and particularly in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Rom. ii, 4.

16. As also in all his epistles - St. Peter wrote this a little before his own and St. Paul's martyrdom. St. Paul therefore had now written all his epistles; and even from this expression we may learn that St. Peter had read them all, perhaps sent to him by St. Paul himself. Nor was he at all disgusted by what St. Paul had written concerning him in the Epistle to the Galatians. Speaking of these things - Namely, of the coming of our Lord, delayed through his longsuffering, and of the circumstances preceding and accompanying it. Which things the unlearned - They who are not taught of God. And the unstable - Wavering, double-minded, unsettled men. Wrest - As though Christ would not come. As they do also the other scriptures - Therefore St Paul's writings were now part of the scriptures. To their own destruction - But that some use the scriptures ill, is no reason why others should not use them at all.

18. But grow in grace - That is, in every Christian temper. There may be, for a time, grace without growth; as there may be natural life without growth. But such sickly life, of soul or body, will end in death, and every day draw nigher to it. Health is the means of both natural and spiritual growth. If the remaining evil of our fallen nature be not daily mortified, it will, like an evil humour in the body, destroy the whole man. But "if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body," (only so far as we do this,) "ye shall live" the life of faith, holiness, happiness. The end and design of grace being purchased and bestowed on us, is to destroy the image of the earthy, and restore us to that of the heavenly. And so far as it does this, it truly profits us; and also makes way for more of the heavenly gift, that we may at last be filled with all the fulness of God. The strength and well-being of a Christian depend on what his soul feeds on, as the health of the body depends on whatever we make our daily food. If we feed on what is according to our nature, we grow; if not, we pine away and die. The soul is of the nature of God, and nothing but what is according to his holiness can agree with it. Sin, of every kind, starves the soul, and makes it consume away. Let us not try to invert the order of God in his new creation: we shall only deceive ourselves. It is easy to forsake the will of God, and follow our own; but this will bring leanness into the soul. It is easy to satisfy ourselves without being possessed of the holiness and happiness of the gospel. It is easy to call these frames and feelings, and then to oppose faith to one and Christ to the other. Frames (allowing the expression) are no other than heavenly tempers, "the mind that was in Christ." Feelings are the divine consolations of the Holy Ghost shed abroad in the heart of him that truly believes. And wherever faith is, and wherever Christ is, there are these blessed frames and feelings. If they are not in us, it is a sure sign that though the wilderness became a pool, the pool is become a wilderness again. And in the knowledge of Christ - That is, in faith, the root of all. To him be the glory to the day of eternity - An expression naturally flowing from that sense which the apostle had felt in his soul throughout this whole chapter. Eternity is a day without night, without interruption, without end.

## NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN

THE great similitude, or rather sameness, both of spirit and expression, which runs through St. John's Gospel and all his epistles, is a clear evidence of their being written by the same person. In this epistle he speaks not to any particular church, but to all the Christians of that age; and in them to the whole Christian church in all succeeding ages. Some have apprehended that it is not easy to discern the scope and method of this epistle. But if we examine it with simplicity, these may readily be discovered. St. John in this letter, or rather tract, (for he was present with part of those to whom he wrote,) has this apparent aim, to confirm the happy and holy communion of the faithful with God and Christ, by describing the marks of that blessed state. The parts of it are three:

I. The preface, Chap. i.1-4

II. The tract itself, 5- v.1-12

III. The conclusion, 13-21 In the preface he shows the authority of his own preaching and writing, and expressly points out, verse 3, the design of his present writing. To the preface exactly answers the conclusion, more largely explaining the same design, and recapitulating those marks, by we know thrice repeated, v. 18-20. The tract itself has two parts, treating,

I. Severally,

1. Of communion with the Father, i. 5-10
2. Of communion with the Son, ii. 1-12 With a distinct application to fathers, young men, and little children, 13-27 Whereto is annexed an exhortation to abide in him, 28- iii. 1-24 That the fruit of his manifestation in the flesh may extend to his manifestation in glory.
3. Of the confirmation and fruit of this abiding through the Spirit, iv. 1-21

II. Conjointly, Of the testimony of the Father, and Son, and Spirit: on which faith in Christ, the being born of God, love to God and his children, the keeping his commandments and victory over the world, are founded,. v. 1-12 The parts frequently begin and end alike. Sometimes there is an allusion in a preceding part, and a recapitulation in the subsequent. Each part treats of a benefit from God, and the duty of the faithful derived therefrom by the most natural inferences.

# 1st JOHN

## I

1. That which was - Here means, He which was the Word himself; afterwards it means, that which they had heard from him. Which was - Namely, with the Father, ver. 2, before he was manifested. From the beginning - This phrase is sometimes used in a limited sense; but here it properly means from eternity, being equivalent with, "in the beginning," John i, 1. That which we - The apostles. Have not only heard, but seen with our eyes, which we have beheld - Attentively considered on various occasions. Of the Word of life - He is termed the Word, John i, 1; the Life, John i, 4; as he is the living Word of God, who, with the Father and the Spirit, is the fountain of life to all creatures, particularly of spiritual and eternal life.

2. For the life - The living Word. Was manifested - In the flesh, to our very senses. And we testify and declare - We testify by declaring, by preaching, and writing, 1 John i, 3, 4. Preaching lays the foundation, 1 John i, 5-x, writing builds there on. To you - Who have not seen. The eternal life - Which always was, and afterward appeared to us. This is mentioned in the beginning of the epistle. In the end of it is mentioned the same eternal life, which we shall always enjoy.

3. That which we have seen and heard - Of him and from him. Declare we to you - For this end. That ye also may have fellowship with us - May enjoy the same fellowship which we enjoy. And truly our fellowship - Whereby he is in us and we in him. Is with the Father and with the son - Of the Holy Ghost he speaks afterwards.

4. That your joy may be full - So our Lord also, John xv, 11; xvi, 22. There is a joy of hope, a joy of faith, and a joy of love. Here the joy of faith is directly intended. It is a concise expression. Your joy - That is, your faith and the joy arising from it: but it likewise implies the joy of hope and love.

5. And this is the sum of the message which we have heard of him - The Son of God. That God is light - The light of wisdom, love, holiness, glory. What light is to the natural eye, that God is to the spiritual eye. And in him is no darkness at all - No contrary principle. He is pure, unmixed light.

6. If we say - Either with our tongue, or in our heart, if we endeavour to persuade either ourselves or others. We have fellowship with him, while we walk, either inwardly or outwardly, in darkness - In sin of any kind. We do not the truth - Our actions prove, that the truth is not in us.

7. But if we walk in the light - In all holiness. As God is (a deeper word than walk, and more worthy of God) in the light, then we may truly say, we have fellowship one with another - We who have seen, and you who have not seen, do alike enjoy that fellowship with God. The imitation of God being the only sure proof of our having fellowship with him. And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son - With the grace purchased thereby. Cleanseth us from all sin - Both original and actual, taking away all the guilt and all the power.

8. If we say - Any child of man, before his blood has cleansed us. We have no sin - To be cleansed from, instead of confessing our sins, 1 John i, 9, the truth is not in us - Neither in our mouth nor in our heart.

9. But if with a penitent and believing heart, we confess our sins, he is faithful - Because he had promised this blessing, by the unanimous voice of all his prophets. Just - Surely then he will punish: no; for this very reason he will pardon. This may seem strange; but upon the evangelical principle of atonement and redemption, it is undoubtedly true; because, when the debt is paid, or the purchase made, it is the part of equity to cancel the bond, and consign over the purchased possession. Both to forgive us our sins - To take away all the guilt of them. And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness - To purify our souls from every kind and every degree of it.

10. Yet still we are to retain, even to our lives' end, a deep sense of our past sins. Still if we say, we have not sinned, we make him a liar - Who saith, all have sinned. And his word is not in us - We do not receive it; we give it no place in our hearts.

## II

1. My beloved children - So the apostle frequently addresses the whole body of Christians. It is a term of tenderness and endearment, used by our Lord himself to his disciples, John xiii, 33. And perhaps many to whom St. John now wrote were converted by his ministry. It is a different word from that which is translated "little children," in several parts of the epistle, to distinguish it from which, it is here rendered beloved children. I write these things to you, that ye may not sin - Thus he guards them beforehand against abusing the doctrine of reconciliation. All the words, institutions, and judgments of God are levelled against sin, either that it may not be committed, or that it may be abolished. But if any one sin - Let him not lie in sin, despairing of help. We have an advocate - We have for our advocate, not a mean person, but him of whom it was said, "This is my beloved son." Not a guilty person, who stands in need of pardon for himself; but Jesus Christ the righteous; not a mere petitioner, who relies purely upon liberality, but one that has merited, fully merited, whatever he asks.

2. And he is the propitiation - The atoning sacrifice by which the wrath of God is appeased. For our sins - Who believe. And not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world - Just as wide as sin extends, the propitiation extends also.

3. And hereby we know that we truly and savingly know him - As he is the advocate, the righteous, the propitiation. If we keep his commandments - Particularly those of faith and love.

5. But whoso keepeth his word - His commandments. Verily in him the love of God - Reconciled to us through Christ. Is perfected - Is perfectly known. Hereby - By our keeping his word. We know that we are in him - So is the tree known by its fruits. To "know him," to be "in him," to "abide in him," are nearly synonymous terms; only with a gradation, - knowledge, communion, constancy.

6. He that saith he abideth in him - which implies a durable state; a constant, lasting knowledge of, and communion with, him. Ought himself - Otherwise they are vain words. So to walk, even as he walked - In the world. As he, are words that frequently occur in this epistle. Believers having their hearts full of him, easily supply his name.

7. When I speak of keeping his word, I write not a new commandment - I do not speak of any new one. But the old commandment, which ye had - Even from your forefathers.

8. Again, I do write a new commandment to you - Namely, with regard to loving one another. A commandment which, though it also was given long ago, yet is truly new in him and in you. It was exemplified in him, and is now fulfilled by you, in such a manner as it never was before. For there is no comparison between the state of the Old Testament believers, and that which ye now enjoy: the darkness of that dispensation is passed away; and Christ the true light now shineth in your hearts.

9. He that saith he is in the light - In Christ, united to him. And hateth his brother - The very name shows the love due to him. Is in darkness until now - Void of Christ, and of all true light.

10. He that loveth his brother - For Christ's sake. Abideth in the light - Of God. And there is no occasion of stumbling in him - Whereas he that hates his brother is an occasion of stumbling to himself. He stumbles against himself, and against all things within and without; while he that loves his brother, has a free, disencumbered journey.

11. He that hateth his brother - And he must hate, if he does not love him: there is no medium. Is in darkness - In sin, perplexity, entanglement. He walketh in darkness, and knoweth not that he is in the high road to hell.

12. I have written to you, beloved children - Thus St. John bespeaks all to whom he writes. But from the thirteenth to 1 John ii, 13-27 the twentyseventh verse, he divides them particularly into

"fathers," "young men," and "little children." Because your sins are forgiven you - As if he had said, This is the sum of what I have now written. He then proceeds to other things, which are built upon this foundation.

13. The address to spiritual fathers, young men, and little children is first proposed in this verse, wherein he says, I write to you, fathers: I write to you, young men: I write to you, little children: and then enlarged upon; in doing which he says, "I have written to you, fathers," 1 John ii, 14. "I have written to you, young men," 1 John ii, 14-17. "I have written to you, little children," 1 John ii, 18-27. Having finished his address to each, he returns to all together, whom he again terms, (as 1 John ii, 12,) "beloved children." Fathers, ye have known him that is from the beginning - We have known the eternal God, in a manner wherein no other, even true believers, know him. Young men, ye have overcome the wicked one - In many battles, by the power of faith. Little children, ye have known the Father - As your Father, though ye have not yet overcome, by the Spirit witnessing with your Spirit, that ye are the children of God."

14. I have written to you, fathers - As if he had said, Observe well what I but now wrote. He speaks very briefly and modestly to these, who needed not much to be said to them, as having that deep acquaintance with God which comprises all necessary knowledge. Young men, ye are strong - In faith. And the word of God abideth in you - Deeply rooted in your hearts, whereby ye have often foiled your great adversary.

15. To you all, whether fathers, young men, or little children, I say, Love not the world - Pursue your victory by overcoming the world. If any man love the world - Seek happiness in visible things, he does not love God.

16. The desire of the flesh - Of the pleasure of the outward senses, whether of the taste, smell, or touch. The desire of the eye - Of the pleasures of imagination, to which the eye chiefly is subservient; of that internal sense whereby we relish whatever is grand, new, or beautiful. The pride of life - All that pomp in clothes, houses, furniture, equipage, manner of living, which generally procure honour from the bulk of mankind, and so gratify pride and vanity. It therefore directly includes the desire of praise, and, remotely, covetousness. All these desires are not from God, but from the prince of this world.

17. The world passeth away, and the desire thereof - That is, all that can gratify those desires passeth away with it. But he that doeth the will of God - That loves God, not the world. Abideth - In the enjoyment of what he loves, for ever.

18. Little children, it is the last time - The last dispensation of grace, that which is to continue to the end of time, is begun. Ye have heard that antichrist cometh - Under the term antichrist, or the spirit of antichrist, he includes all false teachers and enemies to the truth; yea, whatever doctrines or men are contrary to Christ. It seems to have been long after this that the name of antichrist was appropriated to that grand adversary of Christ, the man of sin, 2 Thess. ii, 3 Antichrist, in St. John's sense, that is, antichristianism, has been spreading from his time till now; and will do so, till that great adversary arises, and is destroyed by Christ's coming.

19. They were not of us - When they went; their hearts were before departed from God, otherwise, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest - That is, this was made manifest by their going out.

20. But ye have an anointing - A chrism; perhaps so termed in opposition to the name of antichrist; an inward teaching from the Holy Ghost, whereby ye know all things - Necessary for

your preservation from these seducers, and for your eternal salvation. St. John here but just touches upon the Holy Ghost, of whom he speaks more largely, chap. iii, 24; iv, 13; v, 6.

21. I have written - Namely, 1 John ii, 13. To you because ye know the truth - That is, to confirm you in the knowledge ye have already. Ye know that no lie is of the truth - That all the doctrines of these antichrists are irreconcilable to it.

22. Who is that liar - Who is guilty of that lying, but he who denies that truth which is the sum of all Christianity? That Jesus is the Christ; that he is the Son of God; that he came in the flesh, is one undivided truth. and he that denies any part of this, in effect denies the whole. He is antichrist - And the spirit of antichrist, who in denying the Son denies the Father also.

23. Whosoever denieth the eternal Son of God, he hath not communion with the Father; but he that truly and believingly acknowledgeth the Son, hath communion with the Father also.

24. If that truth concerning the Father and the Son, which ye have heard from the beginning, abide fixed and rooted in you, ye also shall abide in that happy communion with the Son and the Father.

25. He - The Son. Hath promised us - If we abide in him.

26. These things - From 1 John ii, 21. I have written to you - St. John, according to his custom, begins and ends with the same form, and having finished a kind of parenthesis, 1 John ii, 20-26, continues, ii, 27, what he said in the twentieth verse, concerning them that would seduce you.

27. Ye need not that any should teach you, save as that anointing teacheth you - Which is always the same, always consistent with itself. But this does not exclude our need of being taught by them who partake of the same anointing. Of all things - Which it is necessary for you to know. And is no lie - Like that which antichrist teaches. Ye shall abide in him - This is added both by way of comfort and of exhortation. The whole discourse, from verse 18 to this, 1 John ii, 18-27 is peculiarly adapted to little children.

28. And now, beloved children - Having finished his address to each, he now returns to all in general. Abide in him, that we - A modest expression. May not be ashamed before him at his coming - O how will ye, Jews, Socinians, nominal Christians, be ashamed in that day!

29. Every one - And none else. Who practiceth righteousness - From a believing, loving heart. Is born of him - For all his children are like himself.

## III

1. That we should be called - That is, should be, the children of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not - They know not what to make of us. We are a mystery to them.

2. It doth not yet appear - Even to ourselves. What we shall be - It is something ineffable, which will raise the children of God to be, in a manner, as God himself. But we know, in general, that when he, the Son of God, shall appear, we shall be like him - The glory of God penetrating our inmost substance. For we shall see him as he is - Manifestly, without a veil. And that sight will transform us into the same likeness.

3. And every one that hath this hope in him - In God.

4. Whosoever committeth sin - Thereby transgresseth the holy, just, and good law of God, and so sets his authority at nought; for this is implied in the very nature of sin.

5. And ye know that he - Christ. Was manifested - That he came into the world for this very purpose. To take away our sins - To destroy them all, root and branch, and leave none remaining. And in him is no sin - So that he could not suffer on his own account, but to make us as himself.

6. Whosoever abideth in communion with him, by loving faith, sinneth not - While he so abideth. Whosoever sinneth certainly seeth him not - The loving eye of his soul is not then fixed upon God; neither doth he then experimentally know him - Whatever he did in time past.

7. Let no one deceive you - Let none persuade you that any man is righteous but he that uniformly practices righteousness; he alone is righteous, after the example of his Lord.

8. He that committeth sin is a child of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning - That is, was the first sinner in the universe, and has continued to sin ever since. The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil - All sin. And will he not perform this in all that trust in him?

9. Whosoever is born of God - By living faith, whereby God is continually breathing spiritual life into his soul, and his soul is continually breathing out love and prayer to God, doth not commit sin. For the divine seed of loving faith abideth in him; and, so long as it doth, he cannot sin, because he is born of God - Is inwardly and universally changed.

10. Neither he that loveth not his brother - Here is the transition from the general proposition to one particular.

12. Who was of the wicked one - Who showed he was a child of the devil by killing his brother. And wherefore slew he him - For any fault? No, but just the reverse; for his goodness.

13. Marvel not if the world hate you - For the same cause.

14. We know - As if he had said, We ourselves could not love our brethren, unless we were passed from spiritual death to life, that is, born of God. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death - That is, is not born of God. And he that is not born of God, cannot love his brother.

15. He, I say, abideth in spiritual death, is void of the life of God. For whosoever hateth his brother, and there is no medium between loving and hating him, is, in God's account, a murderer: every degree of hatred being a degree of the same temper which moved Cain to murder his brother. And no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him - But every loving believer hath. For love is the beginning of eternal life. It is the same, in substance, with glory.

16. The word God is not in the original. It was omitted by the apostle just as the particular name is omitted by Mary, when she says to the gardener, "Sir, if thou hast born him hence;" and by the church, when she says, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth," So i, 2; in both which places there is a language, a very emphatical language, even in silence. It declares how totally the thoughts were possessed by the blessed and glorious subject. It expresses also the superlative dignity and amiableness of the person meant, as though He, and He alone, was, or deserved to be, both known and admired by all. Because he laid down his life - Not merely for sinners, but for us in particular. From this truth believed, from this blessing enjoyed, the love of our brethren takes its rise, which may very justly be admitted as an evidence that our faith is no delusion.

17. But whoso hath this world's good - Worldly substance, far less valuable than life. And seeth his brother have need - The very sight of want knocks at the door of the spectator's heart. And shutteth up - Whether asked or not. His bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him - Certainly not at all, however he may talk, 1 John iii, 18, of loving God.

18. Not in word - Only. But in deed - In action: not in tongue by empty professions, but in truth.

19. And hereby we know - We have a farther proof by this real, operative love. That we are of the truth - That we have true faith, that we are true children of God. And shall assure our hearts before him - Shall enjoy the assurance of his favour, and the "testimony of a good conscience toward God." The heart, in St. John's language, is the conscience. The word conscience is not found in his writings.

20. For if we have not this testimony, if in anything our heart, our own conscience, condemn us, much more does God, who is greater than our heart - An infinitely holier and a more impartial Judge. And knoweth all things - So that there is no hope of hiding it from him.

21. If our heart condemn us not - If our conscience, duly enlightened by the word and Spirit of God, and comparing all our thoughts, words, and works with that word, pronounce that they agree therewith. Then have we confidence toward God - Not only our consciousness of his favour continues and increases, but we have a full persuasion, that whatsoever we ask we shall receive of him.

23. And this is his commandment - All his commandments in one word. That we should believe and love - in the manner and degree which he hath taught. This is the greatest and most important command that ever issued from the throne of glory. If this be neglected, no other can be kept: if this be observed, all others are easy.

24. And he that keepeth his commandments - That thus believes and loves. Abideth in him, and God in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us - Which witnesses with our spirits that we are his children, and brings forth his fruits of peace, love, holiness. This is the transition to the treating of the Holy Spirit which immediately follows.

## IV

1. Believe not every spirit - Whereby any teacher is actuated. But try the spirits - By the rule which follows. We are to try all spirits by the written word: "To the law and to the testimony!" If any man speak not according to these, the spirit which actuates him is not of God.

2. Every spirit - Or teacher. Which confesseth - Both with heart and voice. Jesus Christ, who is come in the flesh, is of God - This his coming presupposes, contains, and draws after it, the whole doctrine of Christ.

3. Ye have heard - From our Lord and us, that it cometh.

4. Ye have overcome these seducers, because greater is the Spirit of Christ that is in you than the spirit of antichrist that is in the world.

5. They - Those false prophets. Are of the world - Of the number of those that know not God. Therefore speak they of the world - From the same principle, wisdom, spirit; and, of consequence, the world heareth them - With approbation.

6. We - Apostles. Are of God - Immediately taught, and sent by him. Hereby we know - From what is said, 1 John iv, 2-6.

7. Let us love one another - From the doctrine he has just been defending he draws this exhortation. It is by the Spirit that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Every one that truly loveth God and his neighbour is born of God.

8. God is love - This little sentence brought St. John more sweetness, even in the time he was writing it, than the whole world can bring. God is often styled holy, righteous, wise; but not holiness,

righteousness, or wisdom in the abstract, as he is said to be love; intimating that this is his darling, his reigning attribute, the attribute that sheds an amiable glory on all his other perfections.

12. If we love one another, God abideth in us - This is treated of, 1 John iv, 13-16. And his love is perfected - Has its full effect. In us - This is treated of, 1 John iv, 17-19.

14. And in consequence of this we have seen and testify that the Father sent the Son - These are the foundation and the criteria of our abiding in God and God in us, the communion of the Spirit, and the confession of the Son.

15. Whosoever shall, from a principle of loving faith, openly confess in the face of all opposition and danger, that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him.

16. And we know and believe - By the same Spirit, the love that God hath to us.

17. Hereby - That is, by this communion with God. Is our love made perfect; that we may - That is, so that we shall have boldness in the day of judgment - When all the stout-hearted shall tremble. Because as he - Christ. Is - All love. So are we - Who are fathers in Christ, even in this world.

18. There is no fear in love - No slavish fear can be where love reigns. But perfect, adult love casteth out slavish fear: because such fear hath torment - And so is inconsistent with the happiness of love. A natural man has neither fear nor love; one that is awakened, fear without love; a babe in Christ, love and fear; a father in Christ, love without fear.

19. We love him, because he first loved us - This is the sum of all religion, the genuine model of Christianity. None can say more: why should any one say less, or less intelligibly?

20. Whom he hath seen - Who is daily presented to his senses, to raise his esteem, and move his kindness or compassion toward him.

21. And this commandment have we from him - Both God and Christ. That he who loveth God love his brother - Every one, whatever his opinions or mode of worship be, purely because he is the child, and bears the image, of God. Bigotry is properly the want of this pure and universal love. A bigot only loves those who embrace his opinions, and receive his way of worship; and he loves them for that, and not for Christ's sake.

## V

1. The scope and sum of this whole paragraph appears from the conclusion of it, 1 John v, xiii, "These things have I written to you who believe, that ye may know that ye who believe have eternal life." So faith is the first and last point with St. John also. Every one who loveth - God that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him - Hath a natural affection to all his brethren.

2. Hereby we know - This is a plain proof. That we love the children of God - As his children.

3. For this is the love of God - The only sure proof of it. That we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous - To any that are born of God.

4. For whatsoever - This expression implies the most unlimited universality. Is born of God overcometh the world - Conquers whatever it can lay in the way, either to allure or fright the children of God from keeping his commandments. And this is the victory - The grand means of overcoming. Even our faith - Seeing all things are possible to him that believeth.

5. Who is he that overcometh the world - That is superior to all worldly care, desire, fear? Every believer, and none else. The seventh verse(usually so reckoned) is a brief recapitulation of all which has been before advanced concerning the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. It is cited, in conjunction with the sixth and eighth, 1 John v, 6, 8 by Tertullian, Cyprian, and an uninterrupted train of Fathers. And, indeed, what the sun is in the world, what the heart is in a man, what the needle is in the mariner's compass, this verse is in the epistle. By this the sixth, eighth, and ninth verses 1 John v, 6, 8, 9 are indissolubly connected; as will be evident, beyond all contradiction, when they are accurately considered.

6. This is he - St. John here shows the immovable foundation of that faith that Jesus is the Son of God; not only the testimony of man, but the firm, indubitable testimony of God. Who came - Jesus is he of whom it was promised that he should come; and who accordingly, is come. And this the Spirit, and the water, and the blood testify. Even Jesus - Who, coming by water and blood, is by this very thing demonstrated to be the Christ. Not by the water only - Wherein he was baptized. But by the water and the blood - Which he shed when he had finished the work his Father had given him to do. He not only undertook at his baptism "to fulfil all righteousness," but on the cross accomplished what he had undertaken; in token whereof, when all was finished, blood and water came out of his side. And it is the Spirit who likewise testifieth - Of Jesus Christ, namely, by Moses and all the prophets, by John the Baptist, by all the apostles, and in all the writings of the New Testament. And against his testimony there can be no exception, because the Spirit is truth - The very God of truth.

7. What Bengelius has advanced, both concerning the transposition of these two verses, and the authority of the controverted verse, partly in his "Gnomon," and partly in his "Apparatus Criticus," will abundantly satisfy any impartial person. For there are three that testify - Literally, testifying, or bearing witness. The participle is put for the noun witnesses, to intimate that the act of testifying, and the effect of it, are continually present. Properly, persons only can testify; and that three are described testifying on earth, as if they were persons, is elegantly subservient to the three persons testifying in heaven. The Spirit - In the word, confirmed by miracles. The water - Of baptism, wherein we are dedicated to the Son, (with the Father and Spirit,) typifying his spotless purity, and the inward purifying of our nature. And the blood - Represented in the Lord's supper, and applied to the consciences of believer. And these three harmoniously agree in one - In bearing the same testimony, - that Jesus Christ is the divine, the complete, the only saviour of the world.

8. And there are three that testify in heaven - The testimony of the Spirit, the water, and the blood, is by an eminent gradation corroborated by three, who give a still greater testimony. The Father - Who clearly testified of the Son, both at his baptism and at his transfiguration. The Word - Who testified of himself on many occasions, while he was on earth; and again, with still greater solemnity, after his ascension into heaven, Rev. i, 5; Rev. xix, 13. And the Spirit - Whose testimony was added chiefly after his glorification, chap. ii, 27; John xv, 26; Acts v, 32; Rom. viii, 16. And these three are one - Even as those two, the Father and the Son, are one, John x, 30. Nothing can separate the Spirit from the Father and the Son. If he were not one with the Father and the Son, the apostle ought to have said, The Father and the Word, who are one, and the Spirit, are two. But this is contrary to the whole tenor of Revelation. It remains that these three are one. They are one in essence, in knowledge, in will, and in their testimony. It is observable, the three in the one verse are opposed, not conjointly, but severally, to the three in the other: as if he had said, Not only the Spirit testifies, but also the Father, John v, 37; not only the water, but also the Word, John iii, 11,

John x, 41; not only the blood, but also the Holy Ghost, John xv, 26, &c. It must now appear, to every reasonable man, how absolutely necessary the eighth verse is 1 John v, 8. St. John could not think of the testimony of the Spirit, and water, and blood, and subjoin, "The testimony of God is greater," without thinking also of the testimony of the Son and Holy Ghost; yea, and mentioning it in so solemn an enumeration. Nor can any possible reason be devised, why, without three testifying in heaven, he should enumerate three, and no more, who testify on earth. The testimony of all is given on earth, not in heaven; but they who testify are part on earth, part in heaven. The witnesses who are on earth testify chiefly concerning his abode on earth, though not excluding his state of exaltation: the witnesses who are in heaven testify chiefly concerning his glory at God's right hand, though not excluding his state of humiliation. The seventh verse, therefore, with the sixth, contains a recapitulation of the whole economy of Christ, from his baptism to pentecost; the eighth, the sum of the divine economy, from the time of his exaltation. Hence it farther appears, that this position of the seventh 1 John v, 7, 8 and eighth verses, which places those who testify on earth before those who testify in heaven, is abundantly preferable to the other, and affords a gradation admirably suited to the subject.

9. If we receive the testimony of men - As we do continually, and must do in a thousand instances. The testimony of God is greater - Of higher authority, and much more worthy to be received; namely, this very testimony which God the Father, together with the Word and the Spirit, hath testified of the Son, as the saviour of the world.

10. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the testimony - The dear evidence of this, in himself: he that believeth not God, in this, hath made him a liar; because he supposes that to be false which God has expressly testified.

11. And this is the sum of that testimony, that God hath given us a title to, and the real beginning of, eternal life; and that this is purchased by, and treasured up in, his Son, who has all the springs and the fulness of it in himself, to communicate to his body, the church, first in grace and then in glory.

12. It plainly follows, he that hath the Son - Living and reigning in him by faith. Hath this life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not this life - Hath no part or lot therein. In the former clause, the apostle says simply, the Son; because believers know him: in the latter, the Son of God; that unbelievers may know how great a blessing they fall short of.

13. These things have I written - In the introduction, chap. i, 4, he said, I write: now, in the close, I have written. That ye may know - With a fuller and stronger assurance, that ye have eternal life.

14. And we - Who believe. Have this farther confidence in him, that he heareth - That is, favourably regards, whatever prayer we offer in faith, according to his revealed will.

15. We have - Faith anticipates the blessings. The petitions which we asked of him - Even before the event. And when the event comes, we know it comes in answer to our prayer.

16. This extends to things of the greatest importance. If any one see his brother - That is. any man. Sin a sin which is not unto death - That is, any sin but total apostasy from both the power and form of godliness. Let him ask, and God will give him life - Pardon and spiritual life, for that sinner. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for that - That is, let him not pray for it. A sin unto death may likewise mean, one which God has determined to punish with death.

17. All deviation from perfect holiness is sin; but all sin is not unpardonable.

18. Yet this gives us no encouragement to sin: on the contrary, it is an indisputable truth, he that is born of God - That sees and loves God. Sinneth not - So long as that loving faith abides in him, he neither speaks nor does anything which God hath forbidden. He keepeth himself - Watching unto prayer. And, while he does this, the wicked one toucheth him not - So as to hurt him.

19. We know that we are children of God - By the witness and the fruit of his Spirit, chap. iii, 24. But the whole world - All who have not his Spirit, not only is "touched" by him, but by idolatry, fraud, violence lasciviousness, impiety, all manner of wickedness. Lieth in the wicked one - Void of life, void of sense. In this short expression the horrible state of the world is painted in the most lively colours; a comment on which we have in the actions, conversations, contracts, quarrels, and friendships of worldly men.

20. And we know - By all these infallible proofs. That the Son of God is come - Into the world. And he hath given us a spiritual understanding, that we may know him, the true one -"The faithful and true witness." And we are in the true one - As branches in the vine, even in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God. This Jesus is the only living and true God, together with the father and the Spirit, and the original fountain of eternal life. So the beginning and the end of the epistle agree.

21. Keep yourselves from idols - From all worship of false gods, from all worship of images or of any creature, and from every inward idol; from loving, desiring, fearing anything more than God. Seek all help and defense from evil, all happiness in the true God alone.

## NOTES ON THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN

THE parts of this epistle, written to some Christian matron, and her religious children, are three:

I. The inscription, v. 1-3

II. An exhortation to persevere in true faith and love,. 4-11

III. The conclusion, 12,13

## 2nd JOHN

### V

1. The elder - An appellation suited to a familiar letter, but upon a weighty subject. To the elect - That is, Christian. Kuria is undoubtedly a proper name, both here and in ver. 5; for it was not then usual to apply the title of lady to any but the Roman empress; neither would such a manner of speaking have been suitable to the simplicity and dignity of the apostle. Whom - Both her and her children. I love in the truth - With unfeigned and holy love.

2. For the truth's sake, which abideth in us - As a living principle of faith and holiness.

3. Grace takes away guilt; mercy, misery: peace implies the abiding in grace and mercy. It includes the testimony of God's Spirit, both that we are his children, and that all our ways are

acceptable to him. This is the very foretaste of heaven itself, where it is perfected. In truth and love - Or, faith and love, as St. Paul speaks. Faith and truth are here synonymous terms.

4. I found of thy children - Probably in their aunt's house, ver. 13. Walking in the truth - In faith and love.

5. That which we had from the beginning - Of our Lord's ministry. Indeed it was, in some sense, from the beginning of the world. That we may love one another - More abundantly.

6. And this is the proof of true love, universal obedience built on the love of God. This - Love. Is the great commandment which ye have heard from the beginning - Of our preaching.

7. Carefully keep what ye have heard from the beginning, for many seducers are entered into the world, who confess not Jesus Christ that came in the flesh - Who disbelieve either his prophetic, or priestly, or kingly office. Whosoever does this is the seducer - From God. And the antichrist - Fighting against Christ.

8. That we lose not the things which we have wrought - Which every apostate does. But receive a full reward - Having fully employed all our talents to the glory of him that gave them. Here again the apostle modestly transfers it to himself.

9. Receive this as a certain rule: Whosoever transgresseth - Any law of God. Hath not God - For his Father and his God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ - Believing and obeying it. He hath both the Father and the Son - For his God.

10. If any came to you - Either as a teacher or a brother. And bring not this doctrine - That is, advance anything contrary to it. Receive him not into your house - As either a teacher or a brother- Neither bid him God speed - Give him no encouragement therein.

11. For he that biddeth him God speed - That gives him any encouragement, is accessory to his evil deeds.

12. Having many things to write, I was not minded to write now - Only of these, which were then peculiarly needful.

13. The children of thy elect or Christian sister - Absent, if not dead, when the apostle wrote this.

## NOTES ON THE THIRD EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN

THE third epistle has likewise three parts:

I. The inscription, 1, 2

II. The commendation of Caius, 3-8 With a caution against Diotrephes 9-11 And a recommendation of Demetrius, 12

III. The conclusion, 13-15

## 3rd JOHN

**I**

1. Caius was probably that Caius of Corinth whom St. Paul mentions, Rom. xvi, 23. If so, either he was removed from Achaia into Asia, or St. John sent this letter to Corinth.

3. For - I know thou usest all thy talents to his glory. The truth that is in thee - The true faith and love.

4. I have no greater joy than this - Such is the spirit of every true Christian pastor. To hear that my children walk in the truth - Caius probably was converted by St. Paul. Therefore when St. John speaks of him. with other believers, as his children, it may be considered as the tender style of paternal love, whoever were the instruments of their conversion. And his using this appellation, when writing under the character of the elder, has its peculiar beauty.

5. Faithfully - Uprightly and sincerely.

6. Who have testified of thy love before the church - The congregation with whom I now reside. Whom if thou send forward on their journey - Supplied with what is needful. Thou shalt do well - How tenderly does the apostle enjoin this!

7. They went forth - To preach the gospel.

8. To receive - With all kindness. The truth - Which they preach.

9. I wrote to the church - Probably that to which they came. But Diotrephes - Perhaps the pastor of it. Who loveth to have the preeminence among them - To govern all things according to his own will. Receiveth us not - Neither them nor me. So did the mystery of iniquity already work!

10. He prateth against us - Both them and me, thereby endeavouring to excuse himself.

11. Follow not that which is evil - In Diotrephes. But that which is good - In Demetrius. He hath not seen God - Is a stranger to him.

12. And from the truth itself - That is, what they testify is the very truth. Yea, we also bear testimony - I and they that are with me.

14. Salute the friends by name - That is, in the same manner as if I had named them one by one. The word friend does not often occur in the New Testament, being swallowed up in the more endearing one of brother.

## NOTES ON THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF ST. JUDE

THIS epistle has three parts:

I. The inscription, 1, 2

II. The treatise, in which,

1. He exhorts them to contend for the faith, 3
2. Describes the punishment and the manners of its adversaries, 4- 16
3. Warns the believers, 17-19
4. Confirms them, 20, 21
5. Instructs them in their duty to others, 22, 23

III. The conclusion, 24,

# JUDE

This epistle greatly resembles the second of St. Peter, which St. Jude seems to have had in view while he wrote. That was written but a very little before his death; and hence we may gather that St. Jude lived some time after it, and saw that grievous declension in the church which St. Peter had foretold. But he passes over some things mentioned by St. Peter, repeats some in different expressions and with a different view, and adds others; clearly evidencing thereby the wisdom of God which rested upon him. Thus St. Peter cites and confirms St. Paul's writings, and is himself cited and confirmed by St. Jude.

## I

1. Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ - The highest glory which any, either angel or man, can aspire to. The word servant, under the old covenant, was adapted to the spirit of fear and bondage that clave to that dispensation. But when the time appointed of the Father was come, for the sending of his Son to redeem them that were under the law, the word servant (used by the apostles concerning themselves and all the children of God) signified one that, having the Spirit of adoption, is made free by the Son of God. His being a servant is the fruit and perfection of his being a son. And whenever the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the new Jerusalem, then will it be indeed that "his servants shall serve him," Rev. xxii, 3. The brother of James - St. James was the more eminent, usually styled, "the brother of the Lord." To them that are beloved - The conclusion, ver. 21, exactly answers the introduction. And preserved through Jesus Christ - So both the spring and the accomplishment of salvation are pointed out. This is premised, lest any of them should be discouraged by the terrible things which are afterwards mentioned. And called - To receive the whole blessing of God, in time and eternity.

3. When I gave all diligence to write to you of the common salvation - Designed for all, and enjoyed by all believers. Here the design of the epistle is expressed; the end of which exactly answers the beginning. It was needful to exhort you to contend earnestly - Yet humbly, meekly, and lovingly; otherwise your contention will only hurt your cause, if not destroy your soul. For the faith - All the fundamental truths. Once delivered - By God, to remain unvaried for ever.

4. There are certain men crept in, who were of old described before - Even as early as Enoch; of whom it was foretold, that by their wilful sins they would incur this condemnation. Turning the grace of God - Revealed in the gospel. Into lasciviousness - Into an occasion of more abandoned wickedness.

5. He afterwards destroyed - The far greater part of that very people whom he had once saved. Let none therefore presume upon past mercies, as if he was now out of danger.

6. And the angels, who kept not their first dignity - Once assigned them under the Son of God. But voluntarily left their own habitation - Then properly their own, by the free gift of God. He reserved - Delivered to be kept. In everlasting chains under darkness - O how unlike their own habitation! When these fallen angels came out of the hands of God, they were holy; else God made that which was evil: and being holy, they were beloved of God; else he hated the image of his own

spotless purity. But now he loves them no more; they are doomed to endless destruction. (for if he loved them still, he would love what is sinful:) and both his former love, and his present righteous and eternal displeasure towards the same work of his own hands, are because he changeth not; because he invariably loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity. 2 Pet. ii, 4.

7. The cities which gave themselves over to fornication - The word here means, unnatural lusts. Are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire - That is, the vengeance which they suffered is an example or a type of eternal fire.

8. In like manner these dreamers - Sleeping and dreaming all their lives. Despise authority - Those that are invested with it by Christ, and made by him the overseers of his flock. Rail at dignities - The apostle does not seem to speak of worldly dignities. These they had "in admiration for the sake of gain," ver. 16; but those holy men, who for the purity of their lives, the soundness of their doctrine, and the greatness of their labours in the work of the ministry, were truly honourable before God and all good men; and who were grossly vilified by those who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness. Probably they were the impure followers of Simon Magus, the same with the Gnostics and Nicolaitans, Rev. ii, 15. 2 Pet. ii, 10.

9. Yet Michael - It does not appear whether St. Jude learned this by any Revelation or from ancient tradition. It suffices, that these things were not only true, but acknowledged as such by them to whom he wrote. The archangel - This word occurs but once more in the sacred writings, 1 Thess. iv, 16. So that whether there be one archangel only, or more, it is not possible for us to determine. When he disputed with the devil - At what time we know not. Concerning the body of Moses - Possibly the devil would have discovered the place where it was buried, which God for wise reasons had concealed. Durst not bring even against him a railing accusation - Though so far beneath him in every respect. But simply said, (so great was his modesty!) The Lord rebuke thee - I leave thee to the Judge of all.

10. But these - Without all shame. Rail at the things of God which they know not - Neither can know, having no spiritual senses. And the natural things, which they know - By their natural senses, they abuse into occasions of sin.

11. Woe unto them - Of all the apostles St. Jude alone, and that in this single place, denounces a woe. St. Peter, to the same effect, pronounces them "cursed children." For they have gone in the way of Cain - The murderer. And ran greedily - Literally, have been poured out, like a torrent without banks. After the error of Balaam - The covetous false prophet. And perished in the gainsaying of Korah - Vengeance has overtaken them as it did Korah, rising up against those whom God had sent.

12. These are spots - Blemishes. In your feasts of love - Anciently observed in all the churches. Feeding themselves without fear - Without any fear of God, or jealousy over themselves. Twice dead - In sin, first by nature, and afterwards by apostasy. Plucked up by the roots - And so incapable of ever reviving.

13. Wandering stars - Literally, planets, which shine for a time, but have no light in themselves, and will be soon cast into utter darkness. Thus the apostle illustrates their desperate wickedness by comparisons drawn from the air, earth, sea, and heavens.

14. And of these also - As well as the antediluvian sinners Enoch - So early was the prophecy referred to, ver. 4. The seventh from Adam - There were only five of the fathers between Adam and Enoch, 1 Chron. i, 1-3. The first coming of Christ was revealed to Adam; his second, glorious coming, to Enoch; and the seventh from Adam foretold the things which will conclude the seventh

age of the world. St. Jude might know this either from some ancient book, or tradition, or immediate Revelation. Behold - As if it were already done, the Lord cometh!

15. To execute judgment - Enoch herein looked beyond the flood. Upon all - Sinners, in general. And to convict all the ungodly, in particular, of all the grievous things which ungodly sinners (a sinner is bad; but the ungodly who sin without fear are worse) have spoken against him, ver. 8, 10, though they might not think, all those speeches were against him.

16. These are murmurers - Against men. Complainers - Literally, complainers of their fate, against God. Walking - With regard to themselves. After their own foolish and mischievous desires. Having men's persons in admiration for the sake of gain - Admiring and commending them only for what they can get.

17. By the apostles - He does not exempt himself from the number of apostles. For in the next verse he says, they told you, not us.

19. These are they who separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit - Having natural senses and understanding only, not the Spirit of God; otherwise they could not separate. For that it is a sin, and a very heinous one, "to separate from the church," is out of all question. But then it should be observed,

1. That by the church is meant a body of living Christians, who are "an habitation of God through the Spirit:"
2. That by separating is understood, renouncing all religious intercourse with them; no longer joining with them in solemn prayer, or the other public offices of religion: and,
3. That we have no more authority from scripture to call even this schism, than to call it murder.

20. But ye, beloved, not separating, but building yourselves up in your most holy faith - Than which none can be more holy in itself, or more conducive to the most refined and exalted holiness. Praying through the Holy Spirit - Who alone is able to build you up, as he alone laid the foundation. In this and the following verse St. Jude mentions the Father, Son, and Spirit, together with faith, love, and hope.

21. By these means, through his grace, keep yourselves in the love of God, and in the confident expectation of that eternal life which is purchased for you, and conferred upon you, through the mere mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

22. Meantime watch over others, as well as yourselves, and give them such help as their various needs require. For instance,

1. Some, that are wavering in judgment, staggered by others' or by their own evil reasoning, endeavour more deeply to convince of the whole truth as it is in Jesus.
2. Some snatch, with a swift and strong hand, out of the fire of sin and temptation.
3. On others show compassion in a milder and gentler way; though still with a jealous fear, lest yourselves be infected with the disease you endeavour to cure. See, therefore, that while you love the sinners, ye retain the utmost abhorrence of their sins, and of any the least degree of, or approach to, them.

24. Now to him who alone is able to keep them from falling - Into any of these errors or sins. And to present them faultless in the presence of his glory - That is, in his own presence, when he shall be revealed in all his glory. Please see Notes at Matt. i, 1

# NOTES ON THE REVELATION OF JOHN

IT is scarce possible for any that either love or fear God not to feel their hearts extremely affected in seriously reading either the beginning or the latter part of the Revelation. These, it is evident, we cannot consider too much; but the intermediate parts I did not study at all for many years; as utterly despairing of understanding them, after the fruitless attempts of so many wise and good men: and perhaps I should have lived and died in this sentiment, had I not seen the works of the great Bengelius. But these revived my hopes of understanding even the prophecies of this book; at least many of them in some good degree: for perhaps some will not be opened but in eternity. Let us, however, bless God for the measure of light we may enjoy, and improve it to his glory. The following notes are mostly those of that excellent man; a few of which are taken from his Gnornon Novi Testamenti, but far more from his Ekklarte Offenbarung, which is a full and regular comment on the Revelation. Every part of this I do not undertake to defend. But none should condemn him without reading his proofs at large. It did not suit my design to insert these: they are above the capacity of ordinary readers. Nor had I room to insert the entire translation of a book which contains near twelve hundred pages. All I can do is, partly to translate, partly abridge, the most necessary of his observations; allowing myself the liberty to alter some of them, and to add a few notes where he is not full. His text, it may be observed, I have taken almost throughout, which I apprehend he has abundantly defended both in the Gnomon itself, and in his Apparatus and Crisis in Apocalypsin. Yet I by no means pretend to understand or explain all that is contained in this mysterious book. I only offer what help I can to the serious inquirer, and shall rejoice if any be moved thereby more carefully to read and more deeply to consider the words of this prophecy. Blessed is he that does this with a single eye. His labour shall not be in vain.

## I

1. The Revelation - Properly so called; for things covered before are here revealed, or unveiled. No prophecy in the Old Testament has this title; it was reserved for this alone in the New. It is, as it were, a manifesto, wherein the Heir of all things declares that all power is given him in heaven and earth, and that he will in the end gloriously exercise that power, maugre all the opposition of all his enemies. Of Jesus Christ - Not of "John the Divine," a title added in latter ages. Certain it is, that appellation, the Divine, was not brought into the church, much less was it affixed to John the apostle, till long after the apostolic age. It was St. John, indeed, who wrote this book, but the author of it is Jesus Christ. Which God gave unto him - According to his holy, glorified humanity, as the great Prophet of the church. God gave the Revelation to Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ made it known to his servants. To show - This word recurs, chap. xxii, 6; and in many places the parts of this book refer to each other. Indeed the whole structure of it breathes the art of God, comprising, in the most finished compendium, things to come, many, various; near, intermediate, remote; the greatest, the least; terrible, comfortable; old, new; long, short; and these interwoven together, opposite, composite; relative to each other at a small, at a great, distance; and therefore sometimes, as it were, disappearing, broken off, suspended, and afterwards unexpectedly and most seasonably

appearing again. In all its parts it has an admirable variety, with the most exact harmony, beautifully illustrated by those very digressions which seem to interrupt it. In this manner does it display the manifold wisdom of God shining in the economy of the church through so many ages. His servants - Much is comprehended in this appellation. It is a great thing to be a servant of Jesus Christ. This book is dedicated particularly to the servants of Christ in the seven churches in Asia; but not exclusive of all his other servants, in all nations and ages. It is one single Revelation, and yet sufficient for them all, from the time it was written to the end of the world. Serve thou the Lord Jesus Christ in truth: so shalt thou learn his secret in this book; yea, and thou shalt feel in thy heart whether this book be divine, or not. The things which must shortly come to pass - The things contained in this prophecy did begin to be accomplished shortly after it was given; and the whole might be said to come to pass shortly, in the same sense as St. Peter says, "The end of all things is at hand;" and our Lord himself, "Behold, I come quickly." There is in this book a rich treasure of all the doctrines pertaining to faith and holiness. But these are also delivered in other parts of holy writ; so that the Revelation need not to have been given for the sake of these. The peculiar design of this is, to show the things which must come to pass. And this we are especially to have before our eyes whenever we read or hear it. It is said afterward, "Write what thou seest;" and again, "Write what thou hast seen, and what is, and what shall be hereafter;" but here, where the scope of the hook is shown, it is only said, the things which must come to pass. Accordingly, the showing things to come, is the great point in view throughout the whole. And St. John writes what he has seen, and what is, only as it has an influence on, or gives light to, what shall be. And he - Jesus Christ. Sent and signified them - Showed them by signs or emblems; so the Greek word properly means. By his angel - Peculiarly called, in the sequel, "the angel of God," and particularly mentioned, chap. xvii, 1; xxi, 9; xxii, 6, 16. To his servant John - A title given to no other single person throughout the book.

2. Who hath testified - In the following book. The word of God - Given directly by God. And the testimony of Jesus - Which he hath left us, as the faithful and true witness. Whatsoever things he saw - In such a manner as was a full confirmation of the divine original of this book.

3. Happy is he that readeth, and they that hear, the words of this prophecy - Some have miserably handled this book. Hence others are afraid to touch it; and, while they desire to know all things else, reject only the knowledge of those which God hath shown. They inquire after anything rather than this; as if it were written, "Happy is he that doth not read this prophecy." Nay, but happy is he that readeth, and they that hear, and keep the words thereof - Especially at this time, when so considerable a part of them is on the point of being fulfilled. Nor are helps wanting whereby any sincere and diligent inquirer may understand what he reads therein. The book itself is written in the most accurate manner possible. It distinguishes the several things whereof it treats by seven epistles, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven phials; each of which sevens is divided into four and three. Many things the book itself explains; as the seven stars; the seven candlesticks; the lamb, his seven horns and seven eyes; the incense; the dragon; the heads and horns of the beasts; the fine linen; the testimony of Jesus: and much light arises from comparing it with the ancient prophecies, and the predictions in the other books of the New Testament. In this book our Lord has comprised what was wanting in those prophecies touching the time which followed his ascension and the end of the Jewish polity. Accordingly, it reaches from the old Jerusalem to the new, reducing all things into one sum, in the exactest order, and with a near resemblance to the ancient prophets. The introduction and conclusion agree with Daniel; the description of the man child, and the promises

to Sion, with Isaiah; the judgment of Babylon, with Jeremiah; again, the determination of times, with Daniel; the architecture of the holy city, with Ezekiel; the emblems of the horses, candlesticks, &c., with Zechariah. Many things largely described by the prophets are here summarily repeated; and frequently in the same words. To them we may then usefully have recourse. Yet the Revelation suffices for the explaining itself, even if we do not yet understand those prophecies; yea, it casts much light upon them. Frequently, likewise, where there is a resemblance between them, there is a difference also; the Revelation, as it were, taking a stock from one of the old prophets, and inserting a new graft into it. Thus Zechariah speaks of two olive trees; and so does St. John; but with a different meaning. Daniel has a beast with ten horns; so has St. John; but not with quite the same signification. And here the difference of words, emblems, things, times, ought studiously to be observed. Our Lord foretold many things before his passion; but not all things; for it was not yet seasonable. Many things, likewise, his Spirit foretold in the writings of the apostles, so far as the necessities of those times required: now he comprises them all in one short book; therein presupposing all the other prophecies, and at the same time explaining, continuing, and perfecting them in one thread. It is right therefore to compare them; but not to measure the fulness of these by the scantiness of those preceding. Christ, when on earth, foretold what would come to pass in a short time; adding a brief description of the last things. Here he foretells the intermediate things; so that both put together constitute one complete chain of prophecy. This book is therefore not only the sum and the key of all the prophecies which preceded, but likewise a supplement to all; the seals being closed before. Of consequence, it contains many particulars not revealed in any other part of scripture. They have therefore little gratitude to God for such a Revelation, reserved for the exaltation of Christ, who boldly reject whatever they find here which was not revealed, or not so clearly, in other parts of scripture. He that readeth and they that hear - St. John probably sent this book by a single person into Asia, who read it in the churches, while many heard. But this, likewise, in a secondary sense, refers to all that shall duly read or hear it in all ages. The words of this prophecy - It is a Revelation with regard to Christ who gives it; a prophecy, with regard to John who delivers it to the churches. And keep the things which are written therein - In such a manner as the nature of them requires; namely, with repentance, faith, patience, prayer, obedience, watchfulness, constancy. It behoves every Christian, at all opportunities, to read what is written in the oracles of God; and to read this precious book in particular, frequently, reverently, and attentively. For the time - Of its beginning to be accomplished. Is near - Even when St. John wrote. How much nearer to us is even the full accomplishment of this weighty prophecy!

4. John - The dedication of this book is contained in the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses; but the whole Revelation is a kind of letter. To the seven churches which are in Asia - That part of the Lesser Asia which was then a Roman province. There had been several other churches planted here; but it seems these were now the most eminent; and it was among these that St. John had laboured most during his abode in Asia. In these cities there were many Jews. Such of them as believed in each were joined with the gentile believers in one church. Grace be unto you, and peace - The favour of God, with all temporal and eternal blessings. From him who is, and who was, and who cometh, or, who is to come - A wonderful translation of the great name JEHOVAH: he was of old, he is now, he cometh; that is, will be for ever. And from the seven spirits which are before his throne - Christ is he who "hath the seven spirits of God." "The seven lamps which burn before the throne are the seven spirits of God." " The lamb hath seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God." Seven was a sacred number in the Jewish church: but it did not always

imply a precise number. It sometimes is to be taken figuratively, to denote completeness or perfection. By these seven spirits, not seven created angels, but the Holy Ghost is to be understood. The angels are never termed spirits in this book; and when all the angels stand up, while the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders worship him that sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb, the seven spirits neither stand up nor worship. To these "seven spirits of God," the seven churches, to whom the Spirit speaks so many things, are subordinate; as are also their angels, yea, and "the seven angels which stand before God." He is called the seven spirits, not with regard to his essence, which is one, but with regard to his manifold operations.

5. And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth - Three glorious appellations are here given him, and in their proper order. He was the faithful witness of the whole will of God before his death, and in death, and remains such in glory. He rose from the dead, as "the first fruits of them that slept;" and now hath all power both in heaven and earth. He is here styled a prince: but by and by he hears his title of king; yea, King of kings, and Lord of lords." This phrase, the kings of the earth, signifies their power and multitude, and also the nature of their kingdom. It became the Divine Majesty to call them kings with a limitation; especially in this manifesto from his heavenly kingdom; for no creature, much less a sinful man, can bear the title of king in an absolute sense before the eyes of God.

6. To him that loveth us, and, out of that free, abundant love, hath washed us from the guilt and power of our sins with his own blood, and hath made us kings - Partakers of his present, and heirs of his eternal, kingdom. And priests unto his God and Father - To whom we continually offer ourselves, an holy, living sacrifice. To him be the glory - For his love and redemption. And the might - Whereby he governs all things.

7. Behold - In this and the next verse is the proposition, and the summary of the whole book. He cometh - Jesus Christ. Throughout this book, whenever it is said, He cometh, it means his glorious coming. The preparation for this began at the destruction of Jerusalem, and more particularly at the time of writing this book; and goes on, without any interruption, till that grand event is accomplished. Therefore it is never said in this book, He will come; but, He cometh. And yet it is not said, He cometh again: for when he came before, it was not like himself, but in "the form of a servant." But his appearing in glory is properly his coming; namely, in a manner worthy of the Son of God. And every eye - Of the Jews in particular. Shall see him - But with what different emotions, according as they had received or rejected him. And they who have pierced him - They, above all, who pierced his hands, or feet, or side. Thomas saw the print of these wounds even after his resurrection; and the same, undoubtedly, will be seen by all, when he cometh in the clouds of heaven. And all the tribes of the earth - The word tribes, in the Revelation, always means the Israelites: but where another word, such as nations or people, is joined with it, it implies likewise (as here) all the rest of mankind. Shall wail because of him - For terror and pain, if they did not wail before by true repentance. Yea, Amen - This refers to, every eye shall see him. He that cometh saith, Yea; he that testifies it, Amen. The word translated yea is Greek; Amen is Hebrew: for what is here spoken respects both Jew and gentile.

8. I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God - Alpha is the first, Omega, the last, letter in the Greek alphabet. Let his enemies boast and rage ever so much in the intermediate time, yet the Lord God is both the Alpha, or beginning, and the Omega, or end, of all things. God is the beginning, as he is the Author and Creator of all things, and as he proposes, declares, and promises so great things: he is the end, as he brings all the things which are here revealed to a complete and

glorious conclusion. Again, the beginning and end of a thing is in scripture styled the whole thing. Therefore God is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end; that is, one who is all things, and always the same.

9. I John - The instruction and preparation of the apostle for the work are described from the ninth to the twentieth verse. ver. 9- 20, Your brother - In the common faith. And companion in the affliction - For the same persecution which carried him to Patmos drove them into Asia. This book peculiarly belongs to those who are under the cross. It was given to a banished man; and men in affliction understand and relish it most. Accordingly, it was little esteemed by the Asiatic church, after the time of Constantine; but highly valued by all the African churches, as it has been since by all the persecuted children of God. In the affliction, and kingdom and patience of Jesus - The kingdom stands in the midst. It is chiefly under various afflictions that faith obtains its part in the kingdom; and whosoever is a partaker of this kingdom is not afraid to suffer for Jesus, 2 Tim. ii, 12. I was in the island Patmos - In the reign of Domitian and of Nerva. And there he saw and wrote all that follows. It was a place peculiarly proper for these visions. He had over against him, at a small distance, Asia and the seven churches; going on eastward, Jerusalem and the land of Canaan; and beyond this, Antioch, yea, the whole continent of Asia. To the west, he had Romans, Italy, and all Europe, swimming, as it were, in the sea; to the south, Alexandria and the Nile with its outlets, Egypt, and all Africa; and to the north, what was afterwards called Constantinople, on the straits between Europe and Asia. So he had all the three parts of the world which were then known, with all Christendom, as it were, before his eyes; a large theatre for all the various scenes which were to pass before him: as if this island had been made principally for this end, to serve as an observatory for the apostle. For preaching the word of God he was banished thither, and for the testimony of Jesus - For testifying that he is the Christ.

10. I was in the Spirit - That is, in a trance, a prophetic vision; so overwhelmed with the power, and filled with the light, of the Holy Spirit, as to be insensible of outward things, and wholly taken up with spiritual and divine. What follows is one single, connected vision, which St. John saw in one day; and therefore he that would understand it should carry his thought straight on through the whole, without interruption. The other prophetic books are collections of distinct prophecies, given upon various occasions: but here is one single treatise, whereof all the parts exactly depend on each other. chap. iv, 1 is connected with ver. 19 and what is delivered in the fourth chapter goes on directly to the twenty- second. On the Lord's day - On this our Lord rose from the dead: on this the ancients believed he will come to judgment. It was, therefore, with the utmost propriety that St. John on this day both saw and described his coming. And I heard behind me - St. John had his face to the east: our Lord, likewise, in this appearance looked eastward toward Asia, whither the apostle was to write. A great voice, as of a trumpet - Which was peculiarly proper to proclaim the coming of the great King, and his victory over all his enemies.

11. Saying, What thou seest - And hearest. He both saw and heard. This command extends to the whole book. All the books of the New Testament were written by the will of God; but none were so expressly commanded to be written. In a book - So all the Revelation is but one book: nor did the letter to the angel of each church belong to him or his church only; but the whole book was sent to them all. To the churches - Hereafter named; and through them to all churches, in all ages and nations. To Ephesus - Mark. Thomas Smith, who in the year 1671 travelled through all these cities, observes, that from Ephesus to Smyrna is forty-six English miles; from Smyrna to Pergamos,

sixty-four; from Pergamos to Thyatira, forty-eight; from Thyatira to Sardis, thirty-three; from Sardis to Philadelphia, twenty-seven; from Philadelphia to Laodicea, about forty-two miles.

12, 13. And I turned to see the voice - That is, to see him whose voice it was. And being turned, I saw - It seems, the vision presented itself gradually. First he heard a voice; and, upon looking behind, he saw the golden candlesticks, and then, in the midst of the candlesticks, which were placed in a circle, he saw one like a son of man - That is, in an human form. As a man likewise our Lord doubtless appears in heaven: though not exactly in this symbolical manner, wherein he presents himself as the head of his church. He next observed that our Lord was clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt with a golden girdle - Such the Jewish high priests wore. But both of them are here marks of royal dignity likewise. Girt about at the breast - he that is on a journey girds his loins. Girding the breast was an emblem of solemn rest. It seems that the apostle having seen all this, looked up to behold the face of our Lord: but was beat back by the appearance of his flaming eyes, which occasioned his more particularly observing his feet. Receiving strength to raise his eyes again, he saw the stars in his right hand, and the sword coming out of his mouth: but upon beholding the brightness of his glorious countenance, which probably was much increased since the first glance the apostle had of it, he "fell at his feet as dead." During the time that St. John was discovering these several particulars, our Lord seems to have been speaking. And doubtless even his voice, at the very first, bespoke the God: though not so insupportably as his glorious appearance.

14. His head and his hair - That is, the hair of his head, not his whole head. Were white as white wool - Like the Ancient of Days, represented in Daniel's vision, Dan. vii, 9. Wool is commonly supposed to be an emblem of eternity. As snow - Betokening his spotless purity. And his eyes as a flame of fire - Piercing through all things; a token of his omniscience.

15. And his feet like fine brass - Denoting his stability and strength. As if they burned in a furnace - As if having been melted and refined, they were still red hot. And his voice - To the comfort of his friends, and the terror of his enemies. As the voice of many waters - Roaring aloud, and bearing down all before them.

16. And he had in his right hand seven stars - In token of his favour and powerful protection. And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword - Signifying his justice and righteous anger, continually pointed against his enemies as a sword; sharp, to stab; two-edged, to hew. And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength - Without any mist or cloud.

17. And I fell at his feet as dead - Human nature not being able to sustain so glorious an appearance. Thus was he prepared (like Daniel of old, whom he peculiarly resembles) for receiving so weighty a prophecy. A great sinking of nature usually precedes a large communication of heavenly things. St. John, before our Lord suffered, was so intimate with him, as to lean on his breast, to lie in his bosom. Yet now, near seventy years after, the aged apostle is by one glance struck to the ground. What a glory must this be! Ye sinners, be afraid cleanse your hands: purify your hearts. Ye saints, be humble, prepare: rejoice. But rejoice unto him with reverence: an increase of reverence towards this awful majesty can be no prejudice to your faith. Let all petulancy, with all vain curiosity, be far away, while you are thinking or reading of these things. And he laid his right hand upon me - The same wherein he held the seven stars. What did St. John then feel in himself? Saying, Fear not - His look terrifies, his speech strengthens. He does not call John by his name, (as the angels did Zechariah and others,) but speaks as his well known master. What follows is also spoken to strengthen and encourage him. I am - When in his state of humiliation he spoke of his glory, he frequently spoke in the third person, as Matt. xxvi, 64. But he now speaks of his own glory, without

any veil, in plain and direct terms. The first and the last - That is, the one, eternal God, who is from everlasting to everlasting, Isaiah xli, 4.

18. And he that liveth - Another peculiar title of God. And I have the keys of death and of hades - That is, the invisible world. In the intermediate state, the body abides in death, the soul in hades. Christ hath the keys of, that is, the power over, both; killing or quickening of the body, and disposing of the soul, as it pleaseth him. He gave St. Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven; but not the keys of death or of hades. How comes then his supposed successor at Rome by the keys of purgatory? From the preceding description, mostly, are taken the titles given to Christ in the following letters, particularly the four first.

19. Write the things which thou hast seen - This day: which accordingly are written, ver. 11-18. And which are - The instructions relating to the present state of the seven churches. These are written, ver. 20-chap. iii, 22. And which shall be hereafter - To the end of the world; written, chap. iv, 1, &c.

20. Write first the mystery - The mysterious meaning of the seven stars - St. John knew better than we do, in how many respects these stars were a proper emblem of those angels: how nearly they resembled each other, and how far they differed in magnitude, brightness, aa& other circumstances. The seven stars are angels of the seven churches - Mentioned in the eleventh verse. In each church there was one pastor or ruling minister, to whom all the rest were subordinate. This pastor, bishop, or overseer, had the peculiar care over that flock: on him the prosperity of that congregation in a great measure depended, and he was to answer for all those souls at the judgment seat of Christ. And the seven candlesticks are seven churches - How significant an emblem is this! For a candlestick, though of gold, has no light of itself; neither has any church, or child of man. But they receive from Christ the light of truth, holiness, comfort, that it may shine to all around them. As soon as this was spoken St. John wrote it down, even all that is contained in this first chapter. Afterwards what was contained in the second and third chapters was dictated to him in like manner.

## II

Of the following letters to the angels of the seven churches it may be necessary to speak first in general, and then particularly. In general we may observe, when the Israelites were to receive the law at Mount Sinai, they were first to be purified; and when the kingdom of God was at hand, John the Baptist prepared men for it by repentance. In like manner we are prepared by these letters for the worthy reception of this glorious Revelation. By following the directions given herein, by expelling incorrigibly wicked men, and putting away all wickedness, those churches were prepared to receive this precious depositum. And whoever in any age would profitably read or hear it, must observe the same admonitions. These letters are a kind of sevenfold preface to the book. Christ now appears in the form of a man, (not yet under the emblem of a lamb,) and speaks mostly in proper, not in figurative, words. It is not till chap. iv, 1, that St. John enters upon that grand vision which takes up the residue of the book. There is in each of these letters,

1. A command to write to the angel of the church;
2. A glorious title of Christ;

3. An address to the angel of that church, containing A testimony of his mixed, or good, or bad state; An exhortation to repentance or steadfastness; A declaration of what will be; generally, of the Lord's coming;
4. A promise to him that overcometh, together with the exhortation, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear" The address in each letter is expressed in plain words, the promise, in figurative. In the address our Lord speaks to the angel of each church which then was, and to the members thereof directly; whereas in the promise he speaks of all that should overcome, in whatever church or age, and deals out to them one of the precious promises, (by way of anticipation,) from the last chapters of the book.

1. Write - So Christ dictated to him every word. These things saith he who holdeth the seven stars in his right hand - Such is his mighty power! Such his favour to them and care over them, that they may indeed shine as stars, both by purity of doctrine and holiness of life! Who walketh - According to his promise, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world." In the midst of the golden candlesticks - Beholding all their works and thoughts, and ready to "remove the candlestick out of its place," if any, being warned, will not repent. Perhaps here is likewise an allusion to the office of the priests in dressing the lamps, which was to keep them always burning before the Lord.

2. I know - Jesus knows all the good and all the evil, which his servants and his enemies suffer and do. Weighty word, "I know," how dreadful will it one day sound to the wicked, how sweet to the righteous! The churches and their angels must have been astonished, to find their several states so exactly described, even in the absence of the apostle, and could not but acknowledge the all-seeing eye of Christ and of his Spirit. With regard to us, to every one of us also he saith, "I know thy works." Happy is he that conceives less good of himself, than Christ knows concerning him. And thy labour - After the general, three particulars are named, and then more largely described in an inverted order,

1. Thy labour
   6. Thou hast born for my name's sake and hast not fainted.
2. Thy patience:
   5. Thou hast patience:
3. Thou canst not
   4. Thou hast tried those who say they are bear evil men: apostles and are not, and hast found them liars. And thy patience - Notwithstanding which thou canst not bear that incorrigibly wicked men should remain in the flock of Christ. And thou hast tried those who say they are apostles, and are not - For the Lord hath not sent them.

4. But I have against thee, that thou hast left thy first love - That love for which all that church was so eminent when St. Paul wrote his epistle to them. He need not have left this. He might have retained it entire to the end. And he did retain it in part, or there could not have remained so much of what was commendable in him. But he had not kept, as he might have done, the first tender love in its vigour and warmth. Reader, hast thou?

5. It is not possible for any to recover the first love, but by taking these three steps,

1. Remember:
2. Repent:

3. Do the first works. Remember from whence thou art fallen - From what degree of faith, love, holiness, though perhaps insensibly. And repent - Which in the very lowest sense implies a deep and lively conviction of thy fall. Of the seven angels, two, at Ephesus and at Pergamos, were in a mixed state; two, at Sardis and at Laodicea, were greatly corrupted: all these are exhorted to repent; as are the followers of Jezebel at Thyatira: two, at Smyrna and Philadelphia, were in a flourishing state, and are therefore only exhorted to steadfastness. There can be no state, either of any pastor, church, or single person, which has not here suitable instructions. All, whether ministers or hearers, together with their secret or open enemies, in all places and all ages, may draw hence necessary self-knowledge, reproof, commendation, warning, or confirmation. Whether any be as dead as the angel at Sardis, or as much alive as the angel at Philadelphia, this book is sent to him, and the Lord Jesus hath something to say to him therein. For the seven churches with their angels represent the whole Christian church, dispersed throughout the whole world, as it subsists, not, as some have imagined, in one age after another, but in every age. This is a point of deep importance, and always necessary to be remembered: that these seven churches are, as it were, a sample of the whole church of Christ, as it was then, as it is now, and as it will be in all ages. Do the first works - Outwardly and inwardly, or thou canst never regain the first love. But if not - By this word is the warning sharpened to those five churches which are called to repent; for if Ephesus was threatened, how much more shall Sardis and Laodicea be afraid! And according as they obey the call or not, there is a promise or a threatening, ver. 5, 16, 22; chap. iii, 3, 20. But even in the threatening the promise is implied, in case of true repentance. I come to thee, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place - I will remove, unless thou repent, the flock now under thy care to another place, where they shall be better taken care of. But from the flourishing state of the church of Ephesus after this, there is reason to believe he did repent.

6. But thou hast this - Divine grace seeks whatever may help him that is fallen to recover his standing. That thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans - Probably so called from Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, Acts vi, 5. Their doctrines and lives were equally corrupt. They allowed the most abominable lewdness and adulteries, as well as sacrificing to idols; all which they placed among things indifferent, and pleaded for as branches of Christian liberty.

7. He that hath an ear, let him hear - Every man, whoever can hear at all, ought carefully to hear this. What the Spirit saith - In these great and precious promises. To the churches - And in them to every one that overcometh; that goeth on from faith and by faith to full victory over the world, and the flesh, and the devil. In these seven letters twelve promises are contained, which are an extract of all the promises of God. Some of them are not expressly mentioned again in this book, as "the hidden manna," the inscription of "the name of the new Jerusalem," the "sitting upon the throne." Some resemble what is afterwards mentioned, as "the hidden name," chap. xix, 12; "the ruling the nations," chap. xix, 15; "the morning star," chap. xxii, 16. And some are expressly mentioned, as "the tree of life," chap. xxii, 2; freedom from "the second death," chap. xx, 6; the name in "the book of life," chap. xx, 12; xxi, 27; the remaining "in the temple of God," chap. vii, 15; the inscription of "the name of God and of the Lamb," chap. xiv, 1; xxii, 4. In these promises

sometimes the enjoyment of the highest goods, sometimes deliverance from the greatest evils, is mentioned. And each implies the other, so that where either part is expressed, the whole is to be understood. That part is expressed which has most resemblance to the virtues or works of him that was spoken to in the letter preceding. To eat of the tree of life - The first thing promised in these letters is the last and highest in the accomplishment, chap. xxii, 2, 14, 19. The tree of life and the water of life go together, chap. xxii, 1, 2; both implying the living with God eternally. In the paradise of my God - The word paradise means a garden of pleasure. In the earthly paradise there was one tree of life: there are no other trees in the paradise of God.

8. These things saith the first and the last, who was dead and is alive - How directly does this description tend to confirm him against the fear of death! verses 10, 11. ver. 10, 11 Even with the comfort wherewith St. John himself was comforted, chap. i, 17, 18, shall the angel of this church be comforted.

9. I know thy affliction and poverty - A poor prerogative in the eyes of the world! The angel at Philadelphia likewise had in their sight but "a little strength." And yet these two were the most honourable of all in the eyes of the Lord. But thou art rich - In faith and love, of more value than all the kingdoms of the earth. Who say they are Jews - God's own people. And are not - They are not Jews inwardly, not circumcised in heart. But a synagogue of Satan - Who, like them, was a liar and a murderer from the beginning.

10. The first and last words of this verse are particularly directed to the minister; whence we may gather, that his suffering and the affliction of the church were at the same time, and of the same continuance. Fear none of those things which thou art about to suffer - Probably by means of the false Jews. Behold - This intimates the nearness of the affliction. Perhaps the ten days began on the very day that the Revelation was read at Smyrna, or at least very soon after. The devil - Who sets all persecutors to work; and these more particularly. Is about to cast some of you - Christians at Smyrna; where, in the first ages, the blood of many martyrs was shed. Into prison, that ye may be tried - To your unspeakable advantage, chap. iv, 12, 14. And ye shall have affliction - Either in your own persons, or by sympathizing with your brethren. Ten days - (Literally taken) in the end of Domitian's persecution, which was stopped by the edict of the emperor Nerva. Be thou faithful - Our Lord does not say, "till I come," as in the other letters, but unto death - Signifying that the angel of this church should quickly after seal his testimony with his blood; fifty years before the martyrdom of Polycarp, for whom some have mistaken him. And I will give thee the crown of life - The peculiar reward of them who are faithful unto death.

11. The second death - The lake of fire, the portion of the fearful, who do not overcome, chap. xxi, 8.

12. The sword - With which I will cut off the impenitent, verse 16.

13. Where the throne of Satan is - Pergamos was above measure given to idolatry: so Satan had his throne and full residence there. Thou holdest fast my name - Openly and resolutely confessing me before men. Even in the days wherein Antipas - Martyred under Domitian. Was my faithful witness - Happy is he to whom Jesus, the faithful and true witness, giveth such a testimony!

14. But thou hast there - Whom thou oughtest to have immediately cast out from the flock. Them that hold the doctrine of Balaam - Doctrine nearly resembling his. Who taught Balak - And the rest of the Moabites. To cast a stumblingblock before the sons of Israel - They are generally termed, the children, but here, the sons, of Israel, in opposition to the daughters of Moab, by whom Balaam enticed them to fornication and idolatry. To eat things sacrificed to idols - Which, in so

idolatrous a city as Pergamos, was in the highest degree hurtful to Christianity. And to commit fornication - Which was constantly joined with the idol-worship of the heathens.

15. In like manner thou also - As well as the angel at Ephesus. Hast them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans - And thou sufferest them to remain in the flock.

16. If not, I come to thee - who wilt not wholly escape when I punish them. And will fight with them - Not with the Nicolaitans, who are mentioned only by the by, but the followers of Balaam. With the sword of my mouth - With my just and fierce displeasure. Balaam himself was first withstood by the angel of the Lord with "his sword drawn," Num. xxii, 23, and afterwards "slain with the sword," Num. xxxi, 8.

17. To him that overcometh - And eateth not of those sacrifices. Will I give of the hidden manna - Described, John vi. The new name answers to this: it is now "hid with Christ in God." The Jewish manna was kept in the ancient ark of the covenant. The heavenly ark of the covenant appears under the trumpet of the seventh angel, chap. xi, 19, where also the hidden manna is mentioned again. It seems properly to mean, the full, glorious, everlasting fruition of God. And I will give him a white stone - The ancients, on many occasions, gave their votes in judgment by small stones; by black, they condemned; by white ones they acquitted. Sometimes also they wrote on small smooth stones. Here may be an allusion to both. And a new name - So Jacob, after his victory, gained the new name of Israel. Wouldest thou know what thy new name will be? The way to this is plain, - overcome. Till then all thy inquiries are vain. Thou wilt then read it on the white stone.

18. And to the angel of the church at Thyatira - Where the faithful were but a little flock. These things saith the Son of God - See how great he is, who appeared "like a son of man!" chap. i, 13. Who hath eyes as a flame of fire - "Searching the reins and the heart," verse 23. And feet like fine brass - Denoting his immense strength. Job comprises both these, his wisdom to discern whatever is amiss, and his power to avenge it, in one sentence, Job xlii, 2, "No thought is hidden from him, and he can do all things."

19. I know thy love - How different a character is this from that of the angel of the church at Ephesus! The latter could not bear the wicked, and hated the works of the Nicolaitans; but had left his first love and first works. The former retained his first love, and had more and more works, but did bear the wicked, did not withstand them with becoming vehemence. Mixed characters both; yet the latter, not the former, is reproved for his fall, and commanded to repent. And faith, and thy service, and patience - Love is shown, exercised, and improved by serving God and our neighbour; so is faith by patience and good works.

20. But thou sufferest that woman Jezebel - who ought not to teach at all,

1 Tim. ii, 12. To teach and seduce my servants - At Pergamos were many followers of Balaam; at Thyatira, one grand deceiver. Many of the ancients have delivered, that this was the wife of the pastor himself. Jezebel of old led the people of God to open idolatry. This Jezebel, fitly called by her name, from the resemblance between their works, led them to partake in the idolatry of the heathens. This she seems to have done by first enticing them to fornication, just as Balaam did: whereas at Pergamos they were first enticed to idolatry, and afterwards to fornication.

21. And I gave her time to repent - So great is the power of Christ! But she will not repent - So, though repentance is the gift of God, man may refuse it; God will not compel.

22. I will cast her into a bed-into great affliction-and them that commit either carnal or spiritual adultery with her, unless they repent - She had her time before. Of her works - Those to which she had enticed their and which she had committed with them. It is observable, the angel of the church

at Thyatira was only blamed for suffering her. This fault ceased when God took vengeance on her. Therefore he is not expressly exhorted to repent, though it is implied.

23. And I will kill her children - Those which she hath born in adultery, and them whom she hath seduced. With death - This expression denotes death by the plague, or by some manifest stroke of God's hand. Probably the remarkable vengeance taken on her children was the token of the certainty of all the rest. And all the churches - To which thou now writest. Shall know that I search the reins - The desires. And hearts - Thoughts.

24. But I say to you who do not hold this doctrine - Of Jezebel. Who have not known the depths of Satan - O happy ignorance! As they speak - That were continually boasting of the deep things which they taught. Our Lord owns they were deep, even deep as hell: for they were the very depths of Satan. Were these the same of which Martin Luther speaks? It is well if there are not some of his countrymen now in England who know them too well! I will lay upon you no other burden - Than that you have already suffered from Jezebel and her adherents.

25. What ye - Both the angel and the church have.

26. By works - Those which I have commanded. To him will I give power over the nations - That is, I will give him to share with me in that glorious victory which the Father hath promised me over all the nations who as yet resist me, Psalm ii, 8, 9.

27. And he shall rule them - That is, shall share with me when I do this. With a rod of iron - With irresistible power, employed on those only who will not otherwise submit; who will hereby be dashed in pieces - Totally conquered.

28. I will give him the morning star - Thou, O Jesus, art the morning star! O give thyself to me! Then will I desire no sun, only thee, who art the sun also. He whom this star enlightens has always morning and no evening. The duties and promises here answer each other; the valiant conqueror has power over the stubborn nations. And he that, after having conquered his enemies, keeps the works of Christ to the end, shall have the morning star, - an unspeakable brightness and peaceable dominion in him.

## III

1. The seven spirits of God - The Holy Spirit, from whom alone all spiritual life and strength proceed. And the seven stars - which are subordinate to him. Thou hast a name that thou livest - A fair reputation, a goodly outside appearance. But that Spirit seeth through all things, and every empty appearance vanishes before him.

2. The things which remain - In thy soul; knowledge of the truth, good desires, and convictions. Which were ready to die - Wherever pride, indolence, or levity revives, all the fruits of the Spirit are ready to die.

3. Remember how - Humbly, zealously, seriously. Thou didst receive the grace of God once, and hear - His word. And hold fast - The grace thou hast received. And repent - According to the word thou hast heard.

4. Yet thou hast a few names - That is, persons. But though few, they had not separated themselves from the rest; otherwise, the angel of Sardis would not have had them. Yet it was no virtue of his, that they were unspotted; whereas it was his fault that they were but few. Who have

not defiled their garments - Either by spotting themselves, or by partaking of other men's sins. They shall walk with me in white - in joy; in perfect holiness; in glory. They are worthy - A few good among many bad are doubly acceptable to God. O how much happier is this worthiness than that mentioned, chap. xvi, 6.

5. He shall be clothed in white raiment - The colour of victory, joy, and triumph. And I will not blot his name out of the book of life - Like that of the angel of the church at Sardis: but he shall live for ever. I will confess his name - As one of my faithful servants and soldiers.

7. The holy one, the true one - Two great and glorious names He that hath the key of David - A master of a family, or a prince, has one or more keys, wherewith he can open and shut all the doors of his house or palace. So had David a key, a token of right and sovereignty, which was afterward adjudged to Eliakim, Isaiah xxii, 22. Much more has Christ, the Son of David, the key of the spiritual city of David, the New Jerusalem; the supreme right, power, and authority, as in his own house. He openeth this to all that overcome, and none shutteth: he shutteth it against all the fearful, and none openeth. Likewise when he openeth a door on earth for his works or his servants, none can shut; and when he shutteth against whatever would hurt or defile, none can open.

8. I have given before thee an opened door - To enter into the joy of thy Lord; and, meantime, to go on unhindered in every good work. Thou hast a little strength - But little outward human strength; a little, poor, mean, despicable company. Yet thou hast kept my word - Both in judgment and practice.

9. Behold, I - who have all power; and they must then comply. I will make them come and bow down before thy feet - Pay thee the lowest homage. And know - At length, that all depends on my love, and that thou hast a place therein. O how often does the judgment of the people turn quite round, when the Lord looketh upon them! Job xlii, 7, &c.

10. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience - The word of Christ is indeed a word of patience. I also will keep thee - O happy exemption from that spreading calamity! From the hour of temptation - So that thou shalt not enter into temptation; but it shall pass over thee. The hour denotes the short time of its continuance; that is, at any one place. At every one it was very sharp, though short; wherein the great tempter was not idle, chap. ii, 10. Which hour shall come upon the whole earth - The whole Roman empire. It went over the Christians, and over the Jews and heathens; though in a very different manner. This was the time of the persecution under the seemingly virtuous emperor Trajan. The two preceding persecutions were under those monsters, Nero and Domitian; but Trajan was so admired for his goodness, and his persecution was of such a nature, that it was a temptation indeed, and did throughly try them that dwelt upon the earth.

11. Thy crown - Which is ready for thee, if thou endure to the end.

12. I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God - I will fix him as beautiful, as useful, and as immovable as a pillar in the church of God. And he shall go out no more - But shall be holy and happy for ever. And I will write upon him the name of my God - So that the nature and image of God shall appear visibly upon him. And the name of the city of my God - Giving him a title to dwell in the New Jerusalem. And my new name - A share in that joy which I entered into, after overcoming all my enemies.

14. To the angel of the church at Laodicea - For these St. Paul had had a great concern, Colossians ii, 1. These things saith the Amen - That is, the True One, the God of truth. The beginning - The Author, Prince, and Ruler. Of the creation of God - Of all creatures; the beginning, or Author, by whom God made them all.

15. I know thy works - Thy disposition and behaviour, though thou knowest it not thyself. That thou art neither cold - An utter stranger to the things of God, having no care or thought about them. Nor hot - As boiling water: so ought we to be penetrated and heated by the fire of love. O that thou wert - This wish of our Lord plainly implies that he does not work on us irresistibly, as the fire does on the water which it heats. Cold or hot - Even if thou wert cold, without any thought or profession of religion, there would be more hope of thy recovery.

16. So because thou art lukewarm - The effect of lukewarm water is well known. I am about to spue thee out of my mouth - I will utterly cast thee from me; that is, unless thou repent.

17. Because thou sayest - Therefore "I counsel thee," &c. I am rich - In gifts and grace, as well as worldly goods. And knowest not that thou art - In God's account, wretched and pitiable.

18. I counsel thee - who art poor, and blind, and naked. To buy of me - Without money or price. Gold purified in the fire - True, living faith, which is purified in the furnace of affliction. And white raiment - True holiness. And eyesalve - Spiritual illumination; the "unction of the Holy One," which teacheth all things.

19. Whomsoever I love - Even thee, thou poor Laodicean! O how much has his unwearied love to do! I rebuke - For what is past. And chasten - That they may amend for the time to come.

20. I stand at the door, and knock - Even at this instant; while he is speaking this word. If any man open - Willingly receive me. I will sup with him - Refreshing him with my graces and gifts, and delighting myself in what I have given. And he with me - In life everlasting.

21. I will give him to sit with me on my throne - In unspeakable happiness and glory. Elsewhere, heaven itself is termed the throne of God: but this throne is in heaven.

22. He that hath an ear, let him hear, &c. - This stands in the three former letters before the promise; in the four latter, after it; clearly dividing the seven into two parts; the first containing three, the last, four letters. The titles given our Lord in the three former letters peculiarly respect his power after his resurrection and ascension, particularly over his church; those in the four latter, his divine glory, and unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Again, this word being placed before the promises in the three former letters, excludes the false apostles at Ephesus, the false Jews at Smyrna, and the partakers with the heathens at Pergamos, from having any share therein. In the four latter, being placed after them, it leaves the promises immediately joined with Christ's address to the angel of the church, to show that the fulfilling of these was near; whereas the others reach beyond the end of the world. It should be observed, that the overcoming, or victory, (to which alone these peculiar promises are annexed,) is not the ordinary victory obtained by every believer; but a special victory over great and peculiar temptations, by those that are strong in faith.

## IV

We are now entering upon the main prophecy. The whole Revelation may be divided thus:- The first, second, and third chapters contain the introduction; The fourth and fifth, the proposition; The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth describe things which are already fulfilled; The tenth to the fourteenth, things which are now fulfilling; The fifteenth to the nineteenth, things which will be fulfilled shortly; The twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second, things at a greater distance.

1. After these things - As if he had said, After I had written these letters from the mouth of the Lord. By the particle and, the several parts of this prophecy are usually connected: by the expression, after these things, they are distinguished from each other, chap. vii, 9; xix, 1. By that expression, and after these things, they are distinguished, and yet connected, chap. vii, 1; xv, 5; xviii, 1. St. John always saw and heard, and then immediately wrote down one part after another: and one part is constantly divided from another by some one of these expressions. I saw - Here begins the relation of the main vision, which is connected throughout; as it appears from "the throne, and him that sitteth thereon;" "the Lamb;" (who hitherto has appeared in the form of a man;) " the four living creatures;" and " the four and twenty elders," represented from this place to the end. From this place, it is absolutely necessary to keep in mind the genuine order of the texts, as it stands in the preceding table. A door opened in heaven - Several of these openings are successively mentioned. Here a door is opened; afterward, "the temple of God in heaven," chap. xi, 19; xv, 5; and, at last, "heaven" itself, xix, 11. By each of these St. John gains a new and more extended prospect. And the first voice which I had heard - Namely, that of Christ: afterward, he heard the voices of many others. Said, Come up hither - Not in body, but in spirit; which was immediately done.

2. And immediately I was in the spirit - Even in an higher degree than before, chap. i, 10. And, behold, a throne was set in heaven - St. John is to write "things which shall be;" and, in order thereto, he is here shown, after an heavenly manner, how whatever "shall be," whether good or bad, flows out of invisible fountains; and how, after it is done on the visible theatre of the world and the church, it flows back again into the invisible world, as its proper and final scope. Here commentators divide: some proceed theologically; others, historically; whereas the right way is, to join both together. The court of heaven is here laid open; and the throne of God is, as it were, the center from which everything in the visible world goes forth, and to which everything returns. Here, also, the kingdom of Satan is disclosed; and hence we may extract the most important things out of the most comprehensive and, at the same time, most secret history of the kingdom of hell and heaven. But herein we must be content to know only what is expressly revealed in this book. This describes, not barely what good or evil is successively transacted on earth, but how each springs from the kingdom of light or darkness, and continually tends to the source whence it sprung: So that no man can explain all that is contained therein, from the history of the church militant only. And yet the histories of past ages have their use, as this book is properly prophetical. The more, therefore, we observe the accomplishment of it, so much the more may we praise God, in his truth, wisdom, justice, and almighty power, and learn to suit ourselves to the time, according to the remarkable directions contained in the prophecy. And one sat on the throne - As a king, governor, and judge. Here is described God, the Almighty, the Father of heaven, in his majesty, glory, and dominion.

3. And he that sat was in appearance - Shone with a visible lustre, like that of sparkling precious stones, such as those which were of old on the high priest's breastplate, and those placed as the foundations of the new Jerusalem, chap. xxi, 19, 20. If there is anything emblematical in the colours of these stones, possibly the jasper, which is transparent and of a glittering white, with an intermixture of beautiful colours, may be a symbol of God's purity, with various other perfections, which shine in all his dispensations. The sardine stone, of a blood-red colour, may be an emblem of his justice, and the vengeance he was about to execute on his enemies. An emerald, being green, may betoken favour to the good; a rainbow, the everlasting covenant. See Gen. ix, 9. And this being round about the whole breadth of the throne, fixed the distance of those who stood or sat round it.

4. And round about the throne - In a circle, are four and twenty thrones, and on the thrones four and twenty elders - The most holy of all the former ages, Isaiah xxiv, 23; Heb. xii, 1; representing the whole body of the saints. Sitting - In general; but falling down when they worship. Clothed in white raiment - This and their golden crowns show, that they had already finished their course and taken their place among the citizens of heaven. They are never termed souls, and hence it is probable that they had glorified bodies already. Compare Matt. xxvii, 52.

5. And out of the throne go forth lightnings - Which affect the sight. Voices - Which affect the hearing. Thunderings - Which cause the whole body to tremble. Weak men account all this terrible; but to the inhabitants of heaven it is a mere source of joy and pleasure, mixed with reverence to the Divine Majesty. Even to the saints on earth these convey light and protection; but to their enemies, terror and destruction.

6. And before the throne is a sea as of glass, like crystal - Wide and deep, pure and clear, transparent and still. Both the "seven lamps of fire" and this sea are before the throne; and both may mean "the seven spirits of God," the Holy Ghost; whose powers and operations are frequently represented both under the emblem of fire and of water. We read again, chap. xv, 2, of "a sea as of glass," where there is no mention of "the seven lamps of fire;" but, on the contrary, the sea itself is "mingled with fire." We read also, chap. xxii, 1, of "a stream of water of life, clear as crystal." Now, the sea which is before the throne, and the stream which goes out of the throne, may both mean the same; namely, the Spirit of God. And in the midst of the throne - With respect to its height. Round about the throne - That is, toward the four quarters, east, west, north, and south. Were four living creatures - Not beasts, no more than birds. These seem to be taken from the cherubim in the visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, and in the holy of holies. They are doubtless some of the principal powers of heaven; but of what order, it is not easy to determine. It is very probable that the twenty-four elders may represent the Jewish church: their harps seem to intimate their having belonged to the ancient tabernacle service, where they were wont to be used. If so, the living creatures may represent the Christian church. Their number, also, is symbolical of universality, and agrees with the dispensation of the gospel, which extended to all nations under heaven. And the "new song" which they all sing, saying, "Thou hast redeemed us out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," chap. v, 9, could not possibly suit the Jewish without the Christian church. The first living creature was like a lion - To signify undaunted courage. The second, like a calf - Or ox, Ezek. i, 10, to signify unwearied patience. The third, with the face of a man - To signify prudence and compassion. The fourth, like an eagle - To signify activity and vigour. Full of eyes - To betoken wisdom and knowledge. Before - To see the face of him that sitteth on the throne. And behind - To see what is done among the creatures.

7. And the first - Just such were the four cherubim in Ezekiel, who supported the moving throne of God; whereas each of those that overshadowed the mercy-seat in the holy of holies had all these four faces: whence a late great man supposes them to have been emblematic of the Trinity, and the incarnation of the second Person. A flying eagle - That is, with wings expanded.

8. Each of them hath six wings - As had each of the seraphim in Isaiah's vision. "Two covered his face," in token of humility and reverence: "two his feet," perhaps in token of readiness and diligence for executing divine commissions. Round about and within they are full of eyes. Round about - To see everything which is farther off from the throne than they are themselves. And within - On the inner part of the circle which they make with one another. First, they look from the center to the circumference, then from the circumference to the center. And they rest not - O happy unrest!

Day and night - As we speak on earth. But there is no night in heaven. And say, Holy, holy, holy - Is the Three-One God. There are two words in the original, very different from each other; both which we translate holy. The one means properly merciful; but the other, which occurs here, implies much more. This holiness is the sum of all praise, which is given to the almighty Creator, for all that he does and reveals concerning himself, till the new song brings with it new matter of glory. This word properly signifies separated, both in Hebrew and other languages. And when God is termed holy, it denotes that excellence which is altogether peculiar to himself; and the glory flowing from all his attributes conjoined, shining forth from all his works, and darkening all things besides itself, whereby he is, and eternally remains, in an incomprehensible manner separate and at a distance, not only from all that is impure, but likewise from all that is created. God is separate from all things. He is, and works from himself, out of himself, in himself, through himself, for himself. Therefore, he is the first and the last, the only one and the Eternal, living and happy, endless and unchangeable, almighty, omniscient, wise and true, just and faithful, gracious and merciful. Hence it is, that holy and holiness mean the same as God and Godhead: and as we say of a king, "His Majesty;" so the scripture says of God, "His Holiness," Heb. xii, 10. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. When God is spoken of, he is often named "the Holy One:" and as God swears by his name, so he does also by his holiness; that is, by himself. This holiness is often styled glory: often his holiness and glory are celebrated together, Lev. x, 3; Isaiah vi, 3. For holiness is covered glory, and glory is uncovered holiness. The scripture speaks abundantly of the holiness and glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And hereby is the mystery of the Holy Trinity eminently confirmed. That is also termed holy which is consecrated to him, and for that end separated from other things: and so is that wherein we may be like God, or united to him. In the hymn resembling this, recorded by Isaiah, Isaiah vi, 3, is added, "The whole earth is full of his glory." But this is deferred in the Revelation, till the glory of the Lord (his enemies being destroyed) fills the earth.

9, 10. And when the living creatures give glory-the elders fall down - That is, as often as the living creatures give glory, immediately the elders fall down. The expression implies, that they did so at the same instant, and that they both did this frequently. The living creatures do not say directly, "Holy, holy, holy art thou;" but only bend a little, out of deep reverence, and say, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord." But the elders, when they are fallen down, may say, "Worthy art thou, O Lord our God."

11. Worthy art thou to receive - This he receives not only when he is thus praised, but also when he destroys his enemies and glorifies himself anew. The glory and the honour and the power - Answering the thrice-holy of the living creatures, verse 9. ver. 9, For thou hast created all things - Creation is the ground of all the works of God: therefore, for this, as well as for his other works, will he be praised to all eternity. And through thy will they were - They began to be. It is to the free, gracious and powerfully- working will of Him who cannot possibly need anything that all things owe their first existence. And are created - That is, continue in being ever since they were created.

## V

1. And I saw - This is a continuation of the same narrative. In the right hand - The emblem of his all-ruling power. He held it openly, in order to give it to him that was worthy. It is scarce needful to observe, that there is not in heaven any real book of parchment or paper or that Christ does not really stand there, in the shape of a lion or of a lamb. Neither is there on earth any monstrous beast with seven heads and ten horns. But as there is upon earth something which, in its kind, answers such a representation; so there are in heaven divine counsels and transactions answerable to these figurative expressions. All this was represented to St. John at Patmos, in one day, by way of vision. But the accomplishment of it extends from that time throughout all ages. Writings serve to inform us of distant and of future things. And hence things which are yet to come are figuratively said to be "written in God's book;" so were at that time the contents of this weighty prophecy. But the book was sealed. Now comes the opening and accomplishing also of the great things that are, as it were, the letters of it. A book written within and without - That is, no part of it blank, full of matter. Sealed with seven seals - According to the seven principal parts contained in it, one on the outside of each. The usual books of the ancients were not like ours, but were volumes or long pieces of parchment, rolled upon a long stick, as we frequently roll silks. Such was this represented, which was sealed with seven seals. Not as if the apostle saw all the seals at once; for there were seven volumes wrapped up one within another, each of which was sealed: so that upon opening and unrolling the first, the second appeared to be sealed up till that was opened, and so on to the seventh. The book and its seals represent all power in heaven and earth given to Christ. A copy of this book is contained in the following chapters. By "the trumpets," contained under the seventh seal, the kingdom of the world is shaken, that it may at length become the kingdom of Christ. By "the vials," under the seventh trumpet, the power of the beast, and whatsoever is connected with it, is broken. This sum of all we should have continually before our eyes: so the whole Revelation flows in its natural order.

2. And I saw a strong angel - This proclamation to every creature was too great for a man to make, and yet not becoming the Lamb himself. It was therefore made by an angel, and one of uncommon eminence.

3. And none - No creature; no, not Mary herself. In heaven, or in earth, neither under the earth - That is, none in the universe. For these are the three great regions into which the whole creation is divided. Was able to open the book - To declare the counsels of God. Nor to look thereon - So as to understand any part of it.

4. And I wept much - A weeping which sprung from greatness of mind. The tenderness of heart which he always had appeared more clearly now he was out of his own power. The Revelation was not written without tears; neither without tears will it be understood. How far are they from the temper of St. John who inquire after anything rather than the contents of this book! yea, who applaud their own clemency if they excuse those that do inquire into them!

5. And one of the elders - Probably one of those who rose with Christ, and afterwards ascended into heaven. Perhaps one of the patriarchs. Some think it was Jacob, from whose prophecy the name of Lion is given him, Gen. xlix, 9. The Lion of the tribe of Judah - The victorious prince who is, like a lion, able to tear all his enemies in pieces. The root of David - As God, the root and source of David's family, Isaiah xi, 1, 10. Hath prevailed to open the book - Hath overcome all obstructions, and obtained the honour to disclose the divine counsels.

6. And I saw - First, Christ in or on the midst of the throne; secondly, the four living creatures making the inner circle round him; and, thirdly, the four and twenty elders making a larger circle

round him and them. Standing - He lieth no more; he no more falls on his face; the days of his weakness and mourning are ended. He is now in a posture of readiness to execute all his offices of prophet, priest, and king. As if he had been slain - Doubtless with the prints of the wounds which he once received. And because he was slain, he is worthy to open the book, verse 9, to the joy of his own people, and the terror of his enemies. Having seven horns - As a king, the emblem of perfect strength. And seven eyes - The emblem of perfect knowledge and wisdom. By these he accomplishes what is contained in the book, namely, by his almighty and all-wise Spirit. To these seven horns and seven eyes answer the seven seals and the sevenfold song of praise, verse 12. In Zechariah, likewise, iii, 9; iv, 10. Zech. iii, 9, Zech. iv, 10 mention is made of "the seven eyes of the Lord, which go forth over all the earth." Which - Both the horns and the eyes. Are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth - For the effectual working of the Spirit of God goes through the whole creation; and that in the natural, as well as spiritual, world. For could mere matter act or move? Could it gravitate or attract? Just as much as it can think or speak.

7. And he came - Here was "Ask of me," Psalm ii, 8, fulfilled in the most glorious manner. And took - it is one state of exaltation that reaches from our Lord's ascension to his coming in glory. Yet this state admits of various degrees. At his ascension, "angels, and principalities, and powers were subjected to him." Ten days after, he received from the Father and sent the Holy Ghost. And now he took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne - who gave it him as a signal of his delivering to him all power in heaven and earth. He received it, in token of his being both able and willing to fulfil all that was written therein.

8. And when he took the book, the four living creatures fell down - Now is homage done to the Lamb by every creature. These, together with the elders, make the beginning; and afterward, chap. v, 14, the conclusion. They are together surrounded with a multitude of angels, chap. v, 11, and together sing the new song, as they had before praised God together, chap. iv, 8, &c. Having every one - The elders, not the living creatures. An harp - Which was one of the chief instruments used for thanksgiving in the temple service: a fit emblem of the melody of their hearts. And golden phials - Cups or censers. Full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints - Not of the elders themselves, but of the other saints still upon earth, whose prayers were thus emblematically represented in heaven.

9. And they sing a new song - One which neither they nor any other had sung before. Thou hast redeemed us - So the living creatures also were of the number of the redeemed. This does not so much refer to the act of redemption, which was long before, as to the fruit of it; and so more directly to those who had finished their course, "who were redeemed from the earth," ver. 1, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation - That is, out of all mankind.

10. And hast made them - The redeemed. So they speak of themselves also in the third person, out of deep self-abasement. They shall reign over the earth - The new earth: herewith agree the golden crowns of the elders. The reign of the saints in general follows, under the trumpet of the seventh angel; particularly after the first resurrection, as also in eternity, chap. xi, 18;xv, 7;xx, 4;xxii, 5;Dan. vii, 27;Psalm xlix, 14.

11. And I saw - The many angels. And heard - The voice and the number of them. Round about the elders - So forming the third circle. It is remarkable, that men are represented through this whole vision as nearer to God than any of the angels. And the number of them was - At least two hundred millions, and two millions over. And yet these were but a part of the holy angels. Afterward, chap. vii, 11, St. John heard them all.

12. Worthy is the Lamb - The elders said, ver. 9, "Worthy art thou." They were more nearly allied to him than the angels. To receive the power, &c. - This sevenfold applause answers the seven seals, of which the four former describe all visible, the latter all invisible, things, made subject to the Lamb. And every one of these seven words bears a resemblance to the seal which it answers.

13. And every creature - In the whole universe, good or bad. In the heaven, on the earth, under the earth, on the sea - With these four regions of the world, agrees the fourfold word of praise. What is in heaven, says blessing; what is on earth, honour; what is under the earth, glory: what is on the sea, strength; is unto him. This praise from all creatures begins before the opening of the first seal; but it continues from that time to eternity, according to the capacity of each. His enemies must acknowledge his glory; but those in heaven say, Blessed be God and the Lamb. This royal manifesto is, as it were, a proclamation, showing how Christ fulfils all things, and "every knee bows to him," not only on earth, but also in heaven, and under the earth. This book exhausts all things, 1 Cor. xv, 27, 28, and is suitable to an heart enlarged as the sand of the sea. It inspires the attentive and intelligent reader with such a magnanimity, that he accounts nothing in this world great; no, not the whole frame of visible nature, compared to the immense greatness of what he is here called to behold, yea, and in part, to inherit. St. John has in view, through the whole following vision, what he has been now describing, namely, the four living creatures, the elders, the angels, and all creatures, looking together at the opening of the seven seals.

## VI

The seven seals are not distinguished from each other by specifying the time of them. They swiftly follow the letters to the seven churches, and all begin almost at the same time. By the four former is shown, that all the public occurrences of all ages and nations, as empire, war, provision, calamities, are made subject to Christ. And instances are intimated of the first in the east, the second in the west, the third in the south, the fourth in the north and the whole world. The contents, as of the phials and trumpets, so of the seals, are shown by the songs of praise and thanksgiving annexed to them. They contain therefore "the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing," which the Lamb received. The four former have a peculiar connection with each other; and so have the three latter seals. The former relate to visible things, toward the four quarters to which the four living creatures look. Before we proceed, it may be observed,

1. No man should constrain either himself or another to explain everything in this book. It is sufficient for every one to speak just so far as he understands.
2. We should remember that, although the ancient prophets wrote the occurrences of those kingdoms only with which Israel had to do, yet the Revelation contains what relates to the whole world, through which the Christian church is extended. Yet,
3. We should not prescribe to this prophecy, as if it must needs admit or exclude this or that history, according as we judge one or the other to be of great or small importance. "God seeth not as a man seeth;" therefore what we think great is often omitted, what we think little inserted, in scripture history or prophecy.

4. We must take care not to overlook what is already fulfilled; and not to describe as fulfilled what is still to come. We are to look in history for the fulfilling of the four first seals, quickly after the date of the prophecy. In each of these appears a different horseman. In each we are to consider, first, the horseman himself; secondly, what he does. The horseman himself, by an emblematical prosopopoeia, represents a swift power, bringing with it either,
   1. A flourishing state; or,
   2. Bloodshed; or,
   3. Scarcity of provisions; or,
   4. Public calamities. With the quality of each of these riders the colour of his horse agrees. The fourth horseman is expressly termed "death;" the first, with his bow and crown, "a conqueror;" the second, with his great sword, is a warrior, or, as the Roman termed him, Mars; the third, with the scales, has power over the produce of the land. Particular incidents under this or that Roman emperor are not extensive enough to answer any of these horsemen. The action of every horseman intimates farther,
      1. Toward the east, wide spread empire, and victory upon victory:
      2. Toward the west, much bloodshed:
      3. Toward the south, scarcity of provisions:
      4. Toward the north, the plague and various calamities.

1. I heard one-That is, the first. Of the living creatures - Who looks forward toward the east.

2. And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow - This colour, and the bow shooting arrows afar off, betoken victory, triumph, prosperity, enlargement of empire, and dominion over many people. Another horseman, indeed, and of quite another kind, appears on a white horse, chap. xix, 11. But he that is spoken of under the first seal must be so understood as to bear a proportion to the horsemen in the second, third, and fourth seal. Nerva succeeded the emperor Domitian at the very time when the Revelation was written, in the year of our Lord 96. He reigned scarce a year alone; and three months before his death he named Trajan for his colleague and successor, and died in the year 98. Trajan's accession to the empire seems to be the dawning of the seven seals. And a crown was given him - This, considering his descent, Trajan could have no hope of attaining. But God gave it him by the hand of Nerva; and then the east soon felt his power. And he went forth conquering and to conquer - That is, from one victory to another. In the year 108 the already victorious Trajan went forth toward the east, to conquer not only Armenia, Assyria, and Mesopotamia, but also the countries beyond the Tigris, carrying the bounds of the Roman empire to a far greater extent than ever. We find no emperor like him for making conquests. He aimed at nothing else; he lived only to conquer. Meantime, in him was eminently fulfilled what had been prophesied of the fourth empire, Dan. ii, 40, vii, 23, that he should "devour, tread down, and break in pieces the whole earth."

3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature - Who looked toward the west. Saying, Come - At each seal it was necessary to turn toward that quarter of the world which it more immediately concerned.

4. There went forth another horse that was red - A colour suitable to bloodshed. And to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth - Vespasian, in the year 75, had dedicated a temple to Peace; but after a time we hear little more of peace. All is full of war and bloodshed,

chiefly in the western world, where the main business of men seemed to be, to kill one another. To this horseman there was given a great sword; and he had much to do with it; for as soon as Trajan ascended the throne, peace was taken from the earth. Decebalus, king of Dacia, which lies westward from Patmos, put the Roman to no small trouble. The war lasted five years, and consumed abundance of men on both sides; yet was only a prelude to much other bloodshed, which followed for a long season. All this was signified by the great sword, which strikes those who are near, as the bow does those who are at a distance.

5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature - Toward the south. Saying, Come. And behold a black horse - A fit emblem of mourning and distress; particularly of black famine, as the ancient poets term it. And he that sat on him had a pair of scales in his hand - When there is great plenty, men scarce think it worth their while to weigh and measure everything, Gen. xli, 49. But when there is scarcity, they are obliged to deliver them out by measure and weight, Ezek. iv, 16. Accordingly, these scales signify scarcity. They serve also for a token, that all the fruits of the earth, and consequently the whole heavens, with their courses and influences; that all the seasons of the year, with whatsoever they produce, in nature or states, are subject to Christ. Accordingly his hand is wonderful, not only in wars and victories, but likewise in the whole course of nature.

6. And I heard a voice - It seems, from God himself. Saying - To the horseman, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther." Let there be a measure of wheat for a penny - The word translated measure, was a Grecian measure, nearly equal to our quart. This was the daily allowance of a slave. The Roman penny, as much as a labourer then earned in a day, was about sevenpence halfpenny English. According to this, wheat would be near twenty shillings per bushel. This must have been fulfilled while the Grecian measure and the Roman money were still in use; as also where that measure was the common measure, and this money the current coin. It was so in Egypt under Trajan. And three measures of barley for a penny - Either barley was, in common, far cheaper among the ancients than wheat, or the prophecy mentions this as something peculiar. And hurt not the oil and the wine - Let there not be a scarcity of everything. Let there he some provision left to supply the want of the rest This was also fulfilled in the reign of Trajan, especially in Egypt, which lay southward from Patmos. In this country, which used to be the granary of the empire, there was an uncommon dearth at the very beginning of his reign; so that he was obliged to supply Egypt itself with corn from other countries. The same scarcity there was in the thirteenth year of his reign, the harvest failing for want of the rising of the Nile: and that not only in Egypt, but in all those other parts of Afric, where the Nile uses to overflow.

7. I heard the voice of the fourth living creature - Toward the north.

8. And I saw, and behold a pale horse - Suitable to pale death, his rider. And hades - The representative of the state of separate souls. Followeth even with him - The four first seals concern living men. Death therefore is properly introduced. Hades is only occasionally mentioned as a companion of death. So the fourth seal reaches to the borders of things invisible, which are comprised in the three last seals. And power was given to him over the fourth part of the earth - What came single and in a lower degree before, comes now together, and much more severely. The first seal brought victory with it: in the second was "a great sword;" but here a scimitar. In the third was moderate dearth; here famine, and plague, and wild beasts beside. And it may well be, that from the time of Trajan downwards, the fourth part of men upon the earth, that is, within the Roman empire, died by sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts. "At that time," says Aurelius Victor,

"the Tyber overflowed much more fatally than under Nerva, with a great destruction of houses and there was a dreadful earthquake through many provinces, and a terrible plague and famine, and many places consumed by fire." By death - That is, by pestilence wild beasts have, at several times, destroyed abundance of men; and undoubtedly there was given them, at this time, an uncommon fierceness and strength. It is observable that war brings on scarcity, and scarcity pestilence, through want of wholesome sustenance; and pestilence, by depopulating the country, leaves the few survivors an easier prey to the wild beasts. And thus these judgments make way for one another in the order wherein they are here represented. What has been already observed may be a fourfold proof that the four horsemen, as with their first entrance in the reign of Trajan, (which does by no means exhaust the contents of the four first seals,) so with all their entrances in succeeding ages, and with the whole course of the world and of visible nature, are in all ages subject to Christ, subsisting by his power, and serving his will, against the wicked, and in defense of the righteous. Herewith, likewise, a way is paved for the trumpets which regularly succeed each other; and the whole prophecy, as to what is future, is confirmed by the clear accomplishment of this part of it.

9. And when he opened the fifth seal - As the four former seals, so the three latter, have a close connection with each other. These all refer to the invisible world; the fifth, to the happy dead, particularly the martyrs; the sixth, to the unhappy; the seventh, to the angels, especially those to whom the trumpets are given. And I saw - Not only the church warring under Christ, and the world warring under Satan; but also the invisible hosts, both of heaven and hell, are described in this book. And it not only describes the actions of both these armies upon earth; but their respective removals from earth, into a more happy or more miserable state, succeeding each other at several times, distinguished by various degrees, celebrated by various thanksgivings; and also the gradual increase of expectation and triumph in heaven, and of terror and misery in hell. Under the altar - That is, at the foot of it. Two altars are mentioned in the Revelation, "the golden altar" of incense, chap. ix, 13; and the altar of burnt-offerings, mentioned here, and chap. viii, 5, xiv, 18, xvi, 7. At this the souls of the martyrs now prostrate themselves. By and by their blood shall be avenged upon Babylon; but not yet, whence it appears that the plagues in the fourth seal do not concern Rom. in particular.

10. And they cried - This cry did not begin now, but under the first Roman persecution. The Roman themselves had already avenged the martyrs slain by the Jews on that whole nation. How long - They knew their blood would be avenged; but not immediately, as is now shown them. O Lord - The Greek word properly signifies the master of a family: it is therefore beautifully used by these, who are peculiarly of the household of God. Thou Holy One and true - Both the holiness and truth of God require him to execute judgment and vengeance. Dost thou not judge and avenge our blood? - There is no impure affection in heaven: therefore, this desire of theirs is pure and suitable to the will of God. The martyrs are concerned for the praise of their Master, of his holiness and truth: and the praise is given him, chap. xix, 2, where the prayer of the martyrs is changed into a thanksgiving:- Thou holy One and true: "True and right are thy judgments." How long dost thou not judge "He hath judged the great whore, and avenge our blood? and hath avenged the blood of his servants."

11. And there was given to every one a white robe - An emblem of innocence, joy, and victory, in token of honour and favourable acceptance. And it was said to them - They were told how long. They were not left in that uncertainty. That they should rest - Should cease from crying. They rested from pain before. A time - This word has a peculiar meaning in this book, to denote which, we may

retain the original word chronos. Here are two classes of martyrs specified, the former killed under heathen Rome, the latter, under papal Rome. The former are commanded to rest till the latter are added to them. There were many of the former in the days of John: the first fruits of the latter died in the thirteenth century. Now, a time, or chronos, is 1111 years. This chronos began A. 98, and continued to the year 1209; or from Trajan's persecution, to the first crusade against the Waldenses. Till - It is not said, Immediately after this time is expired, vengeance shall be executed; but only, that immediately after this time their brethren and fellowservants will come to them. This event will precede the other; and there will be some space between.

12. And I saw - This sixth seal seems particularly to point out God's judgment on the wicked departed. St. John saw how the end of the world was even then set before those unhappy spirits. This representation might be made to them, without anything of it being perceived upon earth. The like representation is made in heaven, chap. xi, 18. And there was a great earthquake - Or shaking, not of the earth only, but the heavens. This is a farther description of the representation made to those unhappy souls.

13. And the stars fell to, or towards, the earth - Yea, and so they surely will, let astronomers fix their magnitude as they please. As a fig tree casteth its untimely figs, when it is shaken by a mighty wind - How sublimely is the violence of that shaking expressed by this comparison!

14. And the heavens departed as a book that is rolled together - When the scripture compares some very great with a little thing, the majesty and omnipotence of God, before whom great things are little, is highly exalted. Every mountain and island - What a mountain is to the land, that an island is to the sea.

15. And the kings of the earth - They who had been so in their day. And the great men and chief captains - The generals and nobles. Hid themselves - So far as in them lay. In the rocks of the mountains - There are also rocks on the plains; but they were rocks on high, which they besought to fall upon them.

16. To the mountains and the rocks - Which were tottering already, verse

## VII

1. And after these things - What follows is a preparation for the seventh seal, which is the weightiest of all. It is connected with the sixth by the particle and; whereas what is added, verse 9, stands free and unconnected. I saw four angels - Probably evil ones. They have their employ with the four first trumpets, as have other evil angels with the three last; namely, the angel of the abyss, the four bound in the Euphrates, and Satan himself. These four angels would willingly have brought on all the calamities that follow without delay. But they were restrained till the servants of God were sealed, and till the seven angels were ready to sound: even as the angel of the abyss was not let loose, nor the angels in the Euphrates unbound, neither Satan cast to the earth, till the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels severally sounded. Standing on the four corners of the earth - East, west, south, north. In this order proceed the four first trumpets. Holding the four winds - Which else might have softened the fiery heat, under the first, second, and third trumpet. That the wind should not blow upon the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree - It seems, that these expressions betoken the several quarters of the world; that the earth signifies that to the east of Patmos, Asia, which was nearest to

St. John, and where the trumpet of the first angel had its accomplishment. Europe swims in the sea over against this; and is accordingly termed by the prophets, "the islands." The third part, Afric, seems to be meant, chap. viii, 7, 8, 10, by "the streams of water," or "the trees," which grow plentifully by them.

2. And I saw another (a good) angel ascending from the east - The plagues begin in the east; so does the sealing. Having the seal of the only living and true God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels - Who were hasting to execute their charge. To whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea - First, and afterwards "the trees."

3. Hurt not the earth, till we - Other angels were joined in commission with him. Have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads - Secured the servants of God of the twelve tribes from the impending calamities; whereby they shall be as clearly distinguished from the rest, as if they were visibly marked on their foreheads.

4. Of the children of Israel - To these will afterwards be joined a multitude out of all nations. But it may be observed, this is not the number of all the Israelites who are saved from Abraham or Moses to the end of all things; but only of those who were secured from the plagues which were then ready to fall on the earth. It seems as if this book had, in many places, a special view to the people of Israel.

5. Judah is mentioned first, in respect of the kingdom, and of the Messiah sprung therefrom.

7. After the Levitical ceremonies were abolished, Levi was again on a level with his brethren.

8. Of the tribe of Joseph - Or Ephraim; perhaps not mentioned by name, as having been, with Daniel, the most idolatrous of all the tribes. It is farther observable of Daniel, that it was very early reduced to a single family; which family itself seems to have been cut off in war, before the time of Ezra; for in the Chronicles, where the posterity of the patriarchs is recited, Dan. is wholly omitted.

9. A great multitude - Of those who had happily finished their course. Such multitudes are afterwards described, and still higher degrees of glory which they attain after a sharp fight and magnificent victory, chap. xiv, 1; xv, 2; xix, 1; xx, 4. There is an inconceivable variety in the degrees of reward in the other world. Let not any slothful one say, "If I get to heaven at all, I will be content:" such an one may let heaven go altogether. In worldly things, men are ambitious to get as high as they can. Christians have a far more noble ambition. The difference between the very highest and the lowest state in the world is nothing to the smallest difference between the degrees of glory. But who has time to think of this? Who is at all concerned about it? Standing before the throne - In the full vision of God. And palms in their hands - Tokens of joy and victory.

10. Salvation to our God - Who hath saved us from all evil into all the happiness of heaven. The salvation for which they praise God is described, verse 15; that for which they praise the Lamb, verse 14; and both, in the sixteenth and seventeenth verses. ver. 16, 17

11. And all the angels stood - In waiting. Round about the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures - That is, the living creatures, next the throne; the elders, round these; and the angels, round them both. And they fell on their faces - So do the elders, once only, chap. xi, 16. The heavenly ceremonial has its fixed order and measure.

12. Amen - With this word all the angels confirm the words of the "great multitude;" but they likewise carry the praise much higher. The blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanksgiving, and the honour, and the power, and the strength, be unto our God for ever and ever - Before the Lamb began to open the seven seals, a sevenfold hymn of praise was brought him by many angels, chap. v, 12. Now he is upon opening the last seal, and the seven angels are going to

receive seven trumpets, in order to make the kingdoms of the world subject to God. All the angels give sevenfold praise to God.

13. And one of the elders - What stands, verses 13-17, ver. 13-17 might have immediately followed the tenth verse; but that the praise of the angels, which was at the same time with that of the "great multitude," came in between. Answered - He answered St. John's desire to know, not any words that he spoke.

14. My Lord - Or, my master; a common term of respect. So Zechariah, likewise, bespeaks the angel, Zech. i, 9; iv, 4; vi, 4. Thou knowest - That is, I know not; but thou dost. These are they - Not martyrs; for these are not such a multitude as no man can number. But as all the angels appear here, so do all the souls of the righteous who had lived from the beginning of the world. Who come - He does not say, who did come; but, who come now also: to whom, likewise, pertain all who will come hereafter. Out of great affliction - Of various kinds, wisely and graciously allotted by God to all his children. And have washed their robes - From all guilt. And made them white - In all holiness. By the blood of the Lamb - Which not only cleanses, but adorns us also.

15. Therefore - Because they came out of great affliction, and have washed their robes in his blood. Are they before the throne - It seems, even nearer than the angels. And serve him day and night - Speaking after the manner of men; that is, continually. In his temple - Which is in heaven. And he shall have his tent over them - Shall spread his glory over them as a covering.

16. Neither shall the sun light on them - For God is there their sun. Nor any painful heat, or inclemency of seasons.

17. For the Lamb will feed them - With eternal peace and joy; so that they shall hunger no more. And will lead them to living fountains of water - The comforts of the Holy Ghost; so that they shall thirst no more. Neither shall they suffer or grieve any more; for God "will wipe away all tears from their eyes."

## VIII

1. And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven - Such a silence is mentioned but in this one place. It was uncommon, and highly observable: for praise is sounding in heaven day and night. In particular, immediately before this silence, all the angels, and before them the innumerable multitude, had been crying with a loud voice; and now all is still at once: there is an universal pause. Hereby the seventh seal is very remarkably distinguished from the six preceding. This silence before God shows that those who were round about him were expecting, with the deepest reverence, the great things which the Divine Majesty would farther open and order. Immediately after, the seven trumpets are heard, and a sound more august than ever. Silence is only a preparation: the grand point is, the sounding the trumpets to the praise of God. About half an hour - To St. John, in the vision, it might seem a common half hour.

2. And I saw - The seven trumpets belong to the seventh seal, as do the seven phials to the seventh trumpet. This should be carefully remembered, that we may not confound together the times which follow each other. And yet it may be observed, in general, concerning the times of the incidents mentioned in this book, it is not a certain rule, that every part of the text is fully accomplished before the completion of the following part begins. All things mentioned in the

epistles are not full accomplished before the seals are opened; neither are all things mentioned under the seals fulfilled before the trumpets begin; nor yet is the seventh trumpet wholly past before the phials are poured out. Only the beginning of each part goes before the beginning of the following. Thus the epistles begin before the seals, the seals before the trumpets, the trumpets before the phials. One epistle begins before another, one seal before another, one trumpet especially before another, one phial before another. Yet, sometimes, what begins later than another thing ends sooner; and what begins earlier than another thing ends later: so the seventh trumpet begins earlier than the phials, and yet extends beyond them all. The seven angels which stood before God - A character of the highest eminence. And seven trumpets were given them. - When men desire to make known openly a thing of public concern, they give a token that may be seen or heard far and wide; and, among such, none are more ancient than trumpets, Lev. xxv, 9; Num. x, 2; Amos iii, 6. The Israelites, in particular, used them, both in the worship of God and in war; therewith openly praising the power of God before, after, and in, the battle, Josh. vi, 4; 2 Chron. xiii, 14, &c. And the angels here made known by these trumpets the wonderful works of God, whereby all opposing powers are successively shaken, till the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of God and his Anointed. These trumpets reach nearly from the time of St. John to the end of the world; and they are distinguished by manifest tokens. The place of the four first is specified; namely, east, west, south, and north successively: in the three last, immediately after the time of each, the place likewise is pointed out. The seventh angel did not begin to sound, till after the going forth of the second woe: but the trumpets were given to him and the other six together; (as were afterward the phials to the seven angels;) and it is accordingly said of all the seven together, that "they prepared themselves to sound." These, therefore, were not men, as some have thought, but angels, properly so called.

3. And - In the second verse, the "trumpets were given" to the seven angels; and in the sixth, they "prepared to sound." But between these, the incense of this angel and the prayers of the saints are mentioned; the interposing of which shows, that the prayers of the saints and the trumpets of the angels go together: and these prayers, with the effects of them, may well be supposed to extend through all the seven. Another angel - Another created angel. Such are all that are here spoken of. In this part of the Revelation, Christ is never termed an angel; but, "the Lamb." Came and stood at the altar - Of burnt-offerings. And there was given him a golden censer - A censer was a cup on a plate or saucer. This was the token and the business of the office. And much incense was given-Incense generally signifies prayer: here it signifies the longing desires of the angels, that the holy counsel of God might be fulfilled. And there was much incense; for as the prayers of all the saints in heaven and earth are here joined together: so are the desires of all the angels which are brought by this angel. That he might place it - It is not said, offer it; for he was discharging the office of an angel, not a priest. With the prayers of all the saints - At the same time; but not for the saints. The angels are fellowservants with the saints, not mediators for them.

4. And the smoke of the incense came up before God, with the prayers of the saints - A token that both were accepted.

5. And there were thunderings, and lightnings, and voices, and an earthquake - These, especially when attended with fire, are emblems of God's dreadful judgments, which are immediately to follow.

6. And the seven angels prepared themselves to sound - That each, when it should come to his turn, might sound without delay. But while they do sound, they still stand before God.

7. And the first sounded - And every angel continued to sound, till all which his trumpet brought was fulfilled and till the next began. There are intervals between the three woes, but not between the four first trumpets. And there was hail and fire mingled with blood, and there were cast upon the earth - The earth seems to mean Asia; Palestine, in particular. Quickly after the Revelation was given, the Jewish calamities under Adrian began: yea, before the reign of Trajan was ended. And here the trumpets begin. Even under Trajan, in the year 114, the Jews made an insurrection with a most dreadful fury; and in the parts about Cyrene, in Egypt, and in Cyprus, destroyed four hundred and sixty thousand persons. But they were repressed by the victorious power of Trajan, and afterward slaughtered themselves in vast multitudes. The alarm spread itself also into Mesopotamia, where Lucius Quintius slew a great number of them. They rose in Judea again in the second year of Adrian; but were presently quelled. Yet in 133 they broke out more violently than ever, under their false messiah Barcochab; and the war continued till the year 135, when almost all Judea was desolated. In the Egyptian plague also hail and fire were together. But here hail is to be taken figuratively, as also blood, for a vehement, sudden, powerful, hurtful invasion; and fire betokens the revenge of an enraged enemy, with the desolation therefrom. And they were cast upon the earth - That is, the fire and hail and blood. But they existed before they were cast upon the earth. The storm fell, the blood flowed, and the flames raged round Cyrene, and in Egypt, and Cyprus, before they reached Mesopotamia and Judea. And the third part of the earth was burnt up - Fifty well- fortified cities, and nine hundred and eighty-five well-inhabited towns of the Jews, were wholly destroyed in this war. Vast tracts of land were likewise left desolate and without inhabitant. And the third part of the trees was burned up, and all the green grass was burned up - Some understand by the trees, men of eminence among the Jews; by the grass, the common people. The Roman spared many of the former: the latter were almost all destroyed. Thus vengeance began at the Jewish enemies of Christ's kingdom; though even then the Roman did not quite escape. But afterwards it came upon them more and more violently: the second trumpet affects the Roman heathens in particular; the third, the dead, unholy Christians; the fourth, the empire itself.

8. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea - By the sea, particularly as it is here opposed to the earth, we may understand the west, or Europe; and chiefly the middle parts of it, the vast Roman empire. A mountain here seems to signify a great force and multitude of people. Jer. li, 25; so this may point at the irruption of the barbarous nations into the Roman empire. The warlike Goths broke in upon it about the year 2l, and from that time the irruption of one nation after another never ceased till the very form of the Roman empire, and all but the name, was lost. The fire may mean the fire of war, and the rage of those savage nations. And the third part of the sea became blood - This need not imply, that just a third part of the Roman was slain; but it is certain an inconceivable deal of blood was shed in all these invasions.

9. And the third part of the creatures that were in the sea - That is, of all sorts of men, of every station and degree. Died - By those merciless invaders. And the third part of the ships were destroyed - It is a frequent thing to resemble a state or republic to a ship, wherein many people are embarked together, and share in the same dangers. And how many states were utterly destroyed by those inhuman conquerors! Much likewise of this was literally fulfilled. How often was the sea tinged with blood! How many of those who dwelt mostly upon it were killed! And what number of ships destroyed!

10. And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, and it fell on the third part of the rivers - It seems Afric is meant by the rivers; (with which this burning part of the world abounds in an especial manner;) Egypt in particular, which the Nile overflows every year far and wide. ln the whole African history, between the irruption of the barbarous nations into the Roman empire, and the ruin of the western empire, after the death of Valentinian the Third, there is nothing more momentous than the Arian calamity, which sprung up in the year 315. It is not possible to tell how many persons, particularly at Alexandria, in all Egypt, and in the neighbouring countries, were destroyed by the rage of the Arians. Yet Afric fared better than other parts of the empire, with regard to the barbarous nations, till the governor of it, whose wife was a zealous Arian, and aunt to Genseric, king of the Vandals, was, under that pretense, unjustly accused before the empress Placidia. He was then prevailed upon to invite the Vandals into Afric; who under Genseric, in the year 428, founded there a kingdom of their own, which continued till the year 533. Under these Vandal kings the true believers endured all manner of afflictions and persecutions. And thus Arianism was the inlet to all heresies and calamities, and at length to Mahometanism itself. This great star was not an angel, (angels are not the agents in the two preceding or the following trumpet,) but a teacher of the church, one of the stars in the right hand of Christ. Such was Arius. He fell from on high, as it were from heaven, into the most pernicious doctrines, and made in his fall a gazing on all sides, being great, and now burning as a torch. He fell on the third part of the rivers - His doctrine spread far and wide, particularly in Egypt. And on the fountains of water - wherewith Afric abounds.

11. And the name of the star is called Wormwood - The unparalleled bitterness both of Arius himself and of his followers show the exact propriety of his title. And the third part of the waters became wormwood - A very considerable part of Afric was infected with the same bitter doctrine and Spirit. And many men (though not a third part of them) died - By the cruelty of the Arians.

12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten - Or struck. After the emperor Theodosius died, and the empire was divided into the eastern and the western, the barbarous nations poured in as a flood. The Goths and Hunns in the years 403 and 405 fell upon Italy itself with an impetuous force; and the former, in the year 410, took Rome by storm, and plundered it without mercy. In the year 452 Attila treated the upper part of Italy in the same manner. In 455 Valentinian the Third was killed, and Genseric invited from Afric. He plundered Rome for fourteen days together. Recimer plundered it again in 472. During all these commotions, one province was lost after another, till, in the year 476, Odoacer seized upon Rome, deposed the emperor, and put an end to the empire itself. An eclipse of the sun or moon is termed by the Hebrews, a stroke. Now, as such a darkness does not come all at once, but by degrees, so likewise did the darkness which fell on the Roman, particularly the western empire; for the stroke began long before Odoacer, namely, when the barbarians first conquered the capital city. And the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so that the third part of them was darkened - As under the first, second, and third trumpets by "the earth," "sea, " and "rivers," are to be understood the men that inhabit them; so here by the sun, moon, and stars, may be understood the men that live under them, who are so overwhelmed with calamities in those days of darkness, that they can no longer enjoy the light of heaven: unless it may be thought to imply their being killed; so that the sun, moon, and stars shine to them no longer. The very same expression we find in Ezek. xxxii, 8. "I will darken all the lights of heaven over them." As then the fourth seal transcends the three preceding seals, so does the fourth trumpet the three preceding trumpets. For in this not the third part of the earth, or sea, or rivers only, but of all who are under the sun, are affected. And the day shone not for a third

part thereof - That is, shone with only a third part of its usual brightness. And the night likewise - The moon and stars having lost a third part of their lustre, either with regard to those who, being dead, saw them no longer, or those who saw them with no satisfaction. The three last trumpets have the time of their continuance fixed, and between each of them there is a remarkable pause: whereas between the four former there is no pause, nor is the time of their continuance mentioned; but all together these four seem to take up a little less than four hundred years.

13. And I saw, and heard an angel flying - Between the trumpets of the fourth and fifth angel. In the midst of heaven - The three woes, as we shall see, stretch themselves over the earth from Persia eastward, beyond Italy, westward; all which space had been filled with the gospel by the apostles. In the midst of this lies Patmos, where St. John saw this angel, saying, Woe, woe, woe - Toward the end of the fifth century, there were many presages of approaching calamities. To the inhabitants of the earth - All without exception. Heavy trials were coming on them all. Even while the angel was proclaiming this, the preludes of these three woes were already in motion. These fell more especially on the Jews. As to the prelude of the first woe in Persia, Isdegard II., in 454, was resolved to abolish the sabbath, till he was, by Rabbi Mar, diverted from his purpose. Likewise in the year 474, Phiruz afflicted the Jews much, and compelled many of them to apostatize. A prelude of the second woe was the rise of the Saracens, who, in 510, fell into Arabia and Palestine. To prepare for the third woe, Innocent I., and his successors, not only endeavoured to enlarge their episcopal jurisdiction beyond all bounds, but also their worldly power, by taking every opportunity of encroaching upon the empire, which as yet stood in the way of their unlimited monarchy.

## IX

1. And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star - Far different from that mentioned, chap. viii, 11. This star belongs to the invisible world. The third woe is occasioned by the dragon cast out of heaven; the second takes place at the loosing of the four angels who were bound in the Euphrates. The first is here brought by the angel of the abyss, which is opened by this star, or holy angel. Falling to the earth - Coming swiftly and with great force. And to him was given - when he was come. The key of the bottomless pit - A deep and hideous prison; but different from "the lake of fire."

2. And there arose a smoke out of the pit - The locusts, who afterwards rise out of it, seem to be, as we shall afterwards see, the Persians; agreeable to which, this smoke is their detestable idolatrous doctrine, and false zeal for it, which now broke out in an uncommon paroxysm. As the smoke of a great furnace - where the clouds of it rise thicker and thicker, spread far and wide, and press one upon another, so that the darkness increases continually. And the sun and the air were darkened - A figurative expression, denoting heavy affliction. This smoke occasioned more and more such darkness over the Jews in Persia.

3. And out of the smoke - Not out of the bottomless pit, but from the smoke which issued thence. There went forth locusts - A known emblem of a numerous, hostile, hurtful people. Such were the Persians, from whom the Jews, in the sixth century, suffered beyond expression. In the year 540 their academies were stopped, nor were they permitted to have a president for near fifty years. In 589 this affliction ended; but it began long before 540. The prelude of it was about the year 455

and 47iv, the main storm came on in the reign of Cabades, and lasted from 483 to 532. Toward the beginning of the sixth century, Mar Rab Isaac, president of the academy, was put to death. Hereon followed an insurrection of the Jews, which lasted seven years before they were conquered by the Persians. Some of them were then put to death, but not many; the rest were closely imprisoned. And from this time the nation of the Jews were hated and persecuted by the Persians, till they had well nigh rooted them out. The scorpions of the earth - The most hurtful kind. The scorpions of the air have wings.

4. And it was commanded them - By the secret power of God. Not to hurt the grass, neither any green thing, nor any tree - Neither those of low, middling, or high degree, but only such of them as were not sealed - Principally the unbelieving Israelites. But many who were called Christians suffered with them.

5. Not to kill them - Very few of them were killed: in general, they were imprisoned and variously tormented.

6. The men - That is, the men who are so tormented.

7. And the appearances - This description suits a people neither throughly civilized, nor entirely savage; and such were the Persians of that age. Of the locusts are like horses - With their riders. The Persians excelled in horsemanship. And on their heads are as it were crowns - Turbans. And their faces are as the faces of men - Friendly and agreeable.

8. And they had hair as the hair of women - All the Persians of old gloried in long hair. And their teeth were as the teeth of lions - Breaking and tearing all things in pieces.

9. And the noise of their wings was as the noise of chariots of many horses - With their war-chariots, drawn by many horses, they, as it were, flew to and fro.

10. And they have tails like scorpions - That is, each tail is like a scorpion, not like the tail of a scorpion. To hurt the unsealed men five months - Five prophetic months; that is, seventy-nine common years So long did these calamities last.

11. And they have over them a king - One by whom they are peculiarly directed and governed. His name is Abaddon - Both this and Apollyon signify a destroyer. By this he is distinguished from the dragon, whose proper name is Satan.

12. One woe is past; behold, there come yet two woes after these things - The Persian power, under which was the first woe, was now broken by the Saracens: from this time the first pause made a wide way for the two succeeding woes. In 589, when the first woe ended, Mahomet was twenty years old, and the contentions of the Christians with each other were exceeding great. In 591 Chosroes II. reigned in Persia, who, after the death of the emperor, made dreadful disturbances in the east, Hence Mahomet found an open door for his new religion and empire. And when the usurper Phocas had, in the year 606, not only declared the Bishop of Rome, Boniface III., universal bishop, but also the church of Rome the head of all churches, this was a sure step to advance the Papacy to its utmost height. Thus, after the passing away of the first woe, the second, yea, and the third, quickly followed; as indeed they were both on the way together with it before the first effectually began.

13. And the sixth angel sounded - Under this angel goes forth the second woe. And I heard a voice from the four corners of the golden altar - This golden altar is the heavenly pattern of the Levitical altar of incense. This voice signified that the execution of the wrath of God, mentioned verses 20, 21, ver. 20, 21 should, at no intercession, be delayed any longer.

14. Loose the four angels - To go every way; to the four quarters. These were evil angels, or they would not have been bound. Why, or how long, they were bound we know not.

15. And the four angels were loosed, who were prepared - By loosing them, as well as by their strength and rage. To kill the third part of men - That is, an immense number of them. For the hour, and day, and month, and year - All this agrees with the slaughter which the Saracens made for a long time after Mahomet's death. And with the number of angels let loose agrees the number of their first and most eminent caliphs. These were Ali, Abubeker, Omar, and Osman. Mahomet named Ali, his cousin and son-in-law, for his successor; but he was soon worked out by the rest, till they severally died, and so made room for him. They succeeded each other, and each destroyed innumerable multitudes of men. There are in a prophetic Com. Years. Com. Days. Hour 8 \ Day 196 \ in all 212 years. Month 15 318 / Year 196 117 / Now, the second woe, as also the beginning of the third, has its place between the ceasing of the locusts and the rising of the beast out of the sea, even at the time that the Saracens, who were chiefly cavalry, were in the height of their carnage; from their, first caliph, Abubeker, till they were repulsed from Rome under Leo IV. These 212 years may therefore be reckoned from the year 634 to 847. The gradation in reckoning the time, beginning with the hour and ending with a year, corresponds with their small beginning and vast increase. Before and after Mahomet's death, they had enough to do to settle their affairs at home. Afterwards Abubeker went farther, and in the year 634 gained great advantage over the Persians and Rom. in Syria. Under Omar was the conquest of Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Egypt made. Under Osman, that of Afric, (with the total suppression of the Roman government in the year 647,) of Cyprus, and of all Persia in 651. After Ali was dead, his son Ali Hasen, a peaceable prince, was driven out by Muavia; under whom, and his successors, the power of the Saracens so increased, that within fourscore years after Mahomet's death they had extended their conquests farther than the warlike Roman did in four hundred years.

16. And the number of the horsemen was two hundred millions - Not that so many were ever brought into the field at once, but (if we understand the expression literally) in the course of "the hour, and day, and month, and year." So neither were "the third part of men killed" at once, but during that course of years.

17. And thus I saw the horses and them that sat on them in the vision - St. John seems to add these words, in the vision, to intimate that we are not to take this description just according to the letter. Having breastplates of fire - Fiery red. And hyacinth - Dun blue. And brimstone - A faint yellow. Of the same colour with the fire and smoke and brimstone, which go out of the mouths of their horses. And the heads of their horses are as the heads of lions - That is, fierce and terrible. And out of their mouth goeth fire and smoke and brimstone - This figurative expression may denote the consuming, blinding, all-piercing rage, fierceness, and force of these horsemen.

18. By these three - Which were inseparably joined. Were the third part of men - In the countries they over-ran. Killed - Omar alone, in eleven years and a half, took thirty-six thousand cities or forts. How many men must be killed therein!

19. For the power of these horses is in their mouths, and in their tails - Their riders fight retreating as well as advancing: so that their rear is as terrible as their front. For their tails are like serpents, having heads - Not like the tails of serpents only. They may be fitly compared to the amphisbena, a kind of serpent, which has a short tail, not unlike a head from which it throws out its poison as if it had two heads.

20. And the rest of the men who were not killed - Whom the Saracens did not destroy. It is observable, the countries they over- ran were mostly those where the gospel had been planted. By these plagues - Here the description of the second woe ends. Yet repented not - Though they were called Christians. Of the works of their hands - Presently specified. That they should not worship devils - The invocation of departed saints, whether true, or false, or doubtful, or forged, crept early into the Christian church, and was carried farther and farther; and who knows how many who are invoked as saints are among evil, not good, angels; or how far devils have mingled with such blind worship, and with the wonders wrought on those occasions? And idols - About the year 590, men began to venerate images; and though upright men zealously opposed it, yet, by little and little, images grew into manifest idols. For after much contention, both in the east and west, in the year 787, the worship of images was established by the second Council of Nice. Yet was image worship sharply opposed some time after, by the emperor Theophilus. But when he died, in 842, his widow, Theodoura, established it again; as did the Council at Constantinople in the year 863, and again in 871.

21. Neither repented of their murders, nor of their sorceries - Whoever reads the histories of the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, will find numberless instances of all these in every part of the Christian world. But though God cut off so many of these scandals to the Christian name, yet the rest went on in the same course. Some of them, however, might repent under the plagues which follow.

## X

From the first verse of this chapter to chap. xi. 13, preparation is made for the important trumpet of the seventh angel. It consists of two parts, which run parallel to each other: the former reaches from the first to the seventh verse of this chapter; the latter, from the eighth of this to the thirteenth verse of the eleventh chapter: whence, also, the sixth verse of this chapter is parallel to the eleventh verse. The period to which both these refer begins during the second woe, as appears, chap. xi. 14; but, being once begun, it extends in a continued course far into the trumpet of the seventh angel. Hence many things are represented here which are not fulfilled till long after. So the joyful "consummation of the mystery of God" is spoken of in the seventh verse of this chapter, which yet is not till after "the consummation of the wrath of God," chap. xv, 1. So the ascent of the beast "out of the bottomless pit" is mentioned, chap. xi, 7, which nevertheless is still to come, chap. xvii, 8; and so "the earthquake," by which a tenth part of the great city falls, and the rest are converted, chap. xi, 13, is really later than that by which the same city is "split into three parts," chap. xvi, 19. This is a most necessary observation, whereby we may escape many and great mistakes.

1. And I saw another mighty angel - Another from that "mighty angel," mentioned, chap. v, 2; yet he was a created angel; for he did not swear by himself, verse 6. Clothed with a cloud - In token of his high dignity. And a rainbow upon his head - A lovely token of the divine favour. And yet it is not too glorious for a creature: the woman, chap. xii, 1, is described more glorious still. And his face as the sun - Nor is this too much for a creature: for all the righteous "shall shine forth as the sun," Matt. xiii, 43. And his feet as pillars of fire - Bright as flame.

2. And he had in his hand - His left hand: he swore with his right. He stood with his right foot on the sea, toward the west; his left, on the land, toward the east: so that he looked southward. And so St. John (as Patmos lies near Asia) could conveniently take the book out of his left hand. This sealed book was first in the right hand of him that sat on the throne: thence the Lamb took it, and opened the seals. And now this little book, containing the remainder of the other, is given opened, as it was, to St. John. From this place the Revelation speaks more clearly and less figuratively than before. And he set his right foot upon the sea - Out of which the first beast was to come. And his left foot upon the earth - Out of which was to come the second. The sea may betoken Europe; the earth, Asia; the chief theatres of these great things.

3. And he cried - Uttering the words set down, verse 6. And while he cried, or was crying - At the same instant. Seven thunders uttered their voices - In distinct words, each after the other. Those who spoke these words were glorious, heavenly powers, whose voice was as the loudest thunder.

4. And I heard a voice from heaven - Doubtless from him who had at first commanded him to write, and who presently commands him to take the book; namely, Jesus Christ. Seal up those things which the seven thunders have uttered, and write them not - These are the only things of all which he heard that he is commanded to keep secret: so something peculiarly secret was revealed to the beloved John, besides all the secrets that are written in this book. At the same time we are prevented from inquiring what it was which these thunders uttered: suffice that we may know all the contents of the opened book, and of the oath of the angel.

5. And the angel - This manifestation of things to come under the trumpet of the seventh angel hath a twofold introduction: first, the angel speaks for God, verse 7; then Christ speaks for himself, chap. xi, 3. The angel appeals to the prophets of former times; Christ, to his own two witnesses. Whom I saw standing upon the earth and upon the sea, lifted up his right hand toward heaven - As yet the dragon was in heaven. When he is cast thence he brings the third and most dreadful woe on the earth and sea: so that it seems as if there would be no end of calamities. Therefore the angel comprises, in his posture and in his oath, both heaven, sea, and earth, and makes on the part of the eternal God and almighty Creator, a solemn protestation, that he will assert his kingly authority against all his enemies. He lifted up his right hand toward heaven - The angel in Daniel, Dan. xii, 7, (not improbably the same angel,) lifted up both his hands.

6. And swear - The six preceding trumpets pass without any such solemnity. It is the trumpet of the seventh angel alone which is confirmed by so high an oath. By him that liveth for ever and ever - Before whom a thousand years are but a day. Who created the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the things that are therein - And, consequently, has the sovereign power over all: therefore, all his enemies, though they rage a while in heaven, on the sea, and on the earth, yet must give place to him. That there shall be no more a time - "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, the mystery of God shall be fulfilled:" that is, a time, a chronos, shall not expire before that mystery is fulfilled. A chronos (1111 years) will nearly pass before then, but not quite. The period, then, which we may term a non-chronos (not a whole time) must be a little, and not much, shorter than this. The non-chronos here mentioned seems to begin in the year 800, (when Charles the Great instituted in the west a new line of emperors, or of "many kings,") to end in the year 1836; and to contain, among other things, the "short time" of the third woe, the "three times and a half" of the woman in the wilderness, and the "duration" of the beast.

7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel - Who sounded not only at the beginning of those days, but from the beginning to the end. The mystery of God shall be fulfilled - It is said,

chap. xvii, 17, "The word of God shall be fulfilled." The word of God is fulfilled by the destruction of the beast; the mystery, by the removal of the dragon. But these great events are so near together, that they are here mentioned as one. The beginning of them is in heaven, as soon as the seventh trumpet sounds; the end is on the earth and the sea. So long as the third woe remains on the earth and the sea, the mystery of God is not fulfilled. And the angel's swearing is peculiarly for the comfort of holy men, who are afflicted under that woe. Indeed the wrath of God must be first fulfilled, by the pouring out of the phials: and then comes the joyful fulfilling of the mystery of God. As he hath declared to his servants the prophets - The accomplishment exactly answering the prediction. The ancient prophecies relate partly to that grand period, from the birth of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem; partly to the time of the seventh angel, wherein they will be fully accomplished. To the seventh trumpet belongs all that occurs from chap. xi, 15 - chap. xxii, 5. And the third woe, which takes place under the same, properly stands, chap. xii, 12, xiii, 1-18.

8. And - what follows from this verse to chap. xi, 13, runs parallel with the oath of the angel, and with "the fulfilling of the mystery of God," as it follows under the trumpet of the seventh angel; what is said, verse 11, concerning St. John's "prophesying again," is unfolded immediately after; what is said, verse 7, concerning "the fulfilling the mystery of God," is unfolded, chap. xi, 15-19 and in the following chapters.

9. Eat it up - The like was commanded to Ezekiel. This was an emblem of thoroughly considering and digesting it. And it will make thy belly bitter, but it will be sweet as honey in thy mouth - The sweetness betokens the many good things which follow, chap. xi, 1, 15, &c.; the bitterness, the evils which succeed under the third woe.

11. Thou must prophesy again - Of the mystery of God; of which the ancient prophets had prophesied before. And he did prophesy, by "measuring the temple," chap. xi, 1; as a prophecy may be delivered either by words or actions. Concerning people, and nations, and tongues, and many kings - The people, nations, and tongues are contemporary; but the kings, being many, succeed one another. These kings are not mentioned for their own sake, but with a view to the "holy city," chap. xi, 2. Here is a reference to the great kingdoms in Spain, England, Italy, &c., which arose from the eighth century; or at least underwent a considerable change, as France and Germany in particular; to the Christian, afterward Turkish, empire in the east; and especially to the various potentates, who have successively reigned at or over Jerusalem, and do now, at least titularly, reign over it.

## XI

In this chapter is shown how it will fare with "the holy city," till the mystery of God is fulfilled; in the twelfth, what will befall the woman, who is delivered of the man-child; in the thirteenth, how it will be with the kingdom of Christ, while the "two beasts" are in the height of their power. And there was given me - By Christ, as appears from the third verse. And he said, Arise - Probably he was sitting to write. And measure the temple of God - At Jerusalem, where he was placed in the vision. Of this we have a large description by Ezekiel, Ezek. xl - xlviii; concerning which we may observe,

1. Ezekiel's prophecy was not fulfilled at the return from the Babylonish captivity.

2. Yet it does not refer to the "New Jerusalem," which is far more gloriously described.
3. It must infallibly be fulfilled even then "when they are ashamed of all that they have done," Ezek. xliii, 11.
4. Ezekiel speaks of the same temple which is treated of here.
5. As all things are there so largely described, St. John is shorter and refers thereto.

2. But the court which is without the temple - The old temple had a court in the open air, for the heathens who worshipped the God of Israel. Cast out - Of thy account. And measure it not - As not being holy In so high a degree. And they shall tread - Inhabit. The holy city - Jerusalem, Matt. iv, 5. So they began to do, before St. John wrote. And it has been trodden almost ever since by the Romans, Persians, Saracens, and Turks. But that severe kind of treading which is here peculiarly spoken of, will not be till under the trumpet of the seventh angel, and toward the end of the troublous times. This will continue but forty-two common months, or twelve hundred and sixty common days; being but a small part of the non-chronos.

3. And I - Christ. Will give to my two witnesses - These seem to be two prophets; two select, eminent instruments. Some have supposed (though without foundation) that they are Moses and Elijah, whom they resemble in several respects. To prophesy twelve hundred and sixty days - Common days, that is, an hundred and eighty weeks. So long will they prophesy, (even while that last and sharp treading of the holy city continues,) both by word and deed, witnessing that Jesus is the Son of God, the heir of all things, and exhorting all men to repent, and fear, and glorify God. Clothed in sackcloth - The habit of the deepest mourners, out of sorrow and concern for the people.

4. These are the two olive trees - That is, as Zerubbabel and Joshua, the two olive trees spoken of by Zechariah, Zech. iii, 9, iv, 10, were then the two chosen instruments in God's hand, even so shall these. be in their season. Being themselves full of the unction of the Holy One, they shall continually transmit the same to others also. And the two candlesticks - Burning and shining lights. Standing before the Lord of the earth - Always waiting on God, without the help of man, and asserting his right over the earth and all things therein.

5. If any would kill them - As the Israelites would have done Moses and Aaron, Num. xvi, 41. He must be killed thus - By that devouring fire.

6. These have power - And they use that power. See verse 10. To shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophesying - During those "twelve hundred and sixty days." And have power over the waters - In and near Jerusalem. To turn them into blood - As Moses did those in Egypt. And to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will - This is not said of Moses or Elijah, or any mere man besides. And how is it possible to understand this otherwise than of two individual persons?

7. And when they shall have finished their testimony - Till then they are invincible. The wild beast - Hereafter to be described. That ascendeth - First out of the sea, chap. xiii, 1, and then out of the bottomless pit, chap. xvii, 8. Shall make war with them - It is at his last ascent, not out of the sea, but the bottomless pit, that the beast makes war upon the two witnesses. And even hereby is fixed the time of "treading the holy city," and of the "two witnesses." That time ends after the ascent of the beast out of the abyss, and yet before the fulfilling of the mystery. And shall conquer them - The fire no longer proceeding out of their mouth when they have finished their work. And kill them - These will be among the last martyrs, though not the last of all.

8. And their bodies shall be - Perhaps hanging on a cross. In the street of the great city - Of Jerusalem, a far greater city, than any other in those parts. This is described both spiritually and historically: spiritually, as it is called Sodom Isaiah i, and Egypt; on account of the same abominations abounding there, at the time of the witnesses, as did once in Egypt and Sodom. Historically: Where also their Lord was crucified - This possibly refers to the very ground where his cross stood. Constantine the Great inclosed this within the walls of the city. Perhaps on that very spot will their bodies be exposed.

9. Three days and a half - So exactly are the times set down in this prophecy. If we suppose this time began in the evening, and ended in the morning, and included (which is no way impossible) Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the weekly festival of the Turkish people, the Jewish tribes, and the Christian tongues; then all these together, with the heathen nations, would have full leisure to gaze upon and rejoice over them.

10. And they that dwell upon the earth - Perhaps this expression may peculiarly denote earthly-minded men. Shall make merry - As did the Philistines over Samson. And send gifts to one another - Both Turks, and Jews, and heathens, and false Christians.

11. And great fear fell upon them that saw them - And now knew that God was on their side.

12. And I heard a great voice - Designed for all to hear. And they went up to heaven, and their enemies beheld them - who had not taken notice of their rising again; by which some had been convinced before.

13. And there was a great earthquake and the tenth part of the city fell - We have here an unanswerable proof that this city is not Babylon or Rome, but Jerusalem. For Babylon shall be wholly burned before the fulfilling of the mystery of God. But this city is not burned at all; on the contrary, at the fulfilling of that mystery, a tenth part of it is destroyed by an earthquake, and the other nine parts converted. And there were slain in the earthquake seven thousand men - Being a tenth part of the inhabitants, who therefore were seventy thousand in all. And the rest - The remaining sixty-three thousand were converted: a grand step toward the fulfilling of the mystery of God. Such a conversion we no where else read of. So there shall be a larger as well as holier church at Jerusalem than ever was yet. Were terrified - Blessed terror! And gave glory - The character of true conversion, Jer. xiii, 16. To the God of heaven - He is styled, "The Lord of the earth," verse 4, when he declares his right over the earth by the two witnesses; but the God of heaven, when he not only gives rain from heaven after the most afflicting drought, but also declares his majesty from heaven, by taking his witnesses up into it. When the whole multitude gives glory to the God of heaven, then that "treading of the holy city" ceases. This is the point so long aimed at, the desired "fulfilling of the mystery of God," when the divine promises are so richly fulfilled on those who have gone through so great afflictions. All this is here related together, that whereas the first and second woe went forth in the east, the rest of the eastern affairs being added at once, the description of the western might afterwards remain unbroken. It may be useful here to see how the things here spoken of, and those hereafter described, follow each other in their order.

1. The angel swears; the non-chronos begins; John eats the book; the many kings arise.
2. The non-chronos and the "many kings" being on the decline, that treading" begins, and the "two witnesses" appear.
3. The beast, after he has with the ten kings destroyed Babylon, wars with them and kills them. After three days and an half they revive and ascend to heaven. There

is a great earthquake in the holy city: seven thousand perish, and the rest are converted. The "treading" of the city by the gentiles ends.

4. The beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies are assembled to fight against the Great King.
5. Multitudes of his enemies are killed, and the beast and the false prophet cast alive into the lake of fire.
6. while John measures the temple of God and the altar with the worshippers, the true worship of God is set up. The nations who had trodden the holy city are converted. Hereby the mystery of God is fulfilled.
7. Satan is imprisoned. Being released for a time, he, with Gog and Magog, makes his last assault upon Jerusalem.

14. The second woe is past - The butchery made by the Saracens ceased about the year 847, when their power was so broken by Charles the Great that they never recovered it. Behold, the third woe cometh quickly - Its prelude came while the Roman see took all opportunities of laying claim to its beloved universality, and enlarging its power and grandeur. And in the year 755 the bishop of Rome became a secular prince, by king Pepin's giving him the exarchate of Lombardy. The beginning of the third woe itself stands, chap. xii, 12.

15. And the seventh angel sounded - This trumpet contains the most important and joyful events, and renders all the former trumpets matter of joy to all the inhabitants of heaven. The allusion therefore in this and all the trumpets is to those used in festal solemnities. All these seven trumpets were heard in heaven: perhaps the seventh shall once be heard on earth also, 1 Thess. iv, 16. And there were great voices - From the several citizens of heaven. At the opening of the seventh seal "there was silence in heaven;" at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, great voices. This alone is sufficient to show that the seven seals and seven trumpets do not run parallel to each other. As soon as the seventh angel sounds, the kingdom falls to God and his Christ. This immediately appears in heaven, and is there celebrated with joyful praise. But on earth several dreadful occurrences are to appear first. This trumpet comprises all that follows from these voices to chap. xxii, 5. The kingdom of the world - That is, the royal government over the whole world, and all its kingdoms, Zech. xiv, 9. Is become the kingdom of the Lord - This province has been in the enemy's hands: it now returns to its rightful Master. In the Old Testament, from Moses to Samuel, God himself was the King of his own people. And the same will be in the New Testament: he will himself reign over the Israel of God. And of his Christ - This appellation is now first given him, since the introduction of the book, on the mention of the kingdom devolving upon him, under the seventh trumpet. Prophets and priests were anointed, but more especially kings: whence that term, the anointed, is applied only to a king. Accordingly, whenever the Messiah is mentioned in scripture, his kingdom is implied. Is become - In reality, all things (and so the kingdom of the world) are God's in all ages: yet Satan and the present world, with its kings and lords, are risen against the Lord and against his Anointed. God now puts an end to this monstrous rebellion, and maintains his right to all things. And this appears in an entirely new manner, as soon as the seventh angel sounds.

16. And the four and twenty elders - These shall reign over the earth, chap. v, 10. Who sit before God on their thrones - which we do not read of any angel.

17. The Almighty - He who hath all things in his power as the only Governor of them. Who is, and who was - God is frequently styled, "He who is, and who was, and who is to come." but now he is actually come, the words, "who is to come," are, as it were, swallowed up. When it is said,

We thank thee that thou hast taken thy great power, it is all one as, "We thank thee that thou art come." This whole thanksgiving is partly an enlargement on the two great points mentioned in the fifteenth verse; partly a summary of what is hereafter more distinctly related. Here it is mentioned, how the kingdom is the Lord's; afterwards, how it is the kingdom of his Christ. Thou hast taken thy great power - This is the beginning of what is done under the trumpet of the seventh angel. God has never ceased to use his power; but he has suffered his enemies to oppose it, which he will now suffer no more.

18. And the heathen nations were wroth - At the breaking out of the power and kingdom of God. This wrath of the heathens now rises to the highest pitch; but it meets the wrath of the Almighty, and melts away. In this verse is described both the going forth and the end of God's wrath, which together take up several ages. And the time of the dead is come - Both of the quick and dead, of whom those already dead are far the more numerous part. That they be judged - This, being infallibly certain, they speak of as already present. And to give a reward - At the coming of Christ, chap. xxii, 12; but of free grace, not of debt,

1. To his servants the prophets:
2. To his saints: to them who were eminently holy:
3. To them that fear his name: these are the lowest class. Those who do not even fear God will have no reward from him. Small and great - All universally, young and old, high and low, rich and poor. And to destroy them that destroyed the earth - The earth was destroyed by the "great whore" in particular, chap. xix, 2; xvii, 2, 5; but likewise in general, by the open rage and hate of wicked men against all that is good; by wars, and the various destruction and desolation naturally flowing therefrom; by such laws and constitutions as hinder much good, and occasion many offenses and calamities; by public scandals, whereby a door is opened for all dissoluteness and unrighteousness; by abuse of secular and spiritual powers; by evil doctrines, maxims, and counsels; by open violence and persecution; and by sins crying to God to send plagues upon the earth. This great work of God, destroying the destroyers, under the trumpet of the seventh angel, is not the third woe, but matter of joy, for which the elders solemnly give thanks. All the woes, and particularly the third, go forth over those "who dwell upon the earth;" but this destruction, over those "who destroy the earth," and were also instruments of that woe.

19. And the temple of God-The inmost part of it. Was opened in heaven - And hereby is opened a new scene of the most momentous things, that we may see how the contents of the seventh trumpet are executed; and, notwithstanding the greatest opposition, (particularly by the third woe,) brought to a glorious conclusion. And the ark of the covenant was seen in his temple - The ark of the covenant which was made by Moses was not in the second temple, being probably burnt with the first temple by the Chaldeans. But here is the heavenly ark of the everlasting covenant, the shadow of which was under the Old Testament, Heb. ix, 4. The inhabitants of heaven saw the ark before: St. John also saw it now; for a testimony, that what God had promised, should be fulfilled to the uttermost. And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail - The very same there are, and in the same order, when the seventh angel has poured out his phial; chap. xvi, 17-xxi, one place answers the other. What the trumpet here denounces in heaven, is there executed by the phial upon earth. First it is shown what will be done; and afterwards it is done.

## XII

The great vision of this book goes straight forward, from the fourth to the twenty-second chapter. Only the tenth, with part of the eleventh chapter, was a kind of introduction to the trumpet of the seventh angel; after which it is said, "The second woe is past: behold, the third woe cometh quickly." Immediately the seventh angel sounds, under whom the third woe goes forth. And to this trumpet belongs all that is related to the end of the book. Verse

1. And a great sign was seen in heaven - Not only by St. John, but many heavenly spectators represented in the vision. A sign means something that has an uncommon appearance, and from which we infer that some unusual thing will follow. A woman - The emblem of the church of Christ, as she is originally of Israel, though built and enlarged on all sides by the addition of heathen converts; and as she will hereafter appear, when all her "natural branches are again "grafted in." She is at present on earth; and yet, with regard to her union with Christ, may be said to be in heaven, Eph. ii, 6. Accordingly, she is described as both assaulted and defended in heaven, verses 4, 7. chap. xii, 4, 7 Clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars - These figurative expressions must he so interpreted as to preserve a due proportion between them. So, in Joseph's dream, the sun betokened his father; the moon, his mother; the stars, their children. There may be some such resemblance here; and as the prophecy points out the "power over all nations," perhaps the sun may betoken the Christian world; the moon, the Mahometans, who also carry the moon in their ensigns; and the crown of twelve stars, the twelve tribes of Israel; which are smaller than the sun and moon. The whole of this chapter answers the state of the church from the ninth century to this time.

2. And being with child she crieth, travailing in birth - The very pain, without any outward opposition, would constrain a woman in travail to cry out. These cries, throes, and pains to be delivered, were the painful longings, the sighs, and prayers of the saints for the coming of the kingdom of God. The woman groaned and travailed in spirit, that Christ might appear, as the Shepherd and King of all nations.

3. And behold a great red dragon - His fiery-red colour denoting his disposition. Having seven heads - Implying vast wisdom. And ten horns - Perhaps on the seventh head; emblems of mighty power and strength, which he still retained. And seven diadems on his heads - Not properly crowns, but costly bindings, such as kings anciently wore; for, though fallen, he was a great potentate still, even "the prince of this world."

4. And his tail - His falsehood and subtilty. Draweth - As a train. The third part - A very large number. Of the stars of heaven - The Christians and their teachers, who before sat in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. And casteth them to the earth - Utterly deprives them of all those heavenly blessings. This is properly a part of the description of the dragon, who was not yet himself on earth, but in heaven: consequently, this casting them down was between the beginning of the seventh trumpet and the beginning of the third woe; or between the year 847 and the year 947; at which time pestilent doctrines, particularly that of the Manichees in the east, drew abundance of people from the truth. And the dragon stood before the woman, that when she had brought forth, he might devour the child - That he might hinder the kingdom of Christ from spreading abroad, as it does under this trumpet.

5. And she brought forth a man child - Even Christ, considered not in his person, but in his kingdom. In the ninth age, many nations with their princes were added to the Christian church.

Who was to rule all nations - When his time is come. And her child - Which was already in heaven, as were the woman and the dragon. Was caught up to God - Taken utterly out of his reach.

6. And the woman fled into the wilderness - This wilderness is undoubtedly on earth, where the woman also herself is now supposed to be. It betokens that part of the earth where, after having brought forth, she found a new abode. And this must be in Europe; as Asia and Afric were wholly in the hands of the Turks and Saracens; and in a part of it where the woman had not been before. In this wilderness, God had already prepared a place; that is, made it safe and convenient for her. The wilderness is, those countries of Europe which lie on this side the Danube; for the countries which lie beyond it had received Christianity before. That they may feed her - That the people of that place may provide all things needful for her. Twelve hundred and sixty days - So many prophetic days, which are not, as some have supposed, twelve hundred and sixty, but seven hundred and seventy-seven, common years. This Bengelius has shown at large in his German Introduction. These we may compute from the year 847 to 1524. So long the woman enjoyed a safe and convenient place in Europe, which was chiefly Bohemia; where she was fed, till God provided for her more plentifully at the Reformation.

7. And there was war in heaven - Here Satan makes his grand opposition to the kingdom of God; but an end is now put to his accusing the saints before God. The cause goes against him, verses 10, 11, chap. xii, 10, 11 and Michael executes the sentence. That Michael is a created angel, appears from his not daring, in disputing with Satan, Jude 9, to bring a railing accusation; but only saying, "The Lord rebuke thee." And this modesty is implied in his very name; for Michael signifies, "Who is like God?" which implies also his deep reverence toward God, and distance from all self-exaltation. Satan would be like God: the very name of Michael asks, "Who is like God?" Not Satan; not the highest archangel. It is he likewise that is afterward employed to seize, bind, and imprison that proud spirit.

8. And he prevailed not - The dragon himself is principally mentioned; but his angels, likewise, are to be understood. Neither was this place found any more in heaven - So till now he had a place in heaven. How deep a mystery is this! One may compare this with Luke x, 18; Eph. ii, 2; iv, 8; vi, 12.

9. And the great dragon was cast out - It is not yet said, unto the earth - He was cast out of heaven; and at this the inhabitants of heaven rejoice. He is termed the great dragon, as appearing here in that shape, to intimate his poisonous and cruel disposition. The ancient serpent - In allusion to his deceiving Eve in that form. Dragons are a kind of large serpent. Who is called the Devil and Satan - These are words of exactly the same meaning; only the former is Greek; the latter, Hebrew; denoting the grand adversary of all the saints, whether Jews or gentiles. He has deceived the whole world - Not only in their first parents, but through all ages, and in all countries, into unbelief and all wickedness; into the hating and persecuting faith and all goodness. He was cast out unto the earth - He was cast out of heaven; and being cast out thence, himself came to the earth. Nor had he been unemployed on the earth before, although his ordinary abode was in heaven.

10. Now is come - Hence it is evident that all this chapter belongs to the trumpet of the seventh angel. In the eleventh chapter, from the fifteenth to the eighteenth verse, are proposed the contents of this extensive trumpet; the execution of which is copiously described in this and the following chapters. The salvation - Of the saints. The might - Whereby the enemy is cast out. The kingdom - Here the majesty of God is shown. And the power of his Christ - Which he will exert against the beast; and when he also is taken away, then will the kingdom be ascribed to Christ himself, chap.

xix, 16; xx, 4. The accuser of our brethren - So long as they remained on earth. This great voice, therefore, was the voice of men only. Who accused them before our God day and night - Amazing malice of Satan, and patience of God!

11. And they have overcome him - Carried the cause against him. By the blood of the Lamb - Which cleanses the soul from all sin, and so leaves no room for accusing. And by the word of their testimony - The word of God, which they believed and testified, even unto death. So, for instance, died Olam, king of Sweden, in the year 900, whom his own subjects would have compelled to idolatry; and, upon his refusal, slew as a sacrifice to the idol which he would not worship. So did multitudes of Bohemian Christians, in the year 916, when queen Drahomire raised a severe persecution, wherein many "loved not their lives unto the death."

12. Woe to the earth and the sea - This is the fourth and last denunciation of the third woe, the most grievous of all. The first was only, the second chiefly, on the earth, Asia; the third, both on the earth and the sea, Europe. The earth is mentioned first, because it began in Asia, before the beast brought it on Europe. He knoweth he hath but a little time - Which extends from his casting out of heaven to his being cast into the abyss. We are now come to a most important period of time. The non- chronos hastens to an end. We live in the little time wherein Satan hath great wrath; and this little time is now upon the decline. We are in the "time, times, and half a time," wherein the woman is "fed in the wilderness;" yea, the last part of it, "the half time," is begun. We are, as will be shown, towards the close of the "forty-two months" of the beast; and when his number is fulfilled, grievous things will be. Let him who does not regard the being seized by the wrath of the devil; the falling unawares into the general temptation; the being born away, by the most dreadful violence, into the worship of the beast and his image, and, consequently, drinking the unmixed wine of the wrath of God, and being tormented day and night for ever and ever in the lake of fire and brimstone; let him also who is confident that he can make his way through all these by his own wisdom and strength, without need of any such peculiar preservative as the word of this prophecy affords; let him, I say, go hence. But let him who does not take these warnings for senseless outcries, and blind alarms, beg of God, with all possible earnestness, to give him his heavenly light herein. God has not given this prophecy, in so solemn a manner, only to show his providence over his church, but also that his servants may know at all times in what particular period they are. And the more dangerous any period of time is, the greater is the help which it affords. But where may we fix the beginning and end of the little time? which is probably four-fifths of a chronos, or somewhat above 888 years. This, which is the time of the third woe, may reach from 947, to the year 1836. For,

1. The short interval of the second woe, (which woe ended in the year 840,) and the 777 years of the woman, which began about the year 847, quickly after which followed the war in heaven, fix the beginning not long after 8lxiv, and thus the third woe falls in the tenth century, extending from 900 to 1000; called the dark, the iron, the unhappy age.
2. If we compare the length of the third woe with the period of time which succeeds it in the twentieth chapter, it is but a little time to that vast space which reaches from the beginning of the non-chronos to the end of the world.

13. And when the dragon saw - That he could no longer accuse the saints in heaven, he turned his wrath to do all possible mischief on earth. He persecuted the woman - The ancient persecutions of the church were mentioned, chap. i, 9, ii, 10, vii, 14; but this persecution came after her flight, verse 6, just at the beginning of the third woe. Accordingly, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the

church was furiously persecuted by several heathen powers. In Prussia, king Adelbert was killed in the year 997, king Brunus in 1008; and when king Stephen encouraged Christianity in Hungary, he met with violent opposition. After his death, the heathens in Hungary set themselves to root it out, and prevailed for several years. About the same time, the army of the emperor, Henry the Third, was totally overthrown by the Vandals. These, and all the accounts of those times, show with what fury the dragon then persecuted the woman.

14. And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place - Eagles are the usual symbols of great potentates. So Ezek. xvii, 3, by "a great eagle', means the king of Babylon. Here the great eagle is the Roman empire; the two wings, the eastern and western branches of it. A place in the wilderness was mentioned in the sixth verse also; but it is not the same which is mentioned here. In the text there follow one after the other,

1. The dragon's waiting to devour the child.
2. The birth of the child, which is caught up to God.
3. The fleeing of the woman into the wilderness.
4. The war in heaven, and the casting out of the dragon.
5. The beginning of the third woe.
6. The persecution raised by the dragon against the woman.
7. The woman's flying away upon the eagle's wings. In like manner there follow one after the other,
    1. The beginning of the twelve hundred and sixty days.
    2. The beginning of the little time.
    3. The beginning of the time, times, and half a time. This third period partly coincides both with the first and the second. After the beginning of the twelve hundred and sixty days, or rather of the third woe, Christianity was exceedingly propagated, in the midst of various persecutions. About the year 948 it was again settled in Denmark; in 965, in Poland and Silesia; in 980, through all Russia. In 997 it was brought into Hungary; into Sweden and Norway, both before and after. Transylvania received it about 1000; and, soon after, other parts of Dacia. Now, all the countries in which Christianity was settled between the beginning of the twelve hundred and sixty days, and the imprisonment of the dragon, may be understood by the wilderness, and by her place in particular. This place contained many countries; so that Christianity now reached, in an uninterrupted tract, from the eastern to the western empire; and both the emperors now lent their wings to the woman, and provided a safe abode for her. Where she is fed - By God rather than man; having little human help. For a time, and times, and half a time - The length of the several periods here mentioned seems to be nearly this: - YEARS
        1. The non-chronos contains less than 1111
        2. The little time 888
        3. The time, times, and half a time 777
        4. The time of the beast 666 And comparing the prophecy and history together, they seem to begin and end nearly thus:

1. The non-chronos extends .from about 800 to 1836
2. The 1260 days of the woman from 847-1524
3. The little time 947-1836
4. The time, time, and half 1058-1836
5. The time of the beast is between the beginning and end of the three times and a half. In the year 1058 the empires had a good understanding with each other, and both protected the woman. The bishops of Rome, likewise, particularly Victor II., were duly subordinate to the emperor. We may observe, the twelve hundred and sixty days of the woman, from 847 to 1524, and the three times and a half, refer to the same wilderness. But in the former part of the twelve hundred and sixty days, before the three times and an half began, namely, from the year 847 to 1058, she was fed by others, being little able to help herself; whereas, from 1058 to 1524, she is both fed by others, and has food herself. To this the sciences transplanted into the west from the eastern countries much contributed; the scriptures, in the original tongues, brought into the west of Europe by the Jews and Greeks, much more; and most of all, the Reformation, grounded on those scriptures.

15. Water is an emblem of a great people; this water, of the Turks in particular. About the year 1060 they overran the Christian part of Asia. Afterward, they poured into Europe, and spread farther and farther, till they had overflowed many nations.

16. But the earth helped the woman - The powers of the earth; and indeed she needed help through this whole period. "The time" was from 1058 to 1280; during which the Turkish flood ran higher and higher, though frequently repressed by the emperors, or their generals, helping the woman. "The" two "times" were from 1280 to 1725. During these likewise the Turkish power flowed far and wide; but still from time to time the princes of the earth helped the woman, that she was not carried away by it. "The half time" is from 1725 to 1836. In the beginning of this period the Turks began to meddle with the affairs of Persia: wherein they have so entangled themselves, as to be the less able to prevail against the two remaining Christian empires. Yet this flood still reaches the woman "in her place;" and will, till near the end of the "half time," itself be swallowed up, perhaps by means of Russia, which is risen in the room of the eastern empire.

17. And the dragon was wroth - Anew, because he could not cause her to be carried away by the stream. And he went forth - Into other lands. To make war with the rest of her seed - Real Christians, living under heathen or Turkish governors.

## XIII

1. And I stood on the sand of the sea - This also was in the vision. And I saw - Soon after the woman flew away. A wild beast coming up - He comes up twice; first from the sea, then from the abyss. He comes from the sea before the seven phials; "the great whore" comes after them. O reader, this is a subject wherein we also are deeply concerned, and which must be treated, not as a point

of curiosity, but as a solemn warning from God! The danger is near. Be armed both against force and fraud, even with the whole armour of God. Out of the sea - That is, Europe. So the three woes (the first being in Persia, the second about the Euphrates) move in a line from east to west. This beast is the Romish Papacy, as it came to a point six hundred years since, stands now, and will for some time longer. To this, and no other power on earth, agrees the whole text, and every part of it in every point; as we may see, with the utmost evidence, from the propositions following: - PROP. 1. It is one and the same beast, having seven heads, and ten horns, which is described in this and in the seventeenth chapter. Of consequence, his heads are the same, and his horns also. PROP. 2. This beast is a spiritually secular power, opposite to the kingdom of Christ. A power not merely spiritual or ecclesiastical, nor merely secular or political but a mixture of both. He is a secular prince; for a crown, yea, and a kingdom are ascribed to him. And yet he is not merely secular; for he is also a false prophet. PROP. 3. The beast has a strict connection with the city of Rome. This clearly appears from the seventeenth chapter. PROP. 4. The beast is now existing. He is not past. for Rome is now existing; and it is not till after the destruction of Rome that the beast is thrown into the lake. He is not altogether to come: for the second woe is long since past, after which the third came quickly; and presently after it began, the beast rose out of the sea. Therefore, whatever he is, he is now existing. PROP. 5. The beast is the Romish Papacy. This manifestly follows from the third and fourth propositions; the beast has a strict connection with the city of Rome; and the beast is now existing: therefore, either there is some other power more strictly connected with that city, or the Pope is the beast. PROP. 6. The Papacy, or papal kingdom, began long ago. The most remarkable particulars relating to this are here subjoined; taken so high as abundantly to show the rise of the beast, and brought down as low as our own time, in order to throw a light on the following part of the prophecy: A.D. 1033. Benedict the Ninth, a child of eleven years old, is bishop of Rome, and occasions grievous disorders for above twenty years. A.D. 1048. Damasus II. introduces the use of the triple crown. A.D. 1058. The church of Milan is, after long opposition, subjected to the Roman. A.D. 1073. Hildebrand, or Gregory VII., comes to the throne. A.D. 1076. He deposes and excommunicates the emperor. A.D. 1077. He uses him shamefully and absolves him. A.D. 1080. He excommunicates him again, and sends a crown to Rodulph, his competitor. A.D. 1083. Rome is taken. Gregory flees. Clement is made Pope, and crowns the emperor. A.D. 1085. Gregory VII. dies at Salerno. A.D. 1095. Urban II. holds the first Popish council, at Clermont and gives rise to the crusades. A.D. 1111. Paschal II. quarrels furiously with the emperor. A.D. 1123. The first western general council in the Lateran. The marriage of priests is forbidden. A.D. 1132. Innocent II declares the emperor to be the Pope's liege-man, or vassal. A.D. 1143. The Roman set up a governor of their own, independent on Innocent II. He excommunicates them, and dies. Celestine II. is, by an important innovation, chosen to the Popedom without the suffrage of the people; the right of choosing the Pope is taken from the people, and afterward from the clergy, and lodged in the Cardinals alone. A.D. 1152. Eugene II. assumes the power of canonizing saints. A.D. 1155. Adrian IV. puts Arnold of Brixia to death for speaking against the secular power of the Papacy. A.D. 1159. Victor IV. is elected and crowned. But Alexander III. conquers him and his successor. A.D. 1168. Alexander III. excommunicates the emperor, and brings him so low, that, A.D. 1177. he submits to the Pope's setting his foot on his neck. A.D. 1204. Innocent III. sets up the Inquisition against the Vaudois. A.D. 1208. He proclaims a crusade against them. A.D. 1300. Boniface VIII. introduces the year of jubilee. A.D. 1305. The Pope's residence is removed to Avignon. A.D. 1377. It is removed back to Rome. A.D. 1378. The fifty years' schism begins. A.D. 1449. Felix V., the

last Antipope, submits to Nicholas V. A.D. 1517. The Reformation begins. A.D. 1527. Rome is taken and plundered. A.D. 1557. Charles V. resigns the empire; Ferdinand I. thinks the being crowned by the Pope superfluous. A.D. 1564. Pius IV. confirms the Council of Trent. A.D. 1682. Doctrines highly derogatory to the Papal authority are openly taught in France. A.D. 1713. The constitution Unigenitus. A.D. 1721. Pope Gregory VII. canonized anew. He who compares this short table with what will be observed, verse 3, and chap. xvii, 10, will see that the ascent of the beast out of the sea must needs be fixed toward the beginning of it; and not higher than Gregory VII., nor lower than Alexander III. The secular princes now favoured the kingdom of Christ; but the bishops of Rome vehemently opposed it. These at first were plain ministers or pastors of the Christian congregation at Rome, but by degrees they rose to an eminence of honour and power over all their brethren till, about the time of Gregory VII. (and so ever since) they assumed all the ensigns of royal majesty; yea, of a majesty and power far superior to that of all other potentates on earth. We are not here considering their false doctrines, but their unbounded power. When we think of those, we are to look at the false prophet, who is also termed a wild beast at his ascent out of the earth. But the first beast then properly arose, when, after several preludes thereto, the Pope raised himself above the emperor. PROP. 7. Hildebrand, or Gregory VII., is the proper founder of the papal kingdom. All the patrons of the Papacy allow that he made many considerable additions to it; and this very thing constituted the beast, by completing the spiritual kingdom: the new maxims and the new actions of Gregory all proclaim this. Some of his maxims are,

1. That the bishop of Rome alone is universal bishop.
2. That he alone can depose bishops, or receive them again.
3. That he alone has power to make new laws in the church.
4. That he alone ought to use the ensigns of royalty.
5. That all princes ought to kiss his foot.
6. That the name of Pope is the only name under heaven; and that his name alone should be recited in the churches.
7. That he has a power to depose emperors.
8. That no general synod can be convened but by him.
9. That no book is canonical without his authority.
10. That none upon earth can repeal his sentence, but he alone can repeal any sentence.
11. That he is subject to no human judgment.
12. That no power dare to pass sentence on one who appeals to the Pope.
13. That all weighty causes everywhere ought to be referred to him.
14. That the Roman church never did, nor ever can, err.
15. That the Roman bishop, canonically ordained, is immediately made holy, by the merits of St. Peter.
16. That he can absolve subjects from their allegiance. These the most eminent Romish writers own to be his genuine sayings. And his actions agree with his words. Hitherto the Popes had been subject to the emperors, though often unwillingly; but now the Pope began himself, under a spiritual pretext, to act the emperor of the whole Christian world: the immediate dispute was, about the investiture of bishops, the right of which each claimed to himself. And now was the time for the Pope either to give up, or establish his empire forever: to decide

which, Gregory excommunicated the emperor Henry IV.; "having first," says Platina, "deprived him of all his dignities." The sentence ran in these terms: "Blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, incline, I beseech thee, thine ears, and hear me thy servant. In the name of the omnipotent God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I cast down the emperor Henry from all imperial and regal authority, and absolve all Christians, that were his subjects, from the oath whereby they used to swear allegiance to true kings. And moreover, because he had despised mine, yea, thy admonitions, I bind him with the bond of an anathema." The same sentence he repeated at Rome in these terms: "Blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, and thou Paul, teacher of the gentiles, incline, I beseech you, your ears to me, and graciously hear me. Henry, whom they call emperor, hath proudly lifted up his horns and his head against the church of God, - who came to me, humbly imploring to be absolved from his excommunication, - I restored him to communion, but not to his kingdom, - neither did I allow his subjects to return to their allegiance. Several bishops and princes of Germany, taking this opportunity, in the room of Henry, justly deposed, chose Rodulph emperor, who immediately sent ambassadors to me, informing me that he would rather obey me than accept of a kingdom, and that he should always remain at the disposal of God and us. Henry then began to be angry, and at first intreated us to hinder Rodulph from seizing his kingdom. I said I would see to whom the right belonged, and give sentence which should be preferred. Henry forbad this. Therefore I bind Henry and all his favourers with the bond of an anathema, and again take from him all regal power. I absolve all Christians from their oath of allegiance, forbid them to obey Henry in anything, and command them to receive Rodulph as their king. Confirm this, therefore, by your authority, ye most holy princes of the apostles, that all may now at length know, as ye have power to bind and loose in heaven, so we have power to give and take away on earth, empires, kingdoms, principalities, and whatsoever men can have." When Henry submitted, then Gregory began to reign without control. In the same year, 1077, on September 1, he fixed a new era of time, called the Indiction, used at Rome to this day. Thus did the Pope claim to himself the whole authority over all Christian princes. Thus did he take away or confer kingdoms and empires, as a king of kings. Neither did his successors fail to tread in his steps. It is well known, the following Popes have not been wanting to exercise the same power, both over kings and emperors. And this the later Popes have been so far from disclaiming, that three of them have sainted this very Gregory, namely, Clement VIII., Paul V., and Benedict XIII. Here is then the beast, that is, the king: in fact such, though not in name: according to that remarkable observation of Cardinal Bellarmine, "Antichrist will govern the Roman empire, yet without the name of Roman emperor." His spiritual title prevented his taking the name, while he exerciseth all the power. Now Gregory was at the head of this novelty. So Aventine himself, "Gregory VII was the first founder of the pontifical empire." Thus the time of the ascent of the beast is clear. The apostasy and mystery of iniquity gradually increased till he arose, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all." 2 Thess.

ii, 4. Before the seventh trumpet the adversary wrought more secretly; but soon after the beginning of this, the beast openly opposes his kingdom to the kingdom of Christ. PROP 8. The empire of Hildebrand properly began in the year 1077. Then it was, that upon the emperor's leaving Italy, Gregory exercised his power to the full. And on the first of September, in this year, he began his famous epocha. This may be farther established and explained by the following observations:-

OBS. 1. The beast is the Romish Papacy, which has now reigned for some ages. OBS. 2. The beast has seven heads and ten horns. OBS. 3. The seven heads are seven hills, and also seven kings. One of the heads could not have been, "as it were, mortally wounded," had it been only a hill. OBS. 4. The ascent of the beast out of the sea is different from his ascent out of the abyss; the Revelation often mentions both the sea and the abyss but never uses the terms promiscuously. OBS. 5. The heads of the beast do not begin before his rise out of the sea, but with it. OBS. 6. These heads, as kings, succeed each other. OBS. 7. The time which they take up in this succession is divided into three parts. "Five" of the kings signified thereby "are fallen: one is, the other is not yet come." OBS. 8. "One is:" namely, while the angel was speaking this. He places himself and St. John in the middlemost time, that he might the more commodiously point out the first time as past, the second as present, the third as future. OBS. 9. The continuance of the beast is divided in the same manner. The beast "was, is not, will ascend out of the abyss," chap. xvii, 8, 11. Between these two verses, that is interposed as parallel with them, "Five are fallen, one is, the other is not yet come." OBS. 10. Babylon is Rome. All things which the Revelation says of Babylon, agree to Romans, and Roman only. It commenced "Babylon," when it commenced "the great." When Babylon sunk in the east, it arose in the west; and it existed in the time of the apostles, whose judgment is said to be "avenged on her." OBS. 11. The beast reigns both before and after the reign of Babylon. First, the beast reigns, chap. xiii, 1, &c.; then Babylon, chap. xvii, 1, &c.; and then the beast again, chap. xvii, 8, &c. OBS. 12. The heads are of the substance of the beast; the horns are not. The wound of one of the heads is called "the wound of the beast" itself, verse 3; but the horns, or kings, receive the kingdom "with the beast," chap. xvii, 12. That word alone, "the horns and the beast," chap. xvii, 16, sufficiently shows them to be something added to him. OBS. 13. The forty-two months of the beast fall within the first of the three periods. The beast rose out of the sea in the year 1077. A little after, power was given him for forty-two months. This power is still in being. OBS. 14. The time when the beast "is not," and the reign of "Babylon," are together. The beast, when risen out of the sea, raged violently, till "his kingdom was darkened" by the fifth phial. But it was a kingdom still; and the beast having a kingdom, though darkened, was the beast still. But it was afterwards said, "the beast was," (was the beast, that is, reigned,) "and is not;" is not the beast; does not reign, having lost his kingdom. Why? because

"the woman sits upon the beast," who "sits a queen," reigning over the kings of the earth: till the beast, rising out of the abyss, and taking with him the ten kings, suddenly destroys her. OBS. 15. The difference there is between Rome and the Pope, which has always subsisted, will then be most apparent. Rome, distinct from the Pope, bears three meanings; the city itself, the Roman church, and the people of Rome. In the last sense of the word, Rome with its dutchy, which contained part of Tuscany and Campania, revolted from the Greek emperor in 726, and became a free state, governed by its senate. From this time the senate, and not the Pope, enjoyed the supreme civil power. But in 796, Leo III., being chosen Pope, sent to Charles the Great, desiring him to come and subdue the senate and people of Rome, and constrain them to swear allegiance to him. Hence arose a sharp contention between the Pope and the Roman people, who seized and thrust him into a monastery. He escaped and fled to the emperor, who quickly sent him back in great state. In the year 800 the emperor came to Rome, and shortly after, the Roman people, who had hitherto chosen their own bishops, and looked upon themselves and their senate as having the same rights with the ancient senate and people of Rome, chose Charles for their emperor, and subjected themselves to him, in the same manner as the ancient Roman did to their emperors. The Pope crowned him, and paid him homage on his knees, as was formerly done to the Roman emperors: and the emperor took an oath "to defend the holy Roman church in all its emoluments." He was also created consul, and styled himself thenceforward Augustus, Emperor of the Romans. Afterwards he gave the government of the city and dutchy of Rome to the Pope, yet still subject to himself. What the Roman church is, as distinct from the Pope, appears,

1. When a council is held before the Pope's confirmation;
2. When upon a competition, judgment is given which is the true Pope;
3. When the See is vacant;
4. When the Pope himself is suspected by the Inquisition.

How Rome, as it is a city, differs from the Pope, there is no need to show. OBS. 16. In the first and second period of his duration, the beast is a body of men; in the third, an individual. The beast with seven heads is the Papacy of many ages: the seventh head is the man of sin, antichrist. He is a body of men from chap. xiii, 1 - chap. xvii, 7; he is a body of men and an individual, chap. xvii, 8 - chap. xvii, 11; he is an individual, chap. xvii, 12 - chap. xix, 20. OBS. 17. That individual is the seventh head of the beast, or, the other king after the five and one, himself being the eighth, though one of the seven. As he is a Pope, he is one of the seven heads. But he is the eighth, or not a head, but the beast himself, not, as he is a Pope, but as he bears a new and singular character at his coming from the abyss. To illustrate this by a comparison: suppose a tree of seven branches, one of which is much larger than the rest; if those six are cut away, and the seventh remain, that is the tree. OBS. 18. "He is the wicked one, the man of sin, the son of perdition" usually termed

antichrist. OBS. 19. The ten horns, or kings, "receive power as kings with the wild beast one hour," chap. xvii, 12; with the individual beast, "who was not." But he receives his power again, and the kings with it, who quickly give their new power to him. OBS. 20. The whole power of the Roman monarchy, divided into ten kingdoms, will be conferred on the beast, chap. xvii, 13, 16, 17.

OBS. 21. The ten horns and the beast will destroy the whore, chap. xvii, 16. OBS. 22. At length the beast, the ten horns, and the other kings of the earth, will fall in that great slaughter, chap. xix, 19. OBS. 23. Daniel's fourth beast is the Roman monarchy, from the beginning of it, till the thrones are set. This, therefore, comprises both the apocalyptic beast, and the woman, and many other things. This monarchy is like a river which runs from its fountain in one channel, but in its course sometimes takes in other rivers, sometimes is itself parted into several streams, yet is still one continued river. The Roman power was at first undivided; but it was afterwards divided into various channels, till the grand division into the eastern and western empires, which likewise underwent various changes. Afterward the kings of the Heruli. Goths, Lombards, the exarchs of Ravenna, the Roman themselves the emperors, French and German, besides other kings, seized several parts of the Roman power. Now whatever power the Roman had before Gregory VII., that Daniel's beast contains; whatever power the Papacy has had from Gregory VII., this the apocalyptic beast represents, but this very beast (and so Rome with its last authority) is comprehended under that of Daneil. And upon his heads a name of blasphemy - To ascribe to a man what belongs to God alone is blasphemy. Such a name the beast has, not on his horns, nor on one head, but on all. The beast himself bears that name, and indeed through his whole duration. This is the name of Papa or Pope; not in the innocent sense wherein it was formerly given to all bishops, but in that high and peculiar sense wherein it is now given to the bishop of Rome by himself, and his followers: a name which comprises the whole pre- eminence of the highest and most holy father upon earth. Accordingly among the above cited sayings of Gregory, those two stand together, that his "name alone should be recited in the churches;" and that it is "the only name in the world." So both the church and the world were to name no other father on the face of the earth.

2. The three first beasts in Daniel are like "a leopard," "a bear," and "a lion." In all parts, except his feet and mouth, this beast was like a leopard or female panther; which is fierce as a lion or bear, but is also swift and subtle. Such is the Papacy, which has partly by subtilty, partly by force, gained power over so many nations. The extremely various usages, manners, and ways of the Pope, may likewise be compared to the spots of the leopard. And his feet were as the feet of a bear - Which are very strong, and armed with sharp claws. And, as clumsy as they seem, he can therewith walk, stand upright, climb, or seize anything. So does this beast seize and take for his prey whatever comes within the reach of his claws. And his mouth was as the mouth of a lion - To roar, and to devour. And the dragon - Whose vassal and vicegerent he is. Gave him his power - His own strength

and innumerable forces. And his throne - So that he might command whatever he would, having great, absolute authority. The dragon had his throne in heathen Rome, so long as idolatry and persecution reigned there. And after he was disturbed in his possession, yet would he never wholly resign, till he gave it to the beast in Christian Rome, so called.

3. And I saw one - Or the first. Of his heads as it were wounded - So it appeared as soon as ever it rose. The beast is first described more generally, then more particularly, both in this and in the seventeenth chapter. The particular description here respects the former parts; there, the latter parts of his duration: only that some circumstances relating to the former are repeated in the seventeenth chapter. chap. xvii, 1-18 This deadly wound was given him on his first head by the sword, verse 14; chap. xiii, 14 that is, by the bloody resistance of the secular potentates, particularly the German emperors. These had for a long season had the city of Rome, with her bishop, under their jurisdiction. Gregory determined to cast off this yoke from his own, and to lay it on the emperor's shoulders. He broke loose, and excommunicated the emperor, who maintained his right by force, and gave the Pope such a blow, that one would have thought the beast must have been killed thereby, immediately after his coming up. But he recovered, and grew stronger than before. The first head of the beast extends from Gregory VII., at least to Innocent III. In that tract of time the beast was much wounded by the emperors. But, notwithstanding, the wound was healed. Two deadly symptoms attended this wound:

1. Schisms and open ruptures in the church. For while the emperors asserted their right, there were from the year 1080 to the year 1176 only, five open divisions, and at least as many antipopes, some of whom were, indeed, the rightful Popes. This was highly dangerous to the papal kingdoms. But a still more dangerous symptom was,
2. The rising of the nobility at Rome, who would not suffer their bishop to be a secular prince, particularly over themselves. Under Innocent II. they carried their point, re-established the ancient commonwealth, took away from the Pope the government of the city, and left him only his episcopal authority. "At this," says the historian, "Innocent II. and Celestine II. fretted themselves to death: Lucius II., as he attacked the capitol, wherein the senate was, sword in hand, was struck with a stone, and died in a few days: Eugene III., Alexander III., and Lucius III., were driven out of the city: Urban III. and Gregory VIII. spent their days in banishment At length they came to an agreement with Clement III., who was himself a Roman." And the whole earth - The whole western world. Wondered after the wild beast - That is, followed him with wonder, in his councils, his crusades, and his jubilees. This refers not only to the first head, but also to the four following.

4. And they worshipped the dragon - Even in worshipping the beast, although they knew it not. And worshipped the wild beast - Paying him such honour as was not paid to any merely secular potentate. That very title, "Our most holy Lord," was never given to any other monarch on earth. Saying, Who is like the wild beast - "Who is like him?" is a peculiar attribute of God; but that this is constantly attributed to the beast, the books of all his adherents show.

5. And there was given him - By the dragon, through the permission of God. A mouth speaking great things and blasphemy - The same is said of the little horn on the fourth beast in Daniel. Nothing greater, nothing more blasphemous, can be conceived, than what the Popes have said of themselves,

especially before the Reformation. And authority was given him forty-two months - The beginning of these is not to be dated immediately from his ascent out of the sea, but at some distance from it.

6. To blaspheme his name - Which many of the Popes have done explicitly, and in the most dreadful manner. And his tabernacle, even them that dwell in heaven - (For God himself dwelleth in the inhabitance of heaven.) Digging up the bones of many of them, and cursing them with the deepest execrations.

7. And it was given him - That is, God permitted him. To make war with his saints - With the Waldenses and Albigenses. It is a vulgar mistake, that the Waldenses were so called from Peter Waldo of Lyons. They were much more ancient than him; and their true name was Vallenses or Vaudois from their inhabiting the valleys of Lucerne and Agrogne. This name, Vallenses, after Waldo appeared about the year 1160, was changed by the Papists into Waldenses, on purpose to represent them as of modern original. The Albigenses were originally people of Albigeois, part of Upper Languedoc, where they considerably prevailed, and possessed several towns in the year 1200. Against these many of the Popes made open war. Till now the blood of Christians had been shed only by the heathens or Arians; from this time by scarce any but the Papacy. In the year 1208 Innocent III. proclaimed a crusade against them. In June, 1209, the army assembled at Toulouse; from which time abundance of blood was shed, and the second army of martyrs began to be added to the first, who had cried "from beneath the altar." And ever since, the beast has been warring against the saints, and shedding their blood like water. And authority was given him over every tribe and people - Particularly in Europe. And when a way was found by sea into the East Indies, and the West, these also were brought under his authority.

8. And all that dwell upon the earth will worship him - All will be carried away by the torrent, but the little flock of true believers. The name of these only is written in the Lamb's book of life. And if any even of these "make shipwreck of the faith," he will blot them "out of his book;" although they were written therein from (that is, before) the foundation of the world, chap. xvii, 8.

9. If any one have an ear, let him hear - It was said before, "He that hath an ear, let him hear." This expression, if any, seems to imply, that scarce will any that hath an ear be found. Let him hear - With all attention the following warning, and the whole description of the beast,

10. If any man leadeth into captivity - God will in due time repay the followers of the beast in their own kind. Meanwhile, here is the patience and faithfulness of the saints exercised: their patience, by enduring captivity or imprisonment; their faithfulness, by resisting unto blood.

11. And I saw another wild beast - So he is once termed to show his fierceness and strength, but in all other places, "the false prophet." He comes to confirm the kingdom of the first beast. Coming up - After the other had long exercised his authority. Out of the earth - Out of Asia. But he is not yet come, though he cannot be far off for he is to appear at the end of the forty-two months of the first beast. And he had two horns like a lamb - A mild, innocent appearance. But he spake like a dragon - Venomous, fiery, dreadful. So do those who are zealous for the beast.

12. And he exerciseth all the authority of the first wild beast - Described in the second, fourth, fifth, and seventh verses. chap. xiii, 2, 3, 5, 7 Before him - For they are both together. Whose deadly wound was healed - More throughly healed by means of the second beast.

13. He maketh fire - Real fire. To come down - By the power of the devil.

14. Before the wild beast - Whose usurped majesty is confirmed by these wonders. Saying to them - As if it were from God. To make an image to the wild beast - Like that of Nebuchadnezzar, whether of gold, silver, or stone. The original image will be set up where the beast himself shall

appoint. But abundance of copies will be taken, which may be carried into all parts, like those of Diana of Ephesus.

15. So that the image of the wild beast should speak - Many instances of this kind have been already among the Papists, as well as the heathens. And as many as will not worship - When it is required of them; as it will be of all that buy or sell. Shall be killed - By this the Pope manifests that he is antichrist, directly contrary to Christ. It is Christ who shed his own blood; it is antichrist who sheds the blood of others. And yet, it seems, his last and most cruel persecution is to come. This persecution, the reverse of all that preceded, will, as we may gather from many scriptures, fall chiefly on the outward court worshippers, the formal Christians. It is probable that few real, inward Christians shall perish by it: on the contrary, those who "watch and pray always" shall be "accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of man," Luke xxi, 36.

16. On their forehead - The most zealous of his followers will probably choose this. Others may receive it on their hand.

17. That no man might buy or sell - Such edicts have been published long since against the poor Vaudois. But he that had the mark, namely, the name of the first beast, or the number of his name - The name of the beast is that which he bears through his whole duration; namely, that of Papa or Pope: the number of his name is the whole time during which he bears this name. Whosoever, therefore, receives the mark of the beast does as much as if he said expressly, "I acknowledge the present Papacy, as proceeding from God;" or, "I acknowledge that what St. Gregory VII. has done, according to his legend, (authorized by Benedict XIII.,) and what has been maintained in virtue thereof, by his successors to this day, is from God." By the former, a man hath the name of the beast as a mark; by the latter, the number of his name. In a word, to have the name of the beast is, to acknowledge His papal Holiness; to have the number of his name is, to acknowledge the papal succession. The second beast will enforce the receiving this mark under the severest penalties.

18. Here is the wisdom - To be exercised. "The patience of the saints" availed against the power of the first beast: the wisdom God giveth them will avail against the subtilty of the second. Let him that hath understanding - Which is a gift of God, subservient to that wisdom. Count the number of the wild beast - Surely none can be blamed for attempting to obey this command. For it is the number of a man - A number of such years as are common among men. And his number is six hundred and sixty-six years - So long shall he endure from his first appearing.

## XIV

1. And I saw on mount Sion - The heavenly Sion. An hundred forty-four thousand - Either those out of all mankind who had been the most eminently holy, or the most holy out of the twelve tribes of Israel the same that were mentioned, chap. vii, 4, and perhaps also, chap. xvi, 2. But they were then in the world, and were sealed in their foreheads, to preserve them from the plagues that were to follow. They are now in safety, and have the name of the Lamb and of his Father written on their foreheads, as being the redeemed of God and of the Lamb, his now unalienable property. This prophecy often introduces the inhabitants of heaven as a kind of chorus with great propriety and elegance. The church above, making suitable reflections on the grand events which are foretold in this book, greatly serves to raise the attention of real Christians, and to teach the high concern they

have in them. Thus is the church on earth instructed, animated, and encouraged, by the sentiments temper, and devotion of the church in heaven.

2. And I heard a sound out of heaven - Sounding clearer and clearer: first, at a distance, as the sound of many waters or thunders; and afterwards, being nearer, it was as of harpers harping on their harps. It sounded vocally and instrumentally at once.

3. And they - The hundred forty-four thousand-Sing a new song - and none could learn that song - To sing and play it in the same manner. But the hundred forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth - From among men; from all sin.

4. These are they who had not been defiled with women - It seems that the deepest defilement, and the most alluring temptation, is put for every other. They are virgins - Unspotted souls; such as have preserved universal purity. These are they who follow the Lamb - Who are nearest to him. This is not their character, but their reward Firstfruits - Of the glorified spirits. Who is ambitious to be of this number?

5. And in their mouth there was found no guile - Part for the whole. Nothing untrue, unkind, unholy. They are without fault - Having preserved inviolate a virgin purity both of soul and body.

6. And I saw another angel - A second is mentioned, verse 8; a third, verse 9. chap. xiv, 8, 9 These three denote great messengers of God with their assistants; three men who bring messages from God to men. The first exhorts to the fear and worship of God; the second proclaims the fall of Babylon; the third gives warning concerning the beast. Happy are they who make the right use of these divine messages! Flying - Going on swiftly. In the midst of heaven - Breadthways. Having an everlasting gospel - Not the gospel, properly so called; but a gospel, or joyful message, which was to have an influence on all ages. To preach to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people - Both to Jew and gentile, even as far as the authority of the beast had extended.

7. Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come - The joyful message is properly this, that the hour of God's judgment is come. And hence is that admonition drawn, Fear God and give glory to him. They who do this will not worship the beast, neither any image or idol whatsoever. And worship him that made - Whereby he is absolutely distinguished from idols of every kind. The heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and fountains of water - And they who worship him shall be delivered when the angels pour out their phials on the earth, sea, fountains of water, on the sun, and in the air.

8. And another angel followed, saying, Babylon is fallen - With the overthrow of Babylon, that of all the enemies of Christ, and, consequently, happier times, are connected. Babylon the great - So the city of Rome is called upon many accounts. Babylon was magnificent, strong, proud, powerful. So is Rome also. Babylon was first, Rome afterwards, the residence of the emperors of the world. What Babylon was to Israel of old, Roman hath been both to the literal and spiritual "Israel of God." Hence the liberty of the ancient Jews was connected with the overthrow of the Babylonish empire. And when Rome is finally overthrown, then the people of God will be at liberty. Whenever Babylon is mentioned in this book, the great is added, to teach us that Rome then commenced Babylon, when it commenced the great city; when it swallowed up the Grecian monarchy and its fragments, Syria in particular; and, in consequence of this, obtained dominion over Jerusalem about sixty years before the birth of Christ. Then it began, but it will not cease to be Babylon till it is finally destroyed. Its spiritual greatness began in the fifth century, and increased from age to age. It seems it will come to its utmost height just before its final overthrow. Her fornication is her idolatry; invocation of saints and angels; worship of images; human traditions; with all that outward

pomp, yea, and that fierce and bloody zeal, wherewith she pretends to serve God. But with spiritual fornication, as elsewhere, so in Rome, fleshly fornication is joined abundantly. Witness the stews there, licensed by the Pope, which are no inconsiderable branch of his revenue. This is fitly compared, to wine, because of its intoxicating nature. Of this wine she hath, indeed, made all nations drink - More especially by her later missions. We may observe, this making them drink is not ascribed to the beast, but to Babylon. For Rome itself, the Roman inquisitions, congregations, and Jesuits, continually propagate the idolatrous doctrines and practices, with or without the consent of this or that Pope, who himself is not secure from their censure.

9. And a third angel followed - At no great distance of time. Saying, If any one worship the wild beast - This worship consists, partly in an inward submission, a persuasion that all who are subject to Christ must be subject to the beast or they cannot receive the influences of divine grace, or, as their expression is, there is no salvation out of their church; partly in a suitable outward reverence to the beast himself, and consequently to his image.

10. He shall drink - With Babylon, chap. xvi, 19. And shall be tormented - With the beast, chap. xx, 10. In all the scripture there is not another so terrible threatening as this. And God by this greater fear arms his servants against the fear of the beast. The wrath of God, which is poured unmixed - Without any mixture of mercy; without hope. Into the cup of his indignation - And is no real anger implied in all this? O what will not even wise men assert, to serve an hypothesis!

11. And the smoke - From the fire and brimstone wherein they are tormented. Ascendeth for ever and ever - God grant thou and I may never try the strict, literal eternity of this torment!

12. Here is the patience of the saints - Seen, in suffering all things rather than receive this mark. Who keep the commandments of God - The character of all true saints; and particularly the great command to believe in Jesus.

13. And I heard a voice - This is most seasonably heard when the beast is in his highest power and fury. Out of heaven - Probably from a departed saint. Write - He was at first commanded to write the whole book. Whenever this is repeated it denotes something peculiarly observable. Happy are the dead - From henceforth particularly:

1. Because they escape the approaching calamities:
2. Because they already enjoy so near an approach to glory. Who die in the Lord - In the faith of the Lord Jesus. For they rest - No pain, no purgatory follows; but pure, unmixed happiness. From their labours - And the more labourious their life was, the sweeter is their rest. How different this state from that of those, verse 11, chap. xiv, 11 who "have no rest day or night!" Reader, which wilt thou choose? Their works - Each one's peculiar works. Follow - or accompany them; that is, the fruit of their works. Their works do not go before to procure them admittance into the mansions of joy; but they follow them when admitted.

14. In the following verses, under the emblem of an harvest and a vintage, are signified two general visitations; first, many good men are taken from the earth by the harvest; then many sinners during the vintage. The latter is altogether a penal visitation; the former seems to be altogether gracious. Here is no reference in either to the day of judgment, but to a season which cannot be far off. And I saw a white cloud - An emblem of mercy. And on the cloud sat one like a son of man - An angel in an human shape, sent by Christ, the Lord both of the vintage and of the harvest. Having a golden crown on his head - In token of his high dignity. And a sharp sickle in his hand - The sharper the welcomer to the righteous.

15. And another angel came out of the temple - "Which is in heaven," verse 17. chap. xiv, 17 Out of which came the judgments of God in the appointed seasons.

16. Crying - By the command of God. Thrust in thy sickle, for the harvest is ripe - This implies an high degree of holiness in those good men, and an earnest desire to be with God.

18. And another angel from the altar - Of burnt offering; from whence the martyrs had cried for vengeance. Who had power over fire - As "the angel of the waters," chap. xvi, 5, had over water. Cried, saying, Lop off the clusters of the vine of the earth - All the wicked are considered as constituting one body.

20. And the winepress was trodden - By the Son of God, chap. xix, 15. Without the city - Jerusalem. They to whom St. John writes, when a man said, "The city," immediately understood this. And blood came out of the winepress, even to the horses' bridles - So deep at its first flowing from the winepress! One thousand six hundred furlongs - So far! at least two hundred miles, through the whole land of Palestine.

## XV

1. And I saw seven holy angels having the seven last plagues - Before they had the phials, which were as instruments whereby those plagues were to be conveyed. They are termed the last, because by them the wrath of God is fulfilled - Hitherto. God had born his enemies with much longsuffering; but now his wrath goes forth to the uttermost, pouring plagues on the earth from one end to the other, and round its whole circumference. But, even after these plagues, the holy wrath of God against his other enemies does not cease, chap. xx, 15.

2. The song was sung while the angels were coming out, with their plagues, who are therefore mentioned both before and after it, verses 1-6. chap. xv, 1-6, And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire - It was before "clear as crystal," chap. iv, 6, but now mingled with fire, which devours the adversaries. And them that gained, or were gaining, the victory over the wild beast - More of whom were yet to come. The mark of the beast, the mark of his name, and the number of his name, seem to mean here nearly the same thing. Standing at the sea of glass - Which was before the throne. Having the harps of God - Given by him, and appropriated to his praise.

3. And they sing the song of Moses - So called, partly from its near agreement,with the words of that song which he sung after passing the Red Sea, Exod. xv, 11, and of that which he taught the children of Israel a little before his death, Deut. xxxii, 3, 4. But chiefly because Moses was the minister and representative of the Jewish church, as Christ is of the church universal. Therefore it is also termed the sons of the Lamb. It consists of six parts, which answer each other: 1.Great and wonderful are thy 2.For thou only art gracious. works, Lord God Almighty. 3.Just and true are thy ways, O 4. For all the nations shall come King of the nations. and worship before thee. 5.Who would not fear thee, O 6.For thy judgments are made Lord, and glorify thy name? manifest. We know and acknowledge that all thy works in and toward all the creatures are great and wonderful; that thy ways with all the children of men, good and evil, are just and true. For thou only art gracious - And this grace is the spring of all those wonderful works, even of his destroying the enemies of his people. Accordingly in Psalm cxxxvi, 1-26., that clause, "For his mercy endureth for ever," is subjoined to the thanksgiving for his works of vengeance as well as for his delivering the righteous.

For all the nations shall come and worship before thee - They shall serve thee as their king with joyful reverence. This is a glorious testimony of the future conversion of all the heathens. The Christians are now a little flock: they who do not worship God, an immense multitude. But all the nations shall come, from all parts of the earth, to worship him and glorify his name. For thy judgments are made manifest - And then the inhabitants of the earth will at length learn to fear him.

5. After these things the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony - The holiest of all. Was opened - Disclosing a new theatre for the coming forth of the judgments of God now made manifest.

6. And the seven angels came out of the temple - As having received their instructions from the oracle of God himself. St. John saw them in heaven, verse 1, chap. xv, 1 before they went into the temple. They appeared in habits like those the high priest wore when he went into the most holy place to consult the oracle. In this was the visible testimony of God's presence. Clothed in pure white linen - Linen is the habit of service and attendance. Pure - unspotted, unsullied. White - Or bright and shining, which implies much more than bare innocence. And having their breasts girt with golden girdles - In token of their high dignity and glorious rest.

7. And one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels - After they were come out of the temple. Seven golden phials - Or bowls. The Greek word signifies vessels broader at the top than at the bottom. Full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever - A circumstance which adds greatly to the dreadfulness of his wrath.

8. And the temple was filled with smoke - The cloud of glory was the visible manifestation of God's presence in the tabernacle and temple. It was a sign of protection at erecting the tabernacle and at the dedication of the temple. But in the judgment of Korah the glory of the Lord appeared, when he and his companions were swallowed up by the earth. So proper is the emblem of smoke from the glory of God, or from the cloud of glory, to express the execution of judgment, as well as to be a sign of favour. Both proceed from the power of God, and in both he is glorified. And none - Not even of those who ordinarily stood before God. Could go into the temple - That is, into the inmost part of it. Till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled - Which did not take up a long time, like the seven trumpets, but swiftly followed each other.

## XVI

1. Pour out the seven phials - The epistles to the seven churches are divided into three and four: the seven seals, and so the trumpets and phials, into four and three. The trumpets gradually, and in a long tract of time, overthrow the kingdom of the world: the phials destroy chiefly the beast and his followers, with a swift and impetuous force. The four first affect the earth, the sea, the rivers, the sun; the rest fall elsewhere, and are much more terrible.

2. And the first went - So the second, third, &c., without adding angel, to denote the utmost swiftness; of which this also is a token, that there is no period of time mentioned in the pouring out of each phial. They have a great resemblance to the plagues of Egypt, which the Hebrews generally suppose to have been a month distant from each other. Perhaps so may the phials; but they are all yet to come. And poured out his phial upon the earth - Literally taken. And there came a grievous ulcer - As in Egypt, Exod. ix, 10, 11. On the men who had the mark of the wild beast - All of them, and them only. All those plagues seem to be described in proper, not figurative, words.

3. The second poured out his phial upon the sea - As opposed to the dry land. And it become blood, as of a dead man - Thick, congealed, and putrid. And every living soul - Men, beasts, and fishes, whether on or in the sea, died.

4. The third poured out his phial on the rivers and fountains of water - Which were over all the earth. And they became blood - So that none could drink thereof.

5. The Gracious one - So he is styled when his judgments are abroad, and that with a peculiar propriety. In the beginning of the book he is termed "The Almighty." In the time of his patience, he is praised for his power, which otherwise might then be less regarded. In the time of his taking vengeance, for his mercy. Of his power there could then be no doubt.

6. Thou hast given then, blood to drink - Men do not drink out of the sea, but out of fountains and rivers. Therefore this is fitly added here. They are worthy - Is subjoined with a beautiful abruptness.

7. Yea - Answering the angel of the waters, and affirming of God's judgments in general, what he had said of one particular judgment.

8. The fourth poured out his phial upon the sun - Which was likewise affected by the fourth trumpet. There is also a plain resemblance between the first, second, and third phials, and the first, second, and third trumpet. And it was given him - The angel. To scorch the men - Who had the mark of the beast. With fire - As well as with the beams of the sun. So these four phials affected earth, water, fire, and air.

9. And the men blasphemed God, who had power over these plagues - They could not but acknowledge the hand of God, yet did they harden themselves against him.

10. The four first phials are closely connected together; the fifth concerns the throne of the beast, the sixth the Mahometans, the seventh chiefly the heathens. The four first phials and the four first trumpets go round the whole earth; the three last phials and the three last trumpets go lengthways over the earth in a straight line. The fifth poured out his phial upon the throne of the wild beast - It is not said, "on the beast and his throne." Perhaps the sea will then be vacant. And his kingdom was darkened - With a lasting, not a transient, darkness. However the beast as yet has his kingdom. Afterward the woman sits upon the beast. and then it is said, "The wild beast is not," chap. xvii, 3, 7, 8.

11. And they - His followers. Gnawed their tongues - Out of furious impatience. Because of their pains and because of their ulcers - Now mentioned together, and in the plural number, to signify that they were greatly heightened and multiplied.

12. And the sixth poured out his phial upon the great river Euphrates - Affected also by the sixth trumpet. And the water of it - And of all the rivers that flow into it. Was dried up - The far greater part of the Turkish empire lies on this side the Euphrates. The Romish and Mahometan affairs ran nearly parallel to each other for several ages. In the seventh century was Mahomet himself; and, a little before him, Boniface III., with his universal bishopric. In the eleventh, both the Turks and Gregory VII. carried all before them. In the year 1300, Boniface appeared with his two swords at the newly-erected jubilee. In the self-same year arose the Ottoman Porte; yea, and on the same day. And here the phial, poured out on the throne of the beast, is immediately followed by that poured out on the Euphrates; that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared - Those who lie east from the Euphrates, in Persia, India, &c., who will rush blindfold upon the plagues which are ready for them, toward the Holy Land, which lies west of the Euphrates.

13. Out of the mouth of the dragon, the wild beast, and the false prophet - It seems, the dragon fights chiefly against God; the beast, against Christ; the false prophet, against the Spirit of truth; and that the three unclean spirits which come from them, and exactly resemble them, endeavour to blacken the works of creation, of redemption, and of sanctification. The false prophet - So is the second beast frequently named, after the kingdom of the first is darkened; for he can then no longer prevail by main strength, and so works by lies and deceit. Mahomet was first a false prophet, and afterwards a powerful prince: but this beast was first powerful as a prince; afterwards a false prophet, a teacher of lies. Like frogs - Whose abode is in fens, marshes, and other unclean places. To the kings of the whole world - Both Mahometan and pagan. To gather them - To the assistance of their three principals.

15. Behold, I come as a thief - Suddenly, unexpectedly. Observe the beautiful abruptness. I - Jesus Christ. Hear him. Happy is he that watcheth. - Looking continually for him that "cometh quickly." And keepeth on his garments - Which men use to put off when they sleep. Lest he walk naked, and they see his shame - Lest he lose the graces which he takes no care to keep, and others see his sin and punishment.

16. And they gathered them together to Armageddon - Mageddon, or Megiddo, is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. Armageddon signifies the city or the mountain of Megiddo; to which the valley of Megiddo adjoined. This was a place well known in ancient times for many memorable occurrences; in particular, the slaughter of the kings of Canaan, related, Judg. v, 19. Here the narrative breaks off. It is resumed, chap. xix, 19.

17. And the seventh poured out his phial upon the air - Which encompasses the whole earth. This is the most weighty phial of all, and seems to take up more time than any of the preceding. It is done - What was commanded, verse 1. chap. xvi, 1 The phials are poured out.

18. A great earthquake, such as had not been since men were upon the earth - It was therefore a literal, not figurative, earthquake.

19. And the great city - Namely, Jerusalem, here opposed to the heathen cities in general, and in particular to Rome. And the cities of the nations fell - Were utterly overthrown. And Babylon was remembered before God - He did not forget the vengeance which was due to her, though the execution of it was delayed.

20. Every island and mountain was "moved out of its place," chap. vi, 14; but here they all flee away. What a change must this make in the face of the terraqueous globe! And yet the end of the world is not come.

21. And a great hail falleth out of heaven - From which there was no defense. From the earthquake men would fly into the fields; but here also they are met by the hail: nor were they secure if they returned into the houses, when each hail-stone weighed sixty pounds.

## XVII

1. And there came one of the seven angels, saying, Come hither - This relation concerning the great whore, and that concerning the wife of the Lamb, chap. xxi, 9, 10, have the same introduction, in token of the exact opposition between them. I will show thee the judgment of the great whore -

Which is now circumstantially described. That sitteth as a queen - In pomp, power, ease, and luxury. Upon many waters - Many people and nations, verse 15. chap. xvii, 15

2. With whom the kings of the earth - Both ancient and modern, for many ages. Have committed fornication - By partaking of her idolatry and various wickedness. And the inhabitants of the earth - The common people. Have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication - No wine can more thoroughly intoxicate those who drink it, than false zeal does the followers of the great whore.

3. And he carried me away - In the vision. Into a wilderness - The campagna di Romansa, the country round about Rome, is now a wilderness, compared to what it was once. And I saw a woman - Both the scripture and other writers frequently represent a city under this emblem. Sitting upon a scarlet wild beast - The same which is described in the thirteenth chapter. chap. xiii, 1-18 But he was there described as he carried on his own designs only: here, as he is connected with the whore. There is, indeed, a very close connection between them; the seven heads of the beast being "seven hills on which the woman sitteth." And yet there is a very remarkable difference between them, - between the papal power and the city of Rome. This woman is the city of Rome, with its buildings and inhabitants; especially the nobles. The beast, which is now scarlet-coloured, (bearing the bloody livery, as well as the person, of the woman,) appears very different from before. Therefore St. John says at first sight, I saw a beast, not the beast, full of names of blasphemy - He had' before "a name of blasphemy upon his head," chap. xiii, i, now he has many. From the time of Hildebrand, the blasphemous titles of the Pope have been abundantly multiplied. Having seven heads - Which reach in a succession from his ascent out of the sea to his being cast into the lake of fire. And ten horns - Which are contemporary with each other, and belong to his last period.

4. And the woman was arrayed - With the utmost pomp and magnificence. In purple and scarlet - These were the colours of the imperial habit: the purple, in times of peace; and the scarlet, in times of war. Having in her hand a golden cup - Like the ancient Babylon, Jer. li, 7. Full of abominations - The most abominable doctrines as well as practices.

5. And on her forehead a name written - Whereas the saints have the name of God and the Lamb on their foreheads. Mystery - This very word was inscribed on the front of the Pope's mitre, till some of the Reformers took public notice of it. Babylon the great - Benedict XIII., in his proclamation of the jubilee, A.D. 1725, explains this sufficiently. His words are, "To this holy city, famous for the memory of so many holy martyrs, run with religious alacrity. Hasten to the place which the Lord hath chose. Ascend to this new Jerusalem, whence the law of the Lord and the light of evangelical truth hath flowed forth into all nations, from the very first beginning of the church: the city most rightfully called 'The Palace,' placed for the pride of all ages, the city of the Lord, the Sion of the Holy One of Israel. This catholic and apostolical Roman church is the head of the world, the mother of all believers, the faithful interpreter of God and mistress of all churches." But God somewhat varies the style. The mother of harlots - The parent, ringleader, patroness, and nourisher of many daughters, that losely copy after her. And abominations - Of every kind, spiritual and fleshly. Of the earth - In all lands. In this respect she is indeed catholic or universal.

6. And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints - So that Rome may well be called, "The slaughter-house of the martyrs." She hath shed much Christian blood in every age; but at length she is even drunk with it, at the time to which this vision refers. The witnesses of Jesus - The preachers of his word. And I wondered exceedingly - At her cruelty and the patience of God.

7. I will tell thee the mystery - The hidden meaning of this.

8. The beast which thou sawest (namely, verse 3) chap. xvii, 3 was, &c. This is a very observable and punctual description of the beast, verses 8, 10, 11. chap. xvii, 8, 10, 11 His whole duration is here divided into three periods, which are expressed in a fourfold manner.

I. He,
1. Was; 2 And is not;
3. And will ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.

II. He,
1. Was;
2. And is not;
3. And will be again.

III. The seven heads are seven hills and seven kings:
1. Five are fallen;
2. One is;
3. The other is not come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

IV. He,
1. Was;
2. And is not; 3 Even he is the eighth, and is one of the seven, and goeth into perdition. The first of these three is described in the thirteenth chapter. chap. xiii, 1-18 This was past when the angel spoke to St. John. The second was then in its course; the third woe to come. And is not - The fifth phial brought darkness upon his kingdom: the woman took this advantage to seat herself upon him. Then it might be said, He is not. Yet shall he afterwards ascend out of the bottomless pit - Arise again with diabolical strength and fury. But he will not reign long: soon after his ascent he goeth into perdition for ever.

9. Here is the mind that hath wisdom - Only those who are wise will understand this. The seven heads are seven hills.

10. And they are seven kings - Anciently there were royal palaces on all the seven Roman bills. These were the Palatine, Capitoline, Coelian, Exquiline, Viminal, Quirinal, Aventine hills. But the prophecy respects the seven hills at the time of the beast, when the Palatine was deserted and the Vatican in use. Not that the seven heads mean hills distinct from kings; but they have a compound meaning, implying both together. Perhaps the first head of the beast is the Coelian hill, and on it the Lateran, with Gregory VII. and his successors; the second, the Vatican with the church of St. Peter, chosen by Boniface VIII. the third, the Quirinal, with the church of St. Mark, and the Quirinal palace built by Paul II. and the fourth, the Exquiline hill, with the temple of St. Maria Maggiore, where Paul V. reigned. The fifth will be added hereafter. Accordingly, in the papal register, four periods are observable since Gregory VII. In the first almost all the bulls made in the city are dated in the Lateran; in the second, at St. Peter's; in the third, at St. Mark's, or in the Quirinal; in the fourth, at St. Maria Maggiore. But no fifth, sixth, or seventh hill has yet been the residence of any Pope. Not that the hill was deserted, when another was made the papal residence; but a new one was added to the other sacred palaces. Perhaps the times hitherto mentioned might be fixed thus:- 1058. Wings are given to the woman. 1077. The beast ascends out of the sea. 1143. The forty- two months begin. 1810. The forty-two months end. 1832. The beast ascends out of the bottomless pit. 1836. The beast finally overthrown. The fall of those five kings seems to imply, not only the death of the Popes who reigned on those hills, but also such a disannulling of all they had done there,

that it will be said, The beast is not; the royal power, which had so long been lodged in the Pope, being then transferred to the city. One is, the other is not yet come - These two are remarkably distinguished from the five preceding, whom they succeed in their turns. The former of them will continue not a short space, as may be gathered from what is said of the latter: the former is under the government of Babylon; the latter is with the beast. In this second period, one is, at the same time that the beast is not. Even then there will be a Pope, though not with the power which his predecessors had. And he will reside on one of the remaining hills, leaving the seventh for his successor.

11. And the wild beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth - When the time of his not being is over. The beast consists, as it were, of eight parts. The seven heads are seven of them; and the eighth is his whole body, or the beast himself. Yet the beast himself, though he is in a sense termed the eighth, is of the seven, yea, contains them all. The whole succession of Popes from Gregory VII. are undoubtedly antichrist. Yet this hinders not, but that the last Pope in this succession will be more eminently the antichrist, the man of sin, adding to that of his predecessors a peculiar degree of wickedness from the bottomless pit. This individual person, as Pope, is the seventh head of the beast; as the man of sin, he is the eighth, or the beast himself.

12. The ten horns are ten kings - It is nowhere said that these horns are on the beast, or on his heads. And he is said to have them, not as he is one of the seven, but as he is the eighth. They are ten secular potentates, contemporary with, not succeeding, each other, who receive authority as kings with the beast, probably in some convention, which, after a very short space, they will deliver up to the beast. Because of their short continuance, only authority as kings, not a kingdom, is ascribed to them. While they retain this authority together with the beast, he will be stronger than ever before; but far stronger still, when their power is also transferred to him.

13. In the thirteenth and fourteenth verses chap. xvii, 13, 14 is summed up what is afterwards mentioned, concerning the horns and the beast, in this and the two following chapters. These have one mind, and give - They all, with one consent, give their warlike power and royal authority to the wild beast.

14. These - Kings with the beast. He is Lord of lords - Rightful sovereign of all, and ruling all things well. And King of kings - As a king he fights with and conquers all his enemies. And they that are with him - Beholding his victory, are such as were, while in the body, called, by his word and Spirit. And chosen - Taken out of the world, when they were enabled to believe in him. And faithful - Unto death.

15. People, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues - It is not said tribes: for Israel hath nothing to do with Rome in particular.

16. And shall eat her flesh - Devour her immense riches.

17. For God hath put it into their heart - Which indeed no less than almighty power could have effected. To execute his sentence - till the words of God - Touching the overthrow of all his enemies, should be fulfilled.

18. The woman is the great city, which reigneth - Namely, while the beast "is not," and the woman "sitteth upon him."

## XVIII

1. And I saw another angel coming down out of heaven - Termed another, with respect to him who "came down out of heaven," chap. x, 1. And the earth was enlightened with his glory - To make his coming more conspicuous. If such be the lustre of the servant, what images can display the majesty of the Lord, who has "thousand thousands" of those glorious attendants "ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him?"

2. And he cried, Babylon is fallen - This fall was mentioned before, chap. xiv, 8; but is now declared at large. And is become an habitation - A free abode. Of devils, and an hold - A prison. Of every unclean spirit - Perhaps confined there where they had once practiced all uncleanness, till the judgment of the great day. How many horrid inhabitants hath desolate Babylon! of invisible beings, devils, and unclean spirits; of visible, every unclean beast, every filthy and hateful bird. Suppose, then, Babylon to mean heathen Rome; what have the Romanists gained, seeing from the time of that destruction, which they say is past, these are to be its only inhabitants for ever.

4. And I heard another voice - Of Christ, whose people, secretly scattered even there, are warned of her approaching destruction. That ye be not partakers of her sins - That is, of the fruits of them. What a remarkable providence it was that the Revelation was printed in the midst of Spain, in the great Polyglot Bible, before the Reformation! Else how much easier had it been for the Papists to reject the whole book, than it is to evade these striking parts of it.

5. Even to heaven - An expression which implies the highest guilt.

6. Reward her - This God speaks to the executioners of his vengeance. Even as she hath rewarded - Others; in particular, the saints of God. And give her double - This, according to the Hebrew idiom, implies only a full retaliation.

7. As much as she hath glorified herself - By pride, and pomp, and arrogant boasting. And lived deliciously - In all kinds of elegance, luxury, and wantonness. So much torment give her - Proportioning the punishment to the sin. Because she saith in her heart - As did ancient Babylon, Isai xlvii, 8, 9. I sit - Her usual style. Hence those expressions, "The chair, the seat of Rome: he sat so many years." As a queen - Over many kings, "mistress of all churches; the supreme; the infallible; the only spouse of Christ; out of which there is no salvation." And am no widow - But the spouse of Christ. And shall see no sorrow - From the death of my children, or any other calamity; for God himself will defend "the church."

8. Therefore - as both the natural and judicial consequence of this proud security Shall her plagues come - The death of her children, with an incapacity of bearing more. Sorrow - of every kind. And famine - In the room of luxurious plenty: the very things from which she imagined herself to be most safe. For strong is the Lord God who judgeth her - Against whom therefore all her strength, great as it is, will not avail.

10. Thou strong city - Rome was anciently termed by its inhabitants, Valentia, that is, strong. And the word Rome itself, in Greek, signifies strength. This name was given it by the Greek strangers.

12. Merchandise of gold, &c. - Almost all these are still in use at Rome, both in their idolatrous service, and in common life. Fine linen - The sort of it mentioned in the original is exceeding costly. Thyine wood - A sweet-smelling wood not unlike citron, used in adorning magnificent palaces. Vessels of most precious wood - Ebony, in particular, which is often mentioned with ivory: the one excelling in whiteness, the other in blackness; and both in uncommon smoothness.

13. Amomum - A shrub whose wood is a fine perfume. And beasts - Cows and oxen. And of chariots - a purely Latin word is here inserted in the Greek. This St. John undoubtedly used on purpose, in describing the luxury of Rome. And of bodies - A common term for slaves. And souls of men - For these also are continually bought and sold at Rome. And this of all others is the most gainful merchandise to the Roman traffickers.

14. And the fruits - From what was imported they proceed to the domestic delicates of Rome; none of which is in greater request there, than the particular sort which is here mentioned. The word properly signifies, pears, peaches, nectarines, and all of the apple and plum kinds. And all things that are dainty - To the taste. And splendid - To the sight; as clothes, buildings, furniture.

19. And they cast dust on their heads - As mourners. Most of the expressions here used in describing the downfall of Babylon are taken from Ezekiel's description of the downfall of Tyre, Ezek. xxvi, 1 - Ezek. xxviii, 19.

20. Rejoice over her, thou heaven - That is, all the inhabitants of it; and more especially, ye saints; and among the saints still more eminently, ye apostles and prophets.

21. And a mighty angel took up a stone, and threw it into the sea - By a like emblem Jeremiah fore-showed the fall of the Chaldean Babylon, Jer. li, 63, 64.

22. And the voice of harpers - Players on stringed instruments. And musicians - Skilful singers in particular. And pipers - Who played on flutes, chiefly on mournful, whereas trumpeters played on joyful, occasions. Shall be heard no more in thee; and no artificer - Arts of every kind, particularly music, sculpture, painting, and statuary, were there carried to their greatest height. No, nor even the sound of a mill-stone shall be heard any more in thee - Not only the arts that adorn life, but even those employments without which it cannot subsist, will cease from thee for ever. All these expressions denote absolute and eternal desolation. The voice of harpers - Music was the entertainment of the rich and great; trade, the business of men of middle rank; preparing bread and the necessaries of life, the employment of the lowest people: marriages, in which lamps and songs were known ceremonies, are the means of peopling cities, as new births supply the place of those that die. The desolation of Rome is therefore described in such a manner, as to show that neither rich nor poor, neither persons of middle rank, nor those of the lowest condition, should be able to live there any more. Neither shall it be repeopled by new marriages, but remain desolate and uninhabited for ever.

23. For thy merchants were the great men of the earth - A circumstance which was in itself indifferent, and yet led them into pride, luxury, and numberless other sins.

24. And in her was found the blood of the prophets and saints - The same angel speaks still, yet he does not say "in thee," but in her, now so sunk as not to hear these last words. And of all that had been slain - Even before she was built. See Matt. xxiii, 35. There is no city under the sun which has so clear a title to catholic blood-guiltiness as Rome. The guilt of the blood shed under the heathen emperors has not been removed under the Popes, but hugely multiplied. Nor is Rome accountable only for that which hath been shed in the city, but for that shed in all the earth. For at Rome under the Pope, as well as under the heathen emperors, were the bloody orders and edicts given: and whereever the blood of holy men was shed, there were the grand rejoicings for it. And what immense quantities of blood have been shed by her agents! Charles IX., of France, in his letter to Gregory XIII., boasts, that in and not long after the massacre of Paris, he had destroyed seventy thousand Hugonots. Some have computed, that, from the year 1518, to 1548, fifteen millions of Protestants have perished by the Inquisition. This may be overcharged; but certainly the number

of them in those thirty years, as well as since, is almost incredible. To these we may add innumerable martyrs, in ancient, middle, and late ages, in Bohemia, Germany, Holland, France, England, Ireland, and many other parts of Europe, Afric, and Asia.

## XIX

1. I heard a loud voice of a great multitude - Whose blood the great whore had shed. Saying, Hallelujah - This Hebrew word signifies, Praise ye Jah, or Him that is. God named himself to Moses, EHEIEH, that is, I will be, Exod. iii, 14; and at the same time, "Jehovah," that is, "He that is, and was, and is to come:" during the trumpet of the seventh angel, he is styled, "He that is and was," chap. xvi, 5; and not "He that is to come;" because his long-expected coming is under this trumpet actually present. At length he is styled, "Jah," "He that is;" the past together with the future being swallowed up in the present, the former things being no more mentioned, for the greatness of those that now are. This title is of all others the most peculiar to the everlasting God. The salvation - Is opposed to the destruction which the great whore had brought upon the earth. His power and glory - Appear from the judgment executed on her, and from the setting up his kingdom to endure through all ages.

2. For true and righteous are his judgments - Thus is the cry of the souls under the altar changed into a song of praise.

4. And the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures felt down - The living creatures are nearer the throne than the elders. Accordingly they are mentioned before them, with the praise they render to God, chap. iv, 9, 10; v, 8, 14; inasmuch as there the praise moves from the center to the circumference. But here, when God's judgments are fulfilled, it moves back from the circumference to the center. Here, therefore, the four and twenty elders are named before the living creatures.

5. And a voice came forth from the throne - Probably from the four living creatures, saying, Praise our God - The occasion and matter of this song of praise follow immediately after, verses 6, &c.; God was praised before, for his judgment of the great whore, verses 1-4. chap. xix, 1-4 Now for that which follows it: for that the Lord God, the Almighty, takes the kingdom to himself, and avenges himself on the rest of his enemies. Were all these inhabitants of heaven mistaken? If not, there is real, yea, and terrible anger in God.

6. And I heard the voice of a great multitude. So all his servants did praise him. The Almighty reigneth - More eminently and gloriously than ever before.

7. The marriage of the Lamb is come - Is near at hand, to be solemnized speedily. What this implies, none of "the spirits of just men," even in paradise, yet know. O what things are those which are yet behind! And what purity of heart should there be, to meditate upon them! And his wife hath made herself ready - Even upon earth; but in a far higher sense, in that world. After a time allowed for this, the new Jerusalem comes down, both made ready and adorned, chap. xxi, 2.

8. And it is given to her - By God. The bride is all holy men, the whole invisible church. To be arrayed in fine linen, white and clean - This is an emblem of the righteousness of the saints - Both of their justification and sanctification.

9. And he - The angel, saith to me, Write - St. John seems to have been so amazed at these glorious sights, that he needeth to be reminded of this. Happy are they who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb - Called to glory. And he saith - After a little pause.

10. And I fell before his feet to worship him - It seems, mistaking him for the angel of the covenant. But he saith, See thou do it not - In the original, it is only, See not, with a beautiful abruptness. To pray to or worship the highest creature is flat idolatry. I am thy fellowservant and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus - I am now employed as your fellowservant, to testify of the Lord Jesus, by the same Spirit which inspired the prophets of old.

11. And I saw the heaven opened - This is a new and peculiar opening of it, in order to show the magnificent expedition of Christ and his attendants, against his great adversary. And behold a white horse - Many little regarded Christ, when he came meek, "riding upon an ass;" but what will they say, when he goes forth upon his white horse, with the sword of his mouth? White - Such as generals use in solemn triumph. And he that sitteth on him, called Faithful - In performing all his promises. And True - In executing all his threatenings. And in righteousness - With the utmost justice. He judgeth and maketh war - Often the sentence and execution go together.

12. And his eyes are a flame of fire - They were said to be as or like a flame of fire, before, chap. i, 14; an emblem of his omniscience. And upon his head are many diadems - For he is king of all nations. And he hath a name written, which none knoweth but himself - As God he is incomprehensible to every creature.

13. And he is clothed in a vesture dipped in blood - The blood of the enemies he hath already conquered. Isaiah lxiii, 1, &c.

15. And he shall rule them - Who are not slain by his sword. With a rod of iron - That is, if they will not submit to his golden scepter. And he treadeth the wine press of the wrath of God - That is, he executes his judgments on the ungodly. This ruler of the nations was born (or appeared as such) immediately after the seventh angel began to sound. He now appears, not as a child, but as a victorious warrior. The nations have long ago felt his "iron rod," partly while the heathen Romans, after their savage persecution of the Christians, themselves groaned under numberless plagues and calamities, by his righteous vengeance; partly, while other heathens have been broken in pieces by those who bore the Christian name. For although the cruelty, for example, of the Spaniards in America, was unrighteous and detestable, yet did God therein execute his righteous judgment on the unbelieving nations; but they shall experience his iron rod as they never did yet, and then will they all return to their rightful Lord.

16. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh - That is, on the part of his vesture which is upon his thigh. A name written - It was usual of old, for great personages in the eastern countries, to have magnificent titles affixed to their garments.

17. Gather yourselves together to the great supper of God - As to a great feast, which the vengeance of God will soon provide; a strongly figurative expression, (taken from Ezek. xxxix, 17,) denoting the vastness of the ensuing slaughter.

19. And I saw the kings of the earth - The ten kings mentioned chap. xvii, 12; who had now drawn the other kings of the earth to them, whether Popish, Mahometan, or pagan. Gathered together to make war with him that sat upon the horse - All beings, good and evil, visible and invisible, will be concerned in this grand contest. See Zech. xiv, 1, &c.

20. The false prophet, who had wrought the miracles before him - And therefore shared in his punishment; these two ungodly men were cast alive - Without undergoing bodily death. Into the

lake of fire - And that before the devil himself, chap. xx, 10. Here is the last of the beast. After several repeated strokes of omnipotence, he is gone alive into hell. There were two that went alive into heaven; perhaps there are two that go alive into hell. It may be, Enoch and Elijah entered at once into glory, without first waiting in paradise; the beast and the false prophet plunge at once into the extremest degree of torment, without being reserved in chains of darkness till the judgment of the great day. Surely, none but the beast of Rome would have hardened himself thus against the God he pretended to adore, or refused to have repented under such dreadful, repeated visitations! Well is he styled a beast, from his carnal and vile affections; a wild beast, from his savage and cruel spirit! The rest were slain - A like difference is afterwards made between the devil, and Gog and Magog, chap. xx, 9, 10.

21. Here is a most magnificent description of the overthrow of the beast and his adherents. It has, in particular, one exquisite beauty; that, after exhibiting the two opposite armies, and all the apparatus for a battle, verses 11-19; chap. xix, 11-19 then follows immediately, verse 20, xix, 20 the account of the victory, without one word of an engagement or fighting. Here is the most exact propriety; for what struggle can there be between omnipotence, and the power of all the creation united against it! Every description must have fallen short of this admirable silence.

## XX

1. And I saw an angel decending out of heaven - Coming down with a commission from God. Jesus Christ himself overthrew the beast: the proud dragon shall be bound by an angel; even as he and his angels were cast out of heaven by Michael and his angels. Having the key of the bottomless pit - Mentioned before, chap. ix, 1. And a great chain in his hand - The angel of the bottomless pit was shut up therein before the beginning of the first woe. But it is now first that Satan, after he had occasioned the third woe, is both chained and shut up.

2. And he laid hold on the dragon - With whom undoubtedly his angels were now cast into the bottomless pit, as well as finally "into everlasting fire," Matt. xxv, 41. And bound him a thousand years - That these thousand do not precede, or run parallel with, but wholly follow, the times of the beast, may manifestly appear,

1. From the series of the whole book, representing one continued chain of events.
2. From the circumstances which precede. The woman's bringing forth is followed by the casting of the dragon out of heaven to the earth. With this is connected the third woe, whereby the dragon through, and with, the beast, rages horribly. At the conclusion of the third woe the beast is overthrown and cast into "the lake of fire." At the same time the other grand enemy, the dragon, shall be bound and shut up.
3. These thousand years bring a new, full, and lasting immunity from all outward and inward evils, the authors of which are now removed, and an affluence of all blessings. But such time the church has never yet seen. Therefore it is still to come.
4. These thousand years are followed by the last times of the world, the letting loose of Satan, who gathers together Gog and Magog, and is thrown to the beast and

false prophet "in the lake of fire." Now Satan's accusing the saints in heaven, his rage on earth, his imprisonment in the abyss, his seducing Gog and Magog, and being cast into the lake of fire, evidently succeed each other.

5. What occurs from chap. xx, 11 - chap. xxii, 5, manifestly follows the things related in the nineteenth chapter. The thousand years came between; whereas if they were past, neither the beginning nor the end of them would fall within this period. In a short time those who assert that they are now at hand will appear to have spoken the truth. Meantime let every man consider what kind of happiness he expects therein. The danger does not lie in maintaining that the thousand years are yet to come; but in interpreting them, whether past or to come, in a gross and carnal sense. The doctrine of the Son of God is a mystery. So is his cross; and so is his glory. In all these he is a sign that is spoken against. Happy they who believe and confess him in all!

3. And set a seal upon him - How far these expressions are to be taken literally, how far figuratively only, who can tell? That he might deceive the nations no more - One benefit only is here expressed, as resulting from the confinement of Satan. But how many and great blessings are implied! For the grand enemy being removed, the kingdom of God holds on its uninterrupted course among the nations; and the great mystery of God, so long foretold, is at length fulfilled; namely, when the beast is destroyed and Satan bound. This fulfilment approaches nearer and nearer; and contains things of the utmost importance, the knowledge of which becomes every day more distinct and easy. In the mean time it is highly necessary to guard against the present rage and subtilty of the devil. Quickly he will be bound: when he is loosed again, the martyrs will live and reign with Christ. Then follow his coming in glory, the new heaven, new earth, and new Jerusalem. The bottomless pit is properly the devil's prison; afterwards he is cast into the lake of fire. He can deceive the nations no more till the "thousand years," mentioned before, verse 2, chap. xx, 2 are fulfilled. Then he must be loosed - So does the mysterious wisdom of God permit. For a small time - Small comparatively: though upon the whole it cannot be very short, because the things to be transacted therein, verses 8, 9, chap. xx, 8, 9 must take up a considerable space. We are very shortly to expect, one after another, the calamities occasioned by the second beast, the harvest and the vintage, the pouring out of the phials, the judgment of Babylon, the last raging of the beast and his destruction, the imprisonment of Satan. How great things these! and how short the time! What is needful for us? Wisdom, patience, faithfulness, watchfulness. It is no time to settle upon our lees. This is not, if it be rightly understood, an acceptable message to the wise, the mighty, the honourable, of this world. Yet that which is to be done, shall be done: there is no counsel against the Lord.

4. And I saw thrones - Such as are promised the apostles, Matt. xix, 28; Luke xxii, 30. And they - Namely, the saints, whom St. John saw at the same time, Dan. vii, 22, sat upon them; and Judgment was given to them. 1 Cor. vi, 2. Who, and how many, these are, is not said. But they are distinguished from the souls, or persons, mentioned immediately after; and from the saints already raised. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded - With the axe: so the original word signifies. One kind of death, which was particularly inflicted at Rome, is mentioned for all. For the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God - The martyrs were sometimes killed for the word of God in general; sometimes particularly for the testimony of Jesus: the one, while they refused to worship idols; the other, while they confessed the name of Christ. And those who had not worshipped the wild beast, nor his image - These seem to be a company distinct from those who appeared, chap. xv, 2. Those

overcame, probably, in such contests as these had not. Before the number of the beast was expired, the people were compelled to worship him, by the most dreadful violence. But when the beast "was not," they were only seduced into it by the craft of the false prophet. And they lived - Their souls and bodies being re-united. And reigned with Christ - Not on earth, but in heaven. The "reigning on earth" mentioned, chap. xi, 15, is quite different from this. A thousand years - It must be observed, that two distinct thousand years are mentioned throughout this whole passage. Each is mentioned thrice; the thousand wherein Satan is bound, verses 2, 3, 7; chap. xx, 2, 3, 7, the thousand wherein the saints shall reign, verses 4-6. chap. xx, 4-6 The former end before the end of the world; the latter reach to the general resurrection. So that the beginning and end of the former thousand is before the beginning and end of the latter. Therefore as in the second verse, chap. xx, 2 at the first mention of the former; so in the fourth verse, chap. xx, 2 at the first mention of the latter, it is only said, a thousand years; in the other places, "the thousand," verses 3, 5, 7, chap. xx, 3, 5, 7 that is, the thousand mentioned before. During the former, the promises concerning the flourishing state of the church, chap. x, 7, shall be fulfilled; during the latter, while the saints reign with Christ in heaven, men on earth will be careless and secure.

5. The rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years - Mentioned, verse 4. Were ended - The thousand years during which Satan is bound both begin and end much sooner. The small time, and the second thousand years, begin at the same point, immediately after the first thousand. But neither the beginning of the first nor of the second thousand will be known to the men upon earth, as both the imprisonment of Satan and his loosing are transacted in the invisible world. By observing these two distinct thousand years, many difficulties are avoided. There is room enough for the fulfilling of all the prophecies, and those which before seemed to clash are reconciled; particularly those which speak, on the one hand, of a most flourishing state of the church as yet to come; and, on the other, of the fatal security of men in the last days of the world.

6. They shall be priests of God and of Christ - Therefore Christ is God. And shall reign with him - With Christ, a thousand years.

7. And when the former thousand years are fulfilled, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison - At the same time that the first resurrection begins. There is a great resemblance between this passage and chap. xii, 12. At the casting out of the dragon, there was joy in heaven, but there was woe upon earth: so at the loosing of Satan, the saints begin to reign with Christ; but the nations on earth are deceived.

8. And shall go forth to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth - (That is, in all the earth)-the more diligently, as he hath been so long restrained, and knoweth he hath but a small time. Gog and Magog - Magog, the second son of Japhet, is the father of the innumerable northern nations toward the east. The prince of these nations, of which the bulk of that army will consist, is termed Gog by Ezekiel also, Ezek. xxxviii, 2. Both Gog and Magog signify high or lifted up; a name well suiting both the prince and people. When that fierce leader of many nations shall appear, then will his own name be known. To gather them - Both Gog and his armies. Of Gog, little more is said, as being soon mingled with the rest in the common slaughter. The Revelation speaks of this the more briefly, because it had been so particularly described by Ezekiel. Whose number is as the sand of the sea - Immensely numerous: a proverbial expression.

9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, or the land - Filling the whole breadth of it. And surrounded the camp of the saints - Perhaps the gentile church, dwelling round about Jerusalem. And the beloved city - So termed, likewise, Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 11.

10. And they - All these. Shall be tormented day and night - That is, without any intermission. Strictly speaking, there is only night there: no day, no sun, no hope!

11. And I saw - A representation of that great day of the Lord. A great white throne - How great, who can say? White with the glory of God, of him that sat upon it, - Jesus Christ. The apostle does not attempt to describe him here; only adds that circumstance, far above all description, From whose face the earth and the heaven fled away - Probably both the aerial and the starry heaven; which "shall pass away with a great noise." And there was found no place for them - But they were wholly dissolved, the very "elements melting with fervent heat." It is not said, they were thrown into great commotions, but they fled entirely away; not, they started from their foundations, but they " fell into dissolution;" not, they removed to a distant place, but there was found no place for them; they ceased to exist; they were no more. And all this, not at the strict command of the Lord Jesus; not at his awful presence, or before his fiery indignation; but at the bare presence of his Majesty, sitting with severe but adorable dignity on his throne.

12. And I saw the dead, great and small - Of every age and condition. This includes, also, those who undergo a change equivalent to death, 1 Cor. xv, 51. And the books - Human Judges have their books written with pen and ink: how different is the nature of these books! Were opened - O how many hidden things will then come to light; and how many will have quite another appearance than they had before in the sight of men! With the book of God's omniscience, that of conscience will then exactly tally. The book of natural law, as well as of revealed, will then also be displayed. It is not said, The books will be read: the light of that day will make them visible to all. Then, particularly, shall every man know himself, and that with the last exactness This will be the first true, full, impartial, universal history. And another book - Wherein are enrolled all that are accepted through the Beloved; all who lived and died in the faith that worketh by love. Which is the book of life, was opened - What manner of expectation will then be, with regard to the issue of the whole! Mal. iii, 16, &c.

13. Death and hades gave up the dead that were in them - Death gave up all the bodies of men; and hades, the receptacle of separate souls, gave them up, to be re-united to their bodies.

14. And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire - That is, were abolished for ever; for neither the righteous nor the wicked were to die any more: their souls and bodies were no more to be separated. Consequently, neither death nor hades could any more have a being.

## XXI

1. And I saw - So it runs, chap. xix, 11, xx, 1, 4, 11, in a succession. All these several representations follow one another in order: so the vision reaches into eternity. A new heaven and a new earth - After the resurrection and general judgment. St. John is not now describing a flourishing state of the church, but a new and eternal state of all things. For the first heaven and the first earth - Not only the lowest part of heaven, not only the solar system, but the whole ethereal heaven, with all its host, whether of planets or fixed stars, Isai xxxiv, 4 Matt. xxiv, 29. All the former things will be done away, that all may become new, verses 4, 5, 2 Pet. iii, 10, 12. Are passed away - But in the fourth verse it is said, "are gone away." There the stronger word is used; for death, mourning,

and sorrow go away all together: the former heaven and earth only pass away, giving place to the new heaven and the new earth.

2. And I saw the holy city - The new heaven, the new earth, and the new Jerusalem, are closely connected. This city is wholly new, belonging not to this world, not to the millennium, but to eternity. This appears from the series of the vision, the magnificence of the description, and the opposition of this city to the second death, chap. xx, 11, 12; xxi, 1, 2, 5, 8, 9; xxii, 5. Coming down - In the very act of descending.

3. They shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God - So shall the covenant between God and his people be executed in the most glorious manner.

4. And death shall be no more - This is a full proof that this whole description belongs not to time, but eternity. Neither shall sorrow, or crying, or pain, be any more: for the former things are gone away - Under the former heaven, and upon the former earth, there was death and sorrow, crying and pain; all which occasioned many tears: but now pain and sorrow are fled away, and the saints have everlasting life and joy.

5. And he that sat upon the throne said - Not to St. John only. From the first mention of "him that sat upon the throne," chap. iv, 2, this is the first speech which is expressly ascribed to him. And he - The angel. Saith to me Write - As follows. These sayings are faithful and true - This includes all that went before. The apostle seems again to have ceased writing, being overcome with ecstasy at the voice of him that spake.

6. And he - That sat upon the throne. Said to me, It is done - All that the prophets had spoken; all that was spoken, chap. iv, 1. We read this expression twice in this prophecy: first, chap. xvi, 17, at the fulfilling of the wrath of God; and here, at the making all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end - The latter explains the former: the Everlasting. I will give to him that thirsteth - The Lamb saith the same, chap. xxii, 17.

7. He that overcometh - Which is more than, "he that thirsteth." Shall inherit these things - Which I have made new. I will be his God, and he shall be my son - Both in the Hebrew and Greek language, in which the scriptures were written, what we translate shall and will are one and the same word. The only difference consists in an English translation, or in the want of knowledge in him that interprets what he does not understand.

8. But the fearful and unbelieving - Who, through want of courage and faith, do not overcome. And abominable - That is, sodomites. And whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters - These three sins generally went together; their part is in the lake.

9. And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven phials - Whereby room had been made for the kingdom of God. Saying, Come, I will show thee the bride - The same angel had before showed him Babylon, chap. xvii, 1, which is directly opposed to the new Jerusalem.

10. And he carried me away in the spirit - The same expression as before, chap. xvii, 3. And showed me the holy city Jerusalem - The old city is now forgotten, so that this is no longer termed the new, but absolutely Jerusalem. O how did St. John long to enter in! but the time was not yet come. Ezekiel also describes "the holy city," and what pertains thereto, xl.-xlviii. Ezek. xl, 1-Ezek. xlviii, 35 but a city quite different from the old Jerusalem, as it was either before or after the Babylonish captivity. The descriptions of the prophet and of the apostle agree in many particulars; but in many more they differ. Ezekiel expressly describes the temple, and the worship of God therein, closely alluding to the Levitical service. But St. John saw no temple, and describes the city far more large, glorious, and heavenly than the prophet. Yet that which he describes is the same

city; but as it subsisted soon after the destruction of the beast. This being observed, both the prophecies agree together and one may explain the other.

11. Having the glory of God - For her light, verse 23, ver. 23, Isaiah xl, 1, 2, Zech. ii, 5. Her window - There was only one, which ran all round the city. The light did not come in from without through this for the glory of God is within the city. But it shines out from within to a great distance, verses 23, 24. chap. xxi, 23, 24

12. Twelve angels - Still waiting upon the heirs of salvation.

14. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb - Figuratively showing that the inhabitants of the city had built only on that faith which the apostles once delivered to the saints.

15. And he measured the city, twelve thousand furlongs - Not in circumference, but on each of the four sides. Jerusalem was thirtythree furlongs in circumference; Alexandria thirty in length, ten in breadth. Nineveh is reported to have been four hundred furlongs round; Babylon four hundred and eighty. But what inconsiderable villages were all these compared to the new Jerusalem! By this measure is understood the greatness of the city, with the exact order and just proportion of every part of it; to show, figuratively, that this city was prepared for a great number of inhabitants, how small soever the number of real Christians may sometimes appear to be; and that everything relating to the happiness of that state was prepared with the greatest order and exactness. The city is twelve thousand furlongs high; the wall, an hundred and forty-four reeds. This is exactly the same height, only expressed in a different manner. The twelve thousand furlongs, being spoken absolutely, without any explanation, are common, human furlongs: the hundred forty-four reeds are not of common human length, but of angelic, abundantly larger than human. It is said, the measure of a man that is, of an angel because St. John saw the measuring angel in an human shape. The reed therefore was as great as was the stature of that human form in which the angel appeared. In treating of all these things a deep reverence is necessary; and so is a measure of spiritual wisdom; that we may neither understand them too literally and grossly, nor go too far from the natural force of the words. The gold, the pearls, the precious stones, the walls, foundations, gates, are undoubtedly figurative expressions; seeing the city itself is in glory, and the inhabitants of it have spiritual bodies: yet these spiritual bodies are also real bodies, and the city is an abode distinct from its inhabitants, and proportioned to them who take up a finite and a determinate space. The measures, therefore, above mentioned are real and determinate.

18. And the building of the wall was jasper - That is, the wall was built of jasper. And the city - The houses, was of pure gold.

19. And the foundations were adorned with precious stones - That is, beautifully made of them. The precious stones on the high priest's breastplate of judgment were a proper emblem to express the happiness of God's church in his presence with them, and in the blessing of his protection. The like ornaments on the foundations of the walls of this city may express the perfect glory and happiness of all the inhabitants of it from the most glorious presence and protection of God. Each precious stone was not the ornament of the foundation, but the foundation itself. The colours of these are remarkably mixed. A jasper is of the colour of white marble, with a light shade of green and of red; a sapphire is of a sky-blue, speckled with gold; a chalcedony, or carbuncle, of the colour of red-hot iron; an emerald, of a grass green.

20. A sardonyx is red streaked with white; a sardius, of a deep red; a chrysolite, of a deep yellow; a beryl, sea-green; a topaz, pale yellow; a chrysoprase is greenish and transparent, with gold specks; a jacinth, of a red purple; an amethyst, violet purple.

22. The Lord God and the Lamb are the temple of it - He fills the new heaven and the new earth. He surrounds the city and sanctifies it, and all that are therein. He is "all in all."

23. The glory of God - Infinitely brighter than the shining of the sun.

24. And the nations - The whole verse is taken from Isaiah lx, 3. Shall walk by the light thereof - Which throws itself outward from the city far and near. And the kings of the earth - Those of them who have a part there. Bring their glory into it - Not their old glory, which is now abolished; but such as becomes the new earth, and receives an immense addition by their entrance into the city.

26. And they shall bring the glory of the nations into it - It seems, a select part of each nation; that is, all which can contribute to make this city honourable and glorious shall be found in it; as if all that was rich and precious throughout the world was brought into one city.

27. Common - That is. unholy. But those who are written in the Lamb's book of life - True, holy, persevering believers. This blessedness is enjoyed by those only; and, as such, they are registered among them who are to inherit eternal life.

## XXII

1. And he showed me a river of the water of life - The ever fresh and fruitful effluence of the Holy Ghost. See Ezek. xlvii, 1-12; where also the trees are mentioned which "bear fruit every month," that is, perpetually. Proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb - "All that the Father hath," saith the Son of God, "is mine;" even the throne of his glory.

2. In the midst of the street - Here is the paradise of God, mentioned, chap. ii, 7. Is the tree of life - Not one tree only, but many. Every month - That is, in inexpressible abundance. The variety, likewise, as well as the abundance of the fruits of the Spirit, may be intimated thereby. And the leaves are for the healing of the nations - For the continuing their health, not the restoring it; for no sickness is there.

3. And there shall be no more curse - But pure life and blessing; every effect of the displeasure of God for sin being now totally removed. But the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it - That is, the glorious presence and reign of God. And his servants - The highest honour in the universe. Shalt worship him - The noblest employment.

4. And shall see his face - Which was not granted to Moses. They shall have the nearest access to, and thence the highest resemblance of, him. This is the highest expression in the language of scripture to denote the most perfect happiness of the heavenly state, 1 John iii, 2. And his name shall be on their foreheads - Each of them shall be openly acknowledged as God's own property, and his glorious nature most visibly shine forth in them. And they shall reign - But who are the subjects of these kings? The other inhabitants of the new earth. For there must needs be an everlasting difference between those who when on earth excelled in virtue, and those comparatively slothful and unprofitable servants, who were just saved as by fire. The kingdom of God is taken by force; but the prize is worth all the labour. Whatever of high, lovely, or excellent is in all the monarchies of the earth is all together not a grain of dust, compared to the glory of the children of God. God

"is not ashamed to be called their God, for whom he hath prepared this city." But who shall come up into his holy place? "They who keep his commandments," verse 14. ver. 14

5. And they shall reign for ever and ever - What encouragement is this to the patience and faithfulness of the saints, that, whatever their sufferings are, they will work out for them "an eternal weight of glory!" Thus ends the doctrine of this Revelation, in the everlasting happiness of all the faithful. The mysterious ways of Providence are cleared up, and all things issue in an eternal Sabbath, an everlasting state of perfect peace and happiness, reserved for all who endure to the end.

6. And he said to me - Here begins the conclusion of the book, exactly agreeing with the introduction, (particularly verses 6, 7, 10, ver. 6, 7, 10 with chap. i, 1, 3,) chap. i, 1, 3 and giving light to the whole book, as this book does to the whole scripture. These sayings are faithful and true - All the things which you have heard and seen shall be faithfully accomplished in their order, and are infallibly true. The Lord, the God of the holy prophets - Who inspired and authorised them of old. Hath now sent me his angel, to show his servants - By thee. The things which must be done shortly - Which will begin to be performed immediately.

7. Behold, I come quickly - Saith our Lord himself, to accomplish these things. Happy is he that keepeth - Without adding or diminishing, verses 18, 19, ver. 18, 19 the words of this book.

8. I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel - The very same words which occur, chap. xix, 10. The reproof of the angel, likewise, See thou do it not, for I am thy fellowservant, is expressed in the very same terms as before. May it not be the very same incident which is here related again? Is not this far more probable, than that the apostle would commit a fault again, of which he had been so solemnly warned before?

9. See thou do it not - The expression in the original is short and elliptical, as is usual in showing vehement aversion.

10. And he saith to me - After a little pause. Seal not the sayings of this book - Conceal them not, like the things that are sealed up. The time is nigh - Wherein they shall begin to take place.

11. He that is unrighteous - As if he had said, The final judgment is at hand; after which the condition of all mankind will admit of no change for ever. Unrighteous - Unjustified. Filthy - Unsanctified, unholy.

12. I - Jesus Christ. Come quickly - To judge the world. And my reward is with me - The rewards which I assign both to the righteous and the wicked are given at my coming. To give to every man according as his work - His whole inward and outward behaviour shall be.

13. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last - Who exist from everlasting to everlasting. How clear, incontestable a proof, does our Lord here give of his divine glory!

14. Happy are they that do his commandments - His, who saith, I come - He speaks of himself. That they may have right - Through his gracious covenant. To the tree of life - To all the blessings signified by it. When Adam broke his commandment, he was driven from the tree of life. They who keep his commandments" shall eat thereof.

15. Without are dogs - The sentence in the original is abrupt, as expressing abhorrence. The gates are ever open; but not for dogs; fierce and rapacious men.

16. I Jesus have sent my angel to testify these things - Primarily. To you - The seven angels of the churches; then to those churches - and afterwards to all other churches in succeeding ages. I - as God. Am the root - And source of David's family and kingdom; as man, an descended from his loins. "I am the star out of Jacob," Num. xxiv, 17; like the bright morning star, who put an end to the night of ignorance, sin, and sorrow, and usher in an eternal day of light, purity, and joy.

17. The Spirit and the bride - The Spirit of adoption in the bride, in the heart of every true believer. Say - With earnest desire and expectation. Come - And accomplish all the words of this prophecy. And let him that thirsteth, come - Here they also who are farther off are invited. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life - He may partake of my spiritual and unspeakable blessings, as freely as he makes use of the most common refreshments; as freely as he drinks of the running stream.

18, 19. I testify to every one, &c. - From the fulness of his heart, the apostle utters this testimony, this weighty admonition, not only to the churches of Asia, but to all who should ever hear this book. He that adds, all the plagues shall be added to him; he that takes from it, all the blessings shall be taken from him; and, doubtless, this guilt is incurred by all those who lay hindrances in the way of the faithful, which prevent them from hearing their Lord's "I come," and answering, "Come, Lord Jesus." This may likewise be considered as an awful sanction, given to the whole New Testament; in like manner as Moses guarded the law, Deut. iv, 2, and Deut. xii, 32; and as God himself did, Mal. iv, 4, in closing the canon of the Old Testament.

20. He that testifieth these things - Even all that is contained in this book. Saith - For the encouragement of the church in all her afflictions. Yea - Answering the call of the Spirit and the bride. I come quickly - To destroy all her enemies, and establish her in a state of perfect and everlasting happiness. The apostle expresses his earnest desire and hope of this, by answering, Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

21. The grace - The free love. Of the Lord Jesus - And all its fruits. Be with all - Who thus long for his appearing! It may be proper to subjoin here a short view of the whole contents of this book. In the year of the world, 3940. Jesus Christ is born, three years before the common computation. In that which is vulgarly called, the thirtieth year of our Lord, Jesus Christ dies; rises; ascends. Year (A.D.) Event As Described In Revelation Chapter/Verse 96 The Revelation is given; the coming of our Lord is declared to the seven churches in Asia, and their angels, Rev i., ii., iii. 97, 98 The seven seals are opened, and under the fifth the chronos is declared, iv.-vi. Seven trumpets are given to the seven angels, vii. viii. Century, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, the trumpet of the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th angel, viii.

510-589 The first woe, \.....

589-634 The interval after the first woe, } ix.....

634-840 The second woe, /.....

800 The beginning of the non-chronos \..... many kings, } ix., x.

840-947 The interval after the second woe, /.....

847-1521 The twelve hundred and sixty days of the woman, after she hath brought forth the man child, C xii. 6

947-1836 The third woe, 12

1058-1836 The time, times, and half a time, and \..... within that period, the beast, his forty- }to xiii. 5 two months, his number 666, /.....

1209 War with the saints: the end of the chronos, 7

1614 An everlasting gospel promulged, xiv. 6

1810 The end of the forty-two months of the beast; after which, and the pouring out of the phials, he is not, and Babylon reigns queen, xv., xvi.

1832 The beast ascends from the bottomless pit, xvii., xviii.

1836 The end of the non-chronos, and of the many kings; the fulfilling of the word, and of the mystery of God; the repentance of the survivors in the great city; the end of the "little time," and of the three times and a half; the destruction of the east; the imprisonment of Satan, xix., xx. Afterward The loosing of Satan for a small time; the beginning of the thousand years' reign of the saints; the end of the small time, xx. The end of the world; all things new, xx., xxii. The several ages, from the time of St. John's being in Patmos, down to the present time, may, according to the chief incidents mentioned in the Revelation, be distinguished thus: Age Event As Described In Revelation Chapter/Verse

II. The destruction of the Jews by Adrian, C viii. 7

III. The inroads of the barbarous nations, 8

IV. The Arian bitterness, 10

V. The end of the western empire. 12

VI. The Jews tormented in Persia, ix. 1

VII. The Saracen cavalry. 13

VIII. Many kings, x. 11

IX. The ruler of the nations born, xii. 5

X. The third woe, 12

XI. The ascent of the beast out of the pen, xiii. 1

XII. Power given to the beast, 5

XIII. War with the saints, 7

XIV. The middle of the third woe,

XV. The beast in the midst of his strength,

XVI. The Reformation; the woman better fed, 9

XVII. An everlasting gospel promulged, xiv. 6

XVIII. The worship of the beast and of his image, 9

O God, whatsoever stands or falls, stands or falls by thy judgment. Defend thy own truth!Have mercy on me and my readers! To thee be glory for ever!

# JOHN WESLEYS NOTES

# ON THE WHOLE BIBLE

# THE OLD TESTAMENT

## by John Wesley

## PREFACE

ABOUT ten years ago I was prevailed upon to publish Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament. When that work was begun, and indeed when it was finished, I had no design to attempt anything farther of the kind. Nay, I had a full determination, Not to do it, being throughly fatigued with the immense labour (had it been only this; tho' this indeed was but a small part of it,) of writing twice over a Quarto book containing seven or eight hundred pages.

2. But this was scarce published before I was importuned to write Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament. This importunity I have withstood for many years. Over and above the deep conviction I had, of my insufficiency for such a work, of my want of learning, of understanding, of spiritual experience, for an undertaking more difficult by many degrees, than even writing on the New Testament, I objected, That there were many passages in the Old, which I did not understand myself, and consequently could not explain to others, either to their satisfaction, or my own. Above all, I objected the want of time: Not only as I have a thousand other employments, but as my Day is near spent, as I am declined into the vale of years. And to this day it appears to me as a dream, a thing almost incredible, that I should be entering upon a work of this kind, when I am entering into the sixty-third year of my age.

3. Indeed these considerations, the last particular, still appear to me of such weight, that I cannot entertain a thought of composing a body of Notes on the whole Old Testament. All the question remaining was, "Is there extant any Exposition which is worth abridging?" Abundantly less time will suffice for this and less abilities of every kind. In considering this question, I soon turned my thought on the well-known Mark Henry. He is allowed by all competent Judges, to have been a person of strong understanding, of various learning, of solid piety, and much experience in the ways of God. And his exposition is generally clear and intelligible, the thoughts being expressed in plain words: It is also found, agreeable to the tenor of scripture, and to the analogy of faith. It is frequently full, giving a sufficient explication of the passages which require explaining. It is in many parts deep, penetrating farther into the inspired writings than most other comments do. It does not entertain us with vain speculations, but is practical throughout: and usually spiritual too teaching us how to worship God, not in form only, but in spirit and in truth.

4. But it may be reasonably inquired, "If Mark Henry's exposition be not only plain, sound, full, and deep, but practical, yea and spiritual too, what need is there of any other? Or how is it possible to mend This? to alter it for the better?" I answer, very many who have This, have no need of any other: particularly those who believe (what runs thro' the whole work and will much recommend it to them) the doctrine of absolution, irrespective, unconditional Predestination. I do not advise these, much to trouble themselves about any other exposition than Mark Henry's: this is sufficient, thro' the assistance of the Blessed Spirit, to make private Christians wise unto salvation, and (the Lord applying his word) throughly furnished unto every good work.

5. But then it is manifest on the other hand, every one cannot have this exposition. It is too large a purchase: there are thousands who would rejoice to have it; but it bears too high a price. They have not Six Guineas (the London price) in the world, perhaps from one year's end to another. And if they sometimes have, yet they have it not to spare; they need it for other occasions. How much soever therefore they desire so valuable a work, they must content themselves to go without it.

6. But suppose they have money enough to purchase, yet they have not time enough to read it: the size is as unsurmountable an objection as the price itself. It is not possible for men who have their daily bread to earn by the sweat of their brows, who generally are confined to their work, from six in the morning 'till six in the evening, to find leisure for reading over six folios, each containing seven or eight hundred pages. These therefore have need of some other exposition than Mark Henry's. As excellent as it is in its kind, it is not for their purpose; seeing they have neither money to make the purchase, nor time to read it over.

7. It is very possible then to mend this work valuable as it is, at least by shortening it. As the grand objection to it is the size, that objection may be removed: and they who at present have no possibility of profiting by it, while it is of so great a bulk and so high a price, may then enjoy part at least of the same advantage with those who have more money and more leisure. Few I presume that have the whole and leisure to read it, will concern themselves with an extract. But those who cannot have all, will (for the present at least) be glad to have a part. And they who complain it is too short, may yet serve themselves of it, 'till they can procure the long work.

8. But I apprehend this valuable work may be made more valuable still, by making it plainer as well as shorter. Accordingly what is here extracted from it, (which indeed makes but a small part of the following volumes) is considerably plainer than the original. In order to this not only all the Latin sentences occasionally interspersed are omitted, but whatever phrases or words are not so intelligible to persons of no education. Those only who frequently and familiarly converse with men that are wholly uneducated, can conceive how many expressions are mere Greek to them, which are quite natural to those who have any share of learning. It is not by reading, much less by musing alone, that we are enabled to suit our discourse to common capacities. It is only by actually talking with the vulgar, that we learn to talk in a manner they can understand. And unless we do this, what do we profit them? Do we not lose all our labour? Should we speak as angels, we should be of no more use to them, than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

9. Nay I apprehend what is extracted from Mark Henry's work, may in some sense be more sound than the original. Understand me right: I mean more conformable to that glorious declaration, God willeth all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of his truth. And let it not be objected, That the making any alteration with regard to a point of doctrine, is a misrepresentation of the author's sense, and consequently an injury done to him. It would so, is an alteration were made of his words, so as to make them bear a different meaning; or if any words were recited as His, which

he did not write. But neither of these is the case. Nothing is recited here as written by him which he did not write. Neither is any construction put upon his words, different from his own. But what he wrote in favour of Particular Redemption, is totally left out. And of this I here give express notice to the reader once for all.

10. Again. It certainly possible that a work abundantly shorter than Mark Henry's may nevertheless be considerably fuller, in some particulars. There are many words which he passes over without any explanation at all; as taking it for granted that the reader already knows the meaning of them. But this is a supposition not to be made; it is an entire mistake. For instance: What does a common man know of an Omer, or a Hin? "Why Moses explains his own meaning: "An Omer is the tenth part of an ephah." True; but what does the honest man know of an ephah? Just as much as of an Omer. I suppose that which led Mark Henry into these omissions, which otherwise are unaccountable, was the desire of not saying what others had said before, Mark Pool in particular. This is easily gathered from his own words, "Mark Pool's English Annotations are of admirable use; especially for "the explaining of scripture phrases, opening the sense and clearing "of difficulties. I have industriously declined as much as I could what "is to be found there." I wish he had not. Or at least that he had given us the same sense in other words. Indeed he adds, "Those "and other annotations are most easy to be consulted upon occasion." Yes by those that have them: but that is not the case with the generality of Mark Henry's readers. And besides they may justly expect that so large a comment will leave them no occasion to consult others.

11. It is possible likewise to penetrate deeper into the meaning of some scriptures than Mark Henry has done. Altho' in general he is far from being a superficial writer, yet he is not always the same. Indeed if he had, he must have been more than man, considering the vastness of his work. It was scarce possible for any human understanding, to furnish out such a number of folios, without sinking sometimes into trite reflections and observations, rather lively than deep. A stream that runs wide and covers a large tract of land, will be shallow in some places. If it had been confined within a moderate channel, it might have flowed deep all along.

12. Nay, it cannot be denied, that there may be an exposition of scripture more closely practical, than some parts of Mark Henry's are, as well as more spiritual. Even his exposition of the twentieth chapter of Exodus, where one would naturally have expected to find a compleat scheme of Christian practice, does not answer that expectation. Nor do I remember that he has any where given us, a satisfactory account of Spiritual Religion, of the kingdom of God within us, the fruit of Christ dwelling and reigning in the heart. This I hoped to have found particularly in the exposition of our Lord's Sermon upon the mount. But I was quite disappointed of my hope. It was not by any means what I expected.

13. I do not therefore intend the following Notes for a bare abridgment of Mark Henry's exposition. Far from it: I not only omit much more than nineteen parts out of twenty of what he has written, but make many alterations and many additions, well nigh from the beginning to the end. In particular, I every where omit the far greater part of his inferences from and improvement of the chapter. They who think these the most valuable part of the work, may have recourse to the author himself. I likewise omit great part of almost every note, the sum of which is retained: as it seems to be his aim, to say as much, whereas it is mine to say as little as possible. And I omit abundance of quaint sayings and lively antitheses; as, "God feeds his birds. Shall he not feed his babes!" "Pharaoh's princes: his pimps rather." Indeed every thing of this kind which occurred I have left quite untouched: altho' I am sensible these are the very flowers which numberless readers

admire; nay which many, I doubt not, apprehend to be the chief beauties of the book. For that very reason I cannot but wish, they had never had a place therein; for this is a blemish, which is exceeding catching: he that admires it, will quickly imitate it. I used once to wonder, whence some whom I greatly esteem, had so many pretty turns in preaching. But when I read Mark Henry, my wonder ceased. I saw, they were only copying after him: altho' many of them probably without designing or even adverting to it. They generally consulted his exposition of their text, and frequently just before preaching. And hence little witticisms and a kind of archness insensibly stole upon them, and took place of that strong, manly eloquence, which they would otherwise have learned from the inspired writers.

14. With regard to alterations, in what I take from Mark Henry, I continually alter hard words into easy, and long sentences into short. But I do not knowingly alter the sense of any thing I extract from him, I only endeavour in several places, to make it more clear and determinate. I have here and there taken the liberty of altering a word in the text. But this I have done very sparingly, being afraid of venturing too far; as being conscious of my very imperfect acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue. I have added very largely from Mark Pool, as much as seemed necessary for common readers, in order to their understanding those words or passages, which Mark Henry does not explain. Nay, from the time that I had more maturely considered Mark Pool's annotations on the Bible, (which was soon after I had gone thro' the book of Genesis) I have extracted far more from him than from Mark Henry: it having been my constant method, after reading the text, first to read and weigh what Mark Pool observed upon every verse, and afterwards to consult Mark Henry's exposition of the whole paragraph. In consequence of this, instead of short additions from Mark Pool to supply what was wanting in Mark Henry, (which was my first design) I now only make extracts from Mark Henry, to supply so far as they are capable, what was wanting in Mark Pool. I say, so far as they are capable: for I still found in needful to add to both such farther observations, as have from time to time occurred to my own mind in reading or thinking on the scriptures, together with such as I have occasionally extracted from other authors.

15. Every thinking man will now easily discern my design in the following sheets. It is not, to write sermons, essays or set discourses, upon any part of scripture. It is not to draw inferences from the text, or to shew what doctrines may be proved thereby. It is this: To give the direct, literal meaning, of every verse, of every sentence, and as far as I am able, of every word in the oracles of God. I design only, like the hand of a dial, to point every man to This: not to take up his mind with something else, how excellent soever: but to keep his eye fixt upon the naked Bible, that he may read and hear it with understanding. I say again, (and desire it may be well observed, that none may expect what they will not find) It is not my design to write a book, which a man may read separate from the Bible: but barely to assist those who fear God, in hearing and reading the bible itself, by shewing the natural sense of every part, in as few and plain words as I can.

16. And I am not without hopes, that the following notes may in some measure answer this end, not barely to unlettered and ignorant men, but also to men of education and, learning: (altho' it is true, neither these nor the Notes on the New Testament were principally designed for Them.) Sure I am, that tracts wrote in the most plain and simple manner, are of infinitely more service to me, than those which are elabourated with the utmost skill, and set off with the greatest pomp of erudition.

17. But it is no part of my design, to save either learned or unlearned men from the trouble of thinking. If so, I might perhaps write Folios too, which usually overlay, rather than help the thought. On the contrary, my intention is, to make them think, and assist them in thinking. This is the way

to understand the things of God; Meditate thereon day and night; So shall you attain the best knowledge; even to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. And this knowledge will lead you, to love Him, because he hath first loved us: yea, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. Will there not then be all that mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus? And in consequence of this, while you joyfully experience all the holy tempers described in this book, you will likewise be outwardly holy as He that hath called you is holy, in all manner of conversation.

18. If you desire to read the scripture in such a manner as may most effectually answer this end, would it not be advisable,

1. To set apart a little time, if you can, every morning and evening for that purpose?
2. At each time if you have leisure, to read a chapter out of the Old, and one out of the New Testament: is you cannot do this, to take a single chapter, or a part of one?
3. To read this with a single eye, to know the whole will of God, and a fixt resolution to do it? In order to know his will, you should,
4. Have a constant eye to the analogy of faith; the connection and harmony there is between those grand, fundamental doctrines, Original Sin, Justification by Faith, the New Birth, Inward and Outward Holiness.
5. Serious and earnest prayer should be constantly used, before we consult the oracles of God, seeing "scripture can only be understood thro' the same Spirit whereby "it was given." Our reading should likewise be closed with prayer, that what we read may be written on our hearts.
6. It might also be of use, if while we read, we were frequently to pause, and examine ourselves by what we read, both with regard to our hearts, and lives. This would furnish us with matter of praise, where we found God had enabled us to conform to his blessed will, and matter of humiliation and prayer, where we were conscious of having fallen short. And whatever light you then receive, should be used to the uttermost, and that immediately. Let there be no delay. Whatever you resolve, begin to execute the first moment you can. So shall you find this word to be indeed the power of God unto present and eternal salvation. EDINBURGH, April 25, 1765.

## NOTES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED GENESIS

THE Holy Bible, or Book, is so called by way of eminency, as it is the best book that ever was written. The great things of God's law and gospel are here written, that they might be reduced to a greater certainty, might spread farther, remain longer, and be transmitted to distant places and ages, more pure and entire than possibly they could be by tradition. That part of the Bible which we call the Old Testament, contains the acts and monuments of the church from the creation, almost to the coming of Christ in the flesh, which was about four thousand years: the truths then revealed, the laws enacted, the prophecies given, and the chief events that concerned the church. This is called

a testament or covenant, because it was a declaration of the will of God concerning man in a federal way, and had its force from the designed death of the great testator, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, Rev. xiii, 8 - 'Tis called the Old Testament with relation to the New, which doth not cancel, but crown and perfect it, by bringing in that better hope which was typified and foretold in it. This part of the Old Testament we call the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses. These books were, probably, the first that ever were written; for we have no mention of any writing in all the book of Genesis, nor 'till God bid Moses write, Exod. xvii, 14. and set him his copy in the writing of the ten commandments upon the tables of stone. However, we are sure these books are the most ancient writings now extant. The first of these, which we call Genesis, Moses probably wrote in the wilderness, after he had been in the mount with God. And as he framed the tabernacle, so he did the more excellent and durable fabric of this book, according to the pattern shewed him in the mount: into which it is better to resolve the certainty of the things herein contained, than into any tradition which possibly might be handed down to the family of Jacob.-Genesis is a name borrowed from the Greek: it signifies the original or generation: fitly is this book so called, for it is a history of originals; the creation of the world, the entrance of sin and death into it, the invention of arts, the rise of nations, and especially the planting of the church, and the state of it in its early days. 'Tis also a history of generations, the generations of Adam, Noah, Abraham, &c. - The beginning of the New Testament is called Genesis too, Matt. i, 1, the book of the Genesis, or generation of Jesus Christ. Lord, open our eyes, that we may see the wondrous things both of thy law and gospel!

## I

The holy scripture, being designed to maintain and improve natural religion, to repair the decays of it. and supply the defects of it, since the fall, lays down at first this principle of the unclouded light of nature: That this world was, in the beginning of time, created by a Being of infinite wisdom and power, who was himself before all time, and all worlds. And the first verse of the Bible gives us a surer and better, a more satisfying and useful knowledge of the origin of the universe, than all the volumes of the philosophers. We have three things in this chapter.

I. A general idea of the work of creation, ver. 1, 2.

II. A particular account of the several days work, distinctly and in order. The creation of light, the first day, ver. 3-5. Of the firmament, the second day, ver. 6-8. Of the sea, the earth and its fruits, the third day, ver. 9-13. Of the lights of heaven, the fourth day, ver. 14-19. Of the fish and fowl, the fifth day, ver. 20-23. Of the beasts, ver. 24, 25. Of man, ver. 26-28. And food for both, the sixth day, ver. 29, 30.

III. The review and approbation of the whole work, ver. 31.

1. Observe here.

1. The effect produced, The heaven and the earth - That is, the world, including the whole frame and furniture of the universe. But 'tis only the visible part of the creation that Moses designs to give an account of. Yet even in this there are secrets which cannot be fathomed, nor accounted for. But from what we see of heaven and earth, we may infer the eternal power and godhead of the great

Creator. And let our make and place, as men, mind us of our duty, as Christians, which is always to keep heaven in our eye, and the earth under our feet. Observe

2. The author and cause of this great work, God. The Hebrew word is Elohim; which (1.) seems to mean The Covenant God, being derived from a word that signifies to swear. (2.) The plurality of persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The plural name of God in Hebrew, which speaks of him as many, tho' he be but one, was to the Gentiles perhaps a favour of death unto death, hardening them in their idolatry; but it is to us a favour of life unto life, confirming our faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, which, tho' but darkly intimated in the Old Testament, is clearly revealed in the New. Observe
3. The manner how this work was effected; God created, that is, made it out of nothing. There was not any pre-existent matter out of which the world was produced. The fish and fowl were indeed produced out of the waters, and the beasts and man out of the earth; but that earth and those waters were made out of nothing. Observe
4. When this work was produced; In the beginning - That is, in the beginning of time. Time began with the production of those beings that are measured by time. Before the beginning of time there was none but that Infinite Being that inhabits eternity. Should we ask why God made the world no sooner, we should but darken counsel by words without knowledge; for how could there be sooner or later in eternity?

2. Where we have an account of the first matter, and the first Mover.

1. A chaos was the first matter. 'Tis here called the earth, (tho' the earth, properly taken, was not made 'till the third day, ver. 10) because it did most resemble that which was afterwards called earth, a heavy unwieldy mass. 'Tis also called the deep, both for its vastness, and because the waters which were afterwards separated from the earth were now mixed with it. This mighty bulk of matter was it, out of which all bodies were afterwards produced. The Creator could have made his work perfect at first, but by this gradual proceeding he would shew what is ordinarily the method of his providence, and grace. This chaos, was without form and void. Tohu and Bohu, confusion and emptiness, so those words are rendered, Isaiah xxxiv, 11. 'Twas shapeless, 'twas useless, 'twas without inhabitants, without ornaments; the shadow or rough draught of things to come. To those who have their hearts in heaven, this lower world, in comparison of the upper, still appears to be confusion and emptiness. And darkness was upon the face of the deep-God did not create this darkness, (as he is said to create the darkness of affliction, Isaiah xlv, 7.) for it was only the want of light.

2. The Spirit of God was the first Mover; He moved upon the face of the waters - He moved upon the face of the deep, as the hen gathereth her chicken under her wings, and hovers over them, to warm and cherish them, Matt. xxiii, 37 as the eagle stirs up her nest, and fluttereth over her young, ('tis the same word that is here used) Deut. xxxii, 11.

3, 4, 5. We have here a farther account of the first day's work. In which observe,

1. That the first of all visible beings which God created was light, the great beauty and blessing of the universe: like the first-born, it doth, of all visible beings, most resemble its great parent in purity and power, brightness and beneficence.
2. That the light was made by the word of God's power; He said, Let there be light - He willed it, and it was done; there was light - Such a copy as exactly answered the original idea in the eternal mind.
3. That the light which God willed, he approved of. God saw the light, that it was good - 'Twas exactly as he designed it; and it was fit to answer the end for which he designed it.
4. That God divided the light from the darkness - So put them asunder as they could never be joined together: and yet he divided time between them, the day for light, and the night for darkness, in a constant succession. Tho' the darkness was now scattered by the light, yet it has its place, because it has its use; for as the light of the morning befriends the business of the day, so the shadows of the evening befriend the repose of the night. God has thus divided between light and darkness, because he would daily mind us that this is a world of mixtures and changes. In heaven there is perpetual light, and no darkness; in hell utter darkness, and no light: but in this world they are counter-changed, and we pass daily from one to another; that we may learn to expect the like vicissitudes in the providence of God.
5. That God divided them from each other by distinguishing names. He called the light Day, and the darkness he called night - He gave them names as Lord of both. He is the Lord of time, and will be so 'till day and night shall come to an end, and the stream of time be swallowed up in the ocean of eternity.
6. That this was the first day's work, The evening and the morning were the first day - The darkness of the evening was before the light of the morning, that it might set it off, and make it shine the brighter. See note at "ver. 3"

6, 7, 8. We have here an account of the second day's work, the creation of the firmament. In which observe,

1. The command of God: Let there be a firmament - An expansion; so the Hebrew word signifies, like a sheet spread, or a curtain drawn out. This includes all that is visible above the earth, between it and the third heavens, the air, its higher, middle, and lower region, the celestial globe, and all the orbs of light above; it reaches as high as the place where the stars are fixed, for that is called here the firmament of heaven, ver. 14, 15, and as low as the place where the birds fly for that also is called the firmament of heaven, ver. 20.
2. The creation of it: and God made the firmament.
3. The design of it; to divide the waters from the waters-That is, to distinguish between the waters that are wrapt up in the clouds, and those that cover the sea; the waters in the air, and those in the earth.
4. The naming it: He called the firmament Heaven - 'Tis the visible heaven, the pavement of the holy city. The height of the heavens should mind us of God's supremacy, and the infinite distance that is between us and him; the brightness of the heavens, and their purity, should mind us of his majesty, and perfect

holiness; the vastness of the heavens, and their encompassing the earth, and influence upon it, should mind us of his immensity and universal providence. See note at "ver. 6"

9, 10, 11, 12, 13. The third day's work is related in these verses; the forming the sea and the dry land, and making the earth fruitful. Hitherto the power of the Creator had been employed about the upper part of the visible world; now he descends to this lower world, designed for the children of men, both for their habitation, and their maintenance. And here we have an account of the fitting of it for both; the building of their house, and the spreading of their table. Observe,

1. How the earth was prepared to be a habitation for man by the gathering of the waters together, and making the dry land appear. Thus, instead of that confusion which was, when earth and water were mixed in one great mass; now there is order, by such a separation as rendered them both useful. (1.) The waters which covered the earth were ordered to retire, and to gather into one place, viz. those hollows which were fitted for their reception. The waters thus lodged in their proper place, he called Seas; for though they are many, in distant regions, yet either above ground or under ground, they have communication with each other, and so they are one, and the common receptacle of waters, into which all the rivers run. (2.) The dry land was made to appear, and emerge out of the waters, and was called Earth. Observe,
2. How the earth was furnished for the support of man, ver. 11, 12. Present provision was made, by the immediate products of the earth, which, in obedience to God's command, was no sooner made but it became fruitful. Provision was likewise made for time to come, by the perpetuating of the several species of vegetables, every one having its seed in itself after its kind, that during the continuance of man upon the earth, food might be fetched out of the earth, for his use and benefit. See note at "ver. 9"

14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. This is the history of the fourth day's work, the creating the sun, moon and stars. Of this we have an account,

1. In general, verse 14, 15. where we have, (1.) The command given concerning them. Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven - God had said, ver. 3 Let there be light, and there was light; but that was, as it were, a chaos of light, scattered and confused; now it was collected and made into several luminaries, and so rendered both more glorious and more serviceable. (2.) The use they were intended to be of to this earth. [1.] They must be for the distinction of times, of day and night, summer and winter. [2.] They must be for the direction of actions: they are for signs of the change of weather, that the husbandman may order his affairs with discretion. They do also give light upon the earth - That we may walk John xi, 9 and work John ix, 4 according as the duty of every day requires. The lights of heaven do not shine for themselves, nor for the world of spirits above, they need them not; but they shine for us, and for our pleasure and advantage. Lord, what is man that he should be thus regarded, Psalm viii, 3, 4.
2. In particular, ver. 16, 17, 18, The lights of heaven are the sun, moon and stars, and these all are the work of God's hands. (1.) The sun is the greatest light of all, and the most glorious and useful of all the lamps of heaven; a noble instance

of the Creator's wisdom, power and goodness, and an invaluable blessing to the creatures of this lower world. (2.) The moon is a lesser light, and yet is here reckoned one of the greater lights, because, though in regard of its magnitude, it is inferior to many of the stars, yet in respect of its usefulness to the earth, it is more excellent than they. (3.) He made the stars also - Which are here spoken of only in general; for the scriptures were written not to gratify our curiosity, but to lead us to God. Now, these lights are said to rule, ver. 16, 18; not that they have a supreme dominion as God has, but they are rulers under him. Here the lesser light, the moon, is said to rule the night; but Psalm 1xxxvi, 9 the stars are mentioned as sharers in that government, the moon and stars to rule by night. No more is meant, but that they give light, Jer. xxxi, 35. The best and most honourable way of ruling is, by giving light, and doing good. See note at "ver. 14"

20, 21, 22, 23. Each day hitherto hath produced very excellent beings, but we do not read of the creation of any living creature till the fifth day. The work of creation not only proceeded gradually from one thing to another, but advanced gradually from that which was less excellent, to that which was more so. 'Twas on the fifth day that the fish and fowl were created, and both out of the waters. Observe,

1. The making of the fish and fowl at first. ver. 20, 21 God commanded them to be produced, he said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly - The fish in the waters, and the fowl out of them. This command he himself executed, God created great whales, &c.-Insects which are as various as any species of animals, and their structure as curious, were part of this day's work, some of them being allied to the fish, and others to the fowl. Notice is here taken of the various species of fish and fowl, each after their kind; and of the great numbers of both that were produced, for the waters brought forth abundantly; and in particular of great whales the largest of fishes, whose bulk and strength, are remarkable proofs of the power and greatness of the Creator. Observe, 2, The blessing of them in order to their continuance. Life is a wasting thing, its strength is not the strength of stones; therefore the wise Creator not only made the individuals, but provided for the propagating of the several species, ver. 22. God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply - Fruitfulness is the effect of God's blessing, and must be ascribed to it; the multiplying of the fish and fowl from year to year, is still the fruit of this blessing here. See note at "ver. 20"

24, 25. We have here the first part of the sixth day's work. The sea was the day before replenished with fish, and the air with fowl; and this day are made the beasts of the earth, cattle, and the creeping things that pertain to the earth. Here, as before,

1. The Lord gave the word: he said, Let The earth bring forth - Let these creatures come into being upon the earth, and out of it, in their respective kinds.
2. He also did the work; he made them all after their kind - Not only of divers shapes, but of divers natures, manners, food, and fashions: In all which appears the manifold wisdom of the Creator. See note at "ver. 2"

26, 27, 28. We have here the second part of the sixth day's work, the creation of man, which we are in a special manner concerned to take notice of. Observe,

1. That man was made last of all the creatures, which was both an honour and a favour to him: an honour, for the creation was to advance from that which was less perfect, to that which was more so and a favour, for it was not fit he should be lodged in the palace designed for him, till it was completely fitted and furnished for his reception. Man, as soon as he was made, had the whole visible creation before him, both to contemplate, and to take the comfort of.
2. That man's creation was a mere signal act of divine wisdom and power, than that of the other creatures. The narrative of it is introduced with solemnity, and a manifest distinction from the rest. Hitherto it had been said, Let there be light, and Let there be a firmament: but now the word of command is turned into a word of consultation, Let us make man - For whose sake the rest of the creatures were made. Man was to be a creature different from all that had been hitherto made. Flesh and spirit, heaven and earth must be put together in him, and he must be allied to both worlds. And therefore God himself not only undertakes to make, but is pleased so to express himself, as if he called a council to consider of the making of him; Let us make man - The three persons of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, consult about it, and concur in it; because man, when he was made, was to be dedicated and devoted to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
3. That man was made in God's image, and after his likeness; two words to express the same thing. God's image upon man, consists,
   1. In his nature, not that of his body, for God has not a body, but that of his soul. The soul is a spirit, an intelligent, immortal spirit, an active spirit, herein resembling God, the Father of spirits, and the soul of the world.
   2. In his place and authority. Let us make man in our image, and let him have dominion. As he has the government of the inferior creatures, he is as it were God's representative on earth. Yet his government of himself by the freedom of his will, has in it more of God's image, than his government of the creatures.
   3. And chiefly in his purity and rectitude. God's image upon man consists in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, Eph. iv, 24; Colossians iii, 10. He was upright, Eccl. vii, 29. He had an habitual conformity of all his natural powers to the whole will of God. His understanding saw divine things clearly, and there were no errors in his knowledge: his will complied readily and universally with the will of God; without reluctancy: his affections were all regular, and he had no inordinate appetites or passions: his thoughts were easily fixed to the best subjects, and there was no vanity or ungovernableness in them. And all the inferior powers were subject to the dictates of the superior. Thus holy, thus happy, were our first parents, in having the image of God upon them. But how art thou fallen, O son of the morning? How is this image of God upon man defaced! How small are the remains of it, and how great the ruins of it! The Lord renew it upon our souls by his sanctifying grace!
4. That man was made male and female, and blessed with fruitfulness. He created him male and female, Adam and Eve: Adam first out of earth, and Eve out of

his side. God made but one male and one female, that all the nations of men might know themselves to be made of one blood, descendants, from one common stock, and might thereby be induced to love one another. God having made them capable of transmitting the nature they had received, said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth - Here he gave them,

1. A large inheritance; replenish the earth, in which God has set man to be the servant of his providence, in the government of the inferior creatures, and as it were the intelligence of this orb; to be likewise the collector of his praises in this lower world, and lastly, to be a probationer for a better state.
2. A numerous lasting family to enjoy this inheritance; pronouncing a blessing upon them, in the virtue of which, their posterity should extend to the utmost corners of the earth, and continue to the utmost period of time.

5. That God gave to man a dominion over the inferior creatures, over fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air - Though man provides for neither, he has power over both, much more over every living thing that moveth upon the earth - God designed hereby to put an honour upon man, that he might find himself the more strongly obliged to bring honour to his Maker. See note at "ver. 26"

29, 30. We have here the third part of the sixth day's work, which was not any new creation, but a gracious provision of food for all flesh, Psalm 1xxxvi, 25.-Here is,

1. Food provided for man, ver. 29. herbs and fruits must be his meat, including corn, and all the products of the earth. And before the earth was deluged, much more before it was cursed for man's sake, its fruits no doubt, were more pleasing to the taste, and more strengthening and nourishing to the body.
2. Food provided for the beasts, ver. 30. Doth God take care of oxen? Yes, certainly, he provides food convenient for them; and not for oxen only that were used in his sacrifices, and man's service, but even the young lions and the young ravens are the care of his providence, they ask and have their meat from God. See note at "ver. 29"

31. We have here the approbation and conclusion of the whole work of creation. Observe,

1. The review God took of his work, he saw every thing that he had made - So he doth still; all the works of his hands are under his eye; he that made all sees all.
2. The complacency God took in his work. When we come to review our works we find to our shame, that much has been very bad; but when God reviewed his, all was very good.
   1. It was good. Good, for it is all agreeable to the mind of the creator. Good, for it answers the end of its creation. Good, for it is serviceable to man, whom God had appointed Lord of the visible creation. Good, for it is all for God's glory; there is that in the whole visible creation which is a demonstration of God's being and perfections, and which tends to beget in the soul of man a religious regard to him.
   2. It was very good - Of each day's work (except the second) it was said that it was good, but now it is very good. For,
      1. Now man was made, who was the chief of the ways of God, the visible image of the Creator's glory,

2. Now All was made, every part was good, but all together very good. The glory and goodness, the beauty and harmony of God's works both of providence and grace, as this of creation, will best appear when they are perfected.

3. The time when this work was concluded. The evening and the morning were the sixth day - So that in six days God made the world. We are not to think but that God could have made the world in an instant: but he did it in six days, that he might shew himself a free agent, doing his own work, both in his own way, and in his own time; that his wisdom, power and goodness, might appear to us, and be meditated upon by us, the more distinctly; and that he might set us an example of working six days, and resting the seventh. And now as God reviewed his work, let us review our meditations upon it; let us stir up ourselves, and all that is within us, to worship him that made the, heaven, earth, and sea, and the fountains of waters. All his works in all places of his dominion bless him, and therefore bless thou the Lord, O my soul.

**II**

This chapter is an appendix to the history of the creation, explaining, and enlarging on that part of it, which relates immediately to man. We have in it,

I. The institution of the sabbath, which was made for man, to further his holiness and comfort, ver. 1-3.

II. A more particular account of man's creation, as the summary of the whole work, ver. 4-7.

III. A description of the garden of Eden, and the placing of man in it under the obligations of a law and covenant, ver. 8-17.

IV. The creation of the woman, her marriage to the man, and the institution of the ordinance of marriage, ver. 18-25.

1, 2, 3. We have here, (1.) The settlement of the kingdom of nature, in God's resting from the work of creation, ver. 1, 2. Where observe,

1. That the creatures made both in heaven and earth, are the hosts or armies of them, which speaks them numerous, but marshalled, disciplined, and under command. God useth them as his hosts for the defense of his people, and the destruction of his enemies.

2. That the heavens and the earth are finished pieces, and so are all the creatures in them. So perfect is God's work that nothing can be added to it or taken from it, Eccl iii, 14.

3. That after the end of the first six days, God ceased from all work of creation. He hath so ended his work, as that though in his providence he worketh hitherto,

John v, 17. preserving and governing all the creatures, yet he doth not make any new species of creatures.

4. That the eternal God, tho' infinitely happy in himself, yet took a satisfaction in the work of his own hands. He did not rest as one weary, but as one well-pleased with the instances of his own goodness. (2.) The commencement of the kingdom of grace, in the sanctification of the sabbath day, ver. 3. He rested on that day, and took a complacency in his creatures, and then sanctified it, and appointed us on that day to rest and take a complacency in the Creator; and his rest is in the fourth commandment made a reason for ours after six days labour. Observe,
   1. That the solemn observation of one day in seven as a day of holy rest, and holy work, is the indispensible duty of all those to whom God has revealed his holy sabbaths.
   2. That sabbaths are as ancient as the world.
   3. That the sabbath of the Lord is truly honourable, and we have reason to honour it; honour it for the sake of its antiquity, its great author, and the sanctification of the first sabbath by the holy God himself, and in obedience to him, by our first parents in innocency. See note at "ver. 1"

4, 5, 6, 7. In these verses,

1. Here is a name given to the Creator, which we have not yet met with, Jehovah. The LORD in capital letters, is constantly used in our English translation, for Jehovah. This is that great and incommunicable name of God, which speaks his having his being of himself, and his giving being to all things. It properly means, He that was, and that is, and that is to come.
2. Further notice taken of the production of plants and herbs, because they were made to be food for man.
3. A more particular account of the creation of man, ver. 7. Man is a little world, consisting of heaven and earth, soul and body. Here we have all account of the original of both, and the putting of both together: The Lord God, the great fountain of being and power, formed man. Of the other creatures it is said, they were created and made; but of man, that he was formed, which notes a gradual process in the work with great accuracy and exactness. To express the creation of this new thing, he takes a new word: a word (some think) borrowed from the potter's forming his vessel upon the wheel. The body of man is curiously wrought. And the soul takes its rise from the breath of heaven. It came immediately from God; he gave it to be put into the body, Eccl xii, 7 as afterwards he gave the tables of stone of his own writing to be put into the ark. 'Tis by it that man is a living soul, that is, a living man. The body would be a worthless, useless carcase, if the soul did not animate it. See note at "ver. 4"

8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Man consisting of body and soul, a body made out of the earth, and a rational immortal soul, we have in these verses the provision that was made for the happiness of both. That part of man, which is allied to the world of sense, was made happy, for he was put in the paradise of God; that part which is allied to the world of spirits was well provided for, for he was taken into covenant with God. Here we have,

1. A description of the garden of Eden, which was intended for the palace of this prince. The inspired penman in this history writing for the Jews first, and calculating his narratives from the infant state of the church, describes things by their outward sensible appearances, and leaves us, by farther discoveries of the divine light, to be led into the understanding of the mysteries couched under them. Therefore he doth not so much insist upon the happiness of Adam's mind, as upon that of his outward estate. The Mosaic history, as well as the Mosaic law, has rather the patterns of heavenly things, than the heavenly things themselves, Heb. ix, 23. Observe, (1.) The place appointed for Adam's residence was a garden; not an ivory house. As clothes came in with sin, so did houses. The heaven was the roof of Adam's house, and never was any roof so curiously cieled and painted: the earth was his floor, and never was any floor so richly inlaid: the shadow of the trees was his retirement, and never were any rooms so finely hung: Solomon's in all their glory were not arrayed like them. (2.) The contrivance and furniture of this garden was the immediate work of God's wisdom and power. The Lord God planted this garden, that is, he had planted it, upon the third day when the fruits of the earth were made. We may well suppose it to be the most accomplished place that ever the sun saw, when the All-sufficient God himself designed it to be the present happiness of his beloved creature. (3.) The situation of this garden was extremely sweet; it was in Eden, which signifies delight and pleasure. The place is here particularly pointed out by such marks and bounds as were sufficient when Moses wrote, to specify the place to those who knew that country; but now it seems the curious cannot satisfy themselves concerning it. Let it be our care to make sure a place in the heavenly paradise, and then we need not perplex ourselves with a search after the place of the earthly paradise. (4.) The trees wherewith this garden was planted. [1.] It had all the best and choicest trees in common with the rest of the ground. It was beautified with every tree that was pleasant to the sight - It was enriched with every tree that yielded fruit grateful to the taste, and useful to the body. But, [2.] It had two extraordinary trees peculiar to itself, on earth there were not their like.
   1. There was the tree of life in the midst of the garden - Which was not so much a natural means to preserve or prolong life; but was chiefly intended to be a sign to Adam, assuring him of the continuance of life and happiness upon condition of his perseverance in innocency and obedience.
   2. There was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil - So called, not because it had any virtue to beget useful knowledge, but because there was an express Revelation of the will of God concerning this tree, so that by it he might know good and evil. What is good? It is good not to eat of this tree: what is evil? To eat of this tree. The distinction between all other moral good and evil was written in the heart of man; but this, which resulted from a positive law, was written upon this tree. And in the event it proved to give Adam an experimental knowledge of good by the loss of it, and of evil by the sense of it. (5.) The rivers wherewith this garden was watered, ver. 10-14. These four rivers, (or one river branched into four streams) contributed much both

to the pleasantness and the fruitfulness of this garden. Hiddekel and Euphrates are rivers of Babylon. Havilah had gold and spices and precious stones; but Eden had that which was infinitely better, the tree of life, and communion with God.

2. The command which God gave to man in innocency, and the covenant he than took him into. Hither we have seen God; man's powerful Creator, and his bountiful benefactor; now he appears as his ruler and lawgiver. See note at "ver. 8"

16, 17. Thou shall die - That is, thou shalt lose all the happiness thou hast either in possession or prospect; and thou shalt become liable to death, and all the miseries that preface and attend it. This was threatened as the immediate consequence of sin. In the day thou eatest, thou shalt die - Not only thou shalt become mortal, but spiritual death and the forerunners of temporal death shall immediately seize thee. See note at "ver. 17"

18, 19, 20. It is not good that man - This man, should be alone - Though there was an upper world of angels, and a lower world of brutes, yet there being none of the same rank of beings with himself, he might be truly said to be alone. And every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air God brought to Adam-Either by the ministry of angels, or by a special instinct that he might name them, and so might give a proof of his knowledge, the names he gave them being expressive of their inmost natures. See note at "ver. 18"

21, 22. This was done upon the sixth day, as was also the placing of Adam in paradise, though it be here mentioned after an account of the seventh day's rest: but what was said in general, chap. i, 27, that God made man male and female is more distinctly related here, God caused the sleep to fall on Adam, and made it a deep sleep, that so the opening of his side might be no grievance to him: while he knows no sin, God will take care he shall feel no pain. See note at "ver. 21"

23. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones - Probably it was revealed to Adam in a vision, when he was asleep, that this lovely creature, now presented to him, was a piece of himself and was to be his companion, and the wife of his covenant - In token of his acceptance of her, he gave her a name, not peculiar to her, but common to her sex; she shall be called woman, Isha, a She- man, differing from man in sex only, not in nature; made of man, and joined to man.

24. The sabbath and marriage were two ordinances instituted in innocency, the former for the preservation of the church, the latter for the preservation of mankind. It appears by Matt. xix, 4, 5, that it was God himself who said here, a man must leave all his relations to cleave to his wife; but whether he spake it by Moses or by Adam who spake, ver. 23 is uncertain: It should seem they are the words of Adam in God's name, laying down this law to all his posterity. The virtue of a divine ordinance, and the bonds of it, are stronger even than those of nature. See how necessary it is that children should take their parents consent with them in their marriage; and how unjust they are to their parents, as well as undutiful, if they marry without it; for they rob them of their right to them, and interest in them, and alienate it to another fraudulently and unnaturally.

25. They were both naked, they needed no cloaths for defense against cold or heat, for neither could be injurious to them: they needed none for ornament. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Nay, they needed none for decency, they were naked, and had no reason to be ashamed. They knew not what shame was, so the Chaldee reads it. Blushing is now the colour of virtue, but it was not the colour of innocency.

## III

The general contents of this chapter we have Rom. v, 12. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. More particularly, we have here,

I. The innocent tempted, ver. 1-5.
II. The tempted transgressing, ver. 6, 7, 8.
III. The transgressors arraigned, ver. 9, 10.
IV. Upon their arraignment convicted, ver. 11-13.
V. Upon their conviction sentenced, ver. 14-19.
VI. After sentence, reprieved, ver. 20, 21.
VII. Notwithstanding their reprieve, execution in part done, ver. 22-24, and were it not for the gracious intimations of redemption, they and all their race had been left to despair.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5. We have here an account of the temptation wherewith Satan assaulted our first parents, and which proved fatal to them. And here observe, (1.) The tempter, the devil in the shape of a serpent. Multitudes of them fell; but this that attacked our first parents, was surely the prince of the devils. Whether it was only the appearance of a serpent, or a real serpent, acted and possessed by the devil, is not certain. The devil chose to act his part in a serpent, because it is a subtle creature. It is not improbable, that reason and speech were then the known properties of the serpent. And therefore Eve was not surprised at his reasoning and speaking, which otherwise she must have been. (2.) That which the devil aimed at, was to persuade Eve to eat forbidden fruit; and to do this, he took the same method that he doth still.

1. He questions whether it were a sin or no, ver. 1,
2. He denies that there was any danger in it, ver. 4.
3. He suggests much advantage by it, ver. 5. And these are his common topics. As to the advantage, he suits the temptation to the pure state they were now in, proposing to them not any carnal pleasure, but intellectual delights.
   1. Your eyes shall be opened - You shall have much more of the power and pleasure of contemplation than now you have; you shall fetch a larger compass in your intellectual views, and see farther into things than now you do.
   2. You shall be as gods - As Elohim, mighty gods, not only omniscient but omnipotent too:
   3. You shall know good and evil - That is, everything that is desirable to be known. To support this part of the temptation, he abuseth the name given to this tree. 'Twas intended to teach the practical knowledge of good and evil, that is, of duty and disobedience, and it would prove the experimental knowledge of good and evil, that is, of happiness and misery. But he perverts the sense of it, and wrests it to their destruction, as if this tree would give them a speculative notional knowledge of the natures, kinds, and originals of good and evil. And,

4. All this presently, In the day you eat thereof - You will find a sudden and immediate change for the better. See note at "ver. 1"

6, 7, 8. Here we see what Eve's parley with the tempter ended in: Satan at length gains his point. God tried the obedience of our first parents by forbidding them the tree of knowledge, and Satan doth as it were join issue with God, and in that very thing undertakes to seduce them into a transgression; and here we find how he prevailed, God permitting it for wise and holy ends. (1.) We have here the inducements that moved them to transgress. The woman being deceived, was ring-leader in the transgression, 1 Tim. ii, 14

1. She saw that the tree was - It was said of all the rest of the fruit trees wherewith the garden of Eden was planted, that they were pleasant to the sight, and good for food.
2. She imagined a greater benefit by this tree than by any of the rest, that it was a tree not only not to be dreaded, but to be desired to make one wise, and therein excelling all the rest of the trees. This she saw, that is, she perceived and understood it by what the devil had said to her. She gave also to her husband with her - 'Tis likely he was not with her when she was tempted; surely if he had, he would have interposed to prevent the sin; but he came to her when she had eaten, and was prevailed with by her to eat likewise. She gave it to him; persuading him with the same arguements that the serpent had used with her; adding this to the rest, that she herself had eaten of it, and found it so far from being deadly that it was extremely pleasant and grateful. And he did eat - This implied the unbelief of God's word, and confidence in the devil's; discontent with his present state, and an ambition of the honour which comes not from God. He would be both his own carver, and his own master, would have what he pleased, and do what he pleased; his sin was in one word disobedience, Rom. v, 19, disobedience to a plain, easy and express command, which he knew to be a command of trial. He sins against light and love, the clearest light and the dearest love that ever sinner sinned against. But the greatest aggravation of his sin was, that he involved all his posterity in sin and ruin by it. He could not but know that he stood as a public person, and that his disobedience would be fatal to all his seed; and if so, it was certainly both the greatest treachery and the greatest cruelty that ever was. Shame and fear seized the criminals, these came into the world along with sin, and still attend it. The Eyes of them both were opened - The eyes of their consciences; their hearts smote them for what they had done Now, when it was too late, they saw the happiness they were fallen from, and the misery they were fallen into. They saw God provoked, his favour forfeited, his image lost; they felt a disorder in their own spirits, which they had never before been conscious of; they saw a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, and captivating them both to sin and wrath; they saw that they were naked, that is, that they were stripped, deprived of all the honours and joys of their paradise state, and exposed to all the miseries that might justly be expected from an angry God; laid open to the contempt and reproach of heaven and earth, and their own consciences. And they sewed or platted fig leaves together, and, to cover, at least, part of their shame one from another, made

themselves aprons. See here what is commonly the folly of those that have sinned: they are more solicitous to save their credit before men, than to obtain their pardon from God. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day - Tis supposed he came in a human shape; in no other similitude than that wherein they had seen him when he put them into paradise; for he came to convince and humble them, not to amaze and terrify them. He came not immediately from heaven in their view as afterwards on mount Sinai, but he came in the garden, as one that was still willing to be familiar with them. He came walking, not riding upon the wings of the wind, but walking deliberately, as one slow to anger. He came in the cool of the day, not in the night, when all fears are doubly fearful; nor did he come suddenly upon them, but they heard his voice at some distance, giving them notice of his coming; and probably it was a still small voice, like that in which he came to inquire after Elijah. And they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God - A sad change! Before they had sinned, if they heard the voice of the Lord God coming towards them, they would have run to meet him, but now God was become a terror to them, and then no marvel they were become a terror to themselves. See note at "ver. 6"

9. Where art thou? - This enquiry after Adam may be looked upon as a gracious pursuit in order to his recovery. If God had not called to him to reduce him, his condition had been as desperate as that of fallen angels.

10. I heard thy voice in the garden: and I was afraid - Adam was afraid because he was naked; not only unarmed, and therefore afraid to contend with God, but unclothed and therefore afraid so much as to appear before him.

11. Who told thee that thou wast naked? - That is, how camest thou to be sensible of thy nakedness as thy shame? Hast thou eaten of the tree? - Tho' God knows all our sins, yet he will know them from us, and requires from us an ingenuous confession of them, not that he may be informed, but that we may be humbled. Whereof I commanded thee not to eat of it, I thy maker, I thy master, I thy benefactor, I commanded thee to the contrary. Sin appears most plain and most sinful in the glass of the commandment.

13. What is this that thou hast done? - Wilt thou own thy fault? Neither of them does this fully. Adam lays all the blame upon his wife: She gave me of the tree - Nay, he not only lays the blame upon his wife, but tacitly on God himself. The woman thou gavest me, and gavest to be with me as my companion, she gave me of the tree. Eve lays all the blame upon the serpent; the serpent beguiled me. The prisoners being found guilty by their own confession, besides the infallible knowledge of the Judge, and nothing material being offered in arrest of judgment, God immediately proceeds to pass sentence, and in these verses he begins (where the sin began) with the serpent. God did not examine the serpent, nor ask him what he had done, but immediately sentenced him, (1.) Because he was already convicted of rebellion against God. (2.) Because he was to be for ever excluded from pardon; and why should any thing be said to convince and humble him, who was to find no place for repentance?

14. To testify a displeasure against sin, God fastens a curse upon the serpent, Thou art cursed above all cattle - Even the creeping things, when God made them, were blessed of him, chap. i, 22, but sin turned the blessing into a curse. Upon thy belly shalt thou go - No longer upon feet, or half

erect, but thou shalt crawl along, thy belly cleaving to the earth. Dust thou shalt eat - Which signifies a base and despicable condition.

15. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman - The inferior creatures being made for man, it was a curse upon any of them to be turned against man, and man against them. And this is part of the serpent's curse.

1. A perpetual reproach is fastened upon him. Under the cover of the serpent he is here sentenced to be, (1.) Degraded and accursed of God. It is supposed, pride was the sin that turned angels into devils, which is here justly punished by a great variety of mortifications couched under the mean circumstances of a serpent, crawling on his belly, and licking the dust. (2.) Detested and abhorred of all mankind: even those that are really seduced into his interest, yet profess a hatred of him. (3.) Destroyed and ruined at last by the great Redeemer, signified by the bruising of his head; his subtle politics shall be all baffled, his usurped power entirely crushed.
2. A perpetual quarrel is here commenced between the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of the devil among men; war proclaimed between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, Rev. xii, 7. It is the fruit of this enmity, (1.) That there is a continual conflict between God's people and him. Heaven and hell can never be reconciled, no more can Satan and a sanctified soul. (2.) That there is likewise a continual struggle between the wicked and the good. And all the malice of persecutors against the people of God is the fruit of this enmity, which will continue while there is a godly man on this side heaven, and a wicked man on this side hell.
3. A gracious promise is here made of Christ as the deliverer of fallen man from the power of Satan. By faith in this promise, our first parents, and the patriarchs before the flood, were justified and saved; and to this promise, and the benefit of it, instantly serving God day and night they hoped to come. Notice is here given them of three things concerning Christ. (1.) His incarnation, that he should be the seed of the woman. (2.) His sufferings and death, pointed at in Satan's bruising his heel, that is, his human nature. (3.) His victory over Satan thereby. Satan had now trampled upon the woman, and insulted over her; but the seed of the woman should be raised up in the fulness of time to avenge her quarrel, and to trample upon him, to spoil him, to lead him captive, and to triumph over him, Colossians ii, 15.

16. We have here the sentence past upon the woman; she is condemned to a state of sorrow and a state of subjection: proper punishments of a sin in which she had gratified her pleasure and her pride. (1.) She is here put into a state of sorrow; one particular of which only is instanced in, that in bringing forth children, but it includes all those impressions of grief and fear which the mind of that tender sex is most apt to receive, and all the common calamities which they are liable to. It is God that multiplies our sorrows, I will do it: God, as a righteous Judge, doth it, which ought to silence us under all our sorrows; as many as they are we have deserved them all, and more: nay, God as a tender Father doth it for our necessary correction, that we may be humbled for sin, and weaned from it. (2.) She is here put into a state of subjection: the whole sex, which by creation was equal with man, is for sin made inferior.

17. Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife - He excused the fault, by laying it on his wife, but God doth not admit the excuse; tho' it was her fault to persuade him to eat it, it was his fault to hearken to her. Cursed is the ground for thy sake - And the effect of that curse is, Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee - The ground or earth, by the sin of man, is made subject to vanity, the several parts of it being not so serviceable to man's comfort and happiness, as they were when they were made. Fruitfulness was its blessing for man's service, chap. i, 11-29, and now barrenness was its curse for man's punishment.

19. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread - His business before he sinned was a constant pleasure to him; but now his labour shall be a weariness. Unto dust shalt thou return - Thy body shall be forsaken by thy soul, and become itself a lump of dust, and then it shall be lodged in the grave, and mingle with the dust of the earth.

20. God having named the man, and called him Adam, which signifies red earth, he in farther token of dominion named the woman, and called her Eve - That is, life. Adam bears the name of the dying body, Eve of the living soul. The reason of the name is here given, some think by Moses the historian, others by Adam himself, because she was - That is, was to be the mother of all living. He had called her Isha, woman, before, as a wife; here he calls her Evah, life, as a mother. Now,

1. If this was done by divine direction, it was an instance of God's favour, and, like the new naming of Abraham and Sarah, it was a seal of the covenant, and an assurance to them, that notwithstanding their sin, he had not reversed that blessing wherewith he had blessed them, Be fruitful and multiply: it was likewise a confirmation of the promise now made, that the seed of the woman, of this woman, should break the serpent's head.
2. If Adam did of himself, it was an instance of his faith in the word of God.

21. These coats of skin had a significancy. The beasts whose skins they were, must be slain; slain before their eyes to shew them what death is. And probably 'tis supposed they were slain for sacrifice, to typify the great sacrifice which in the latter end of the world should be offered once for all. Thus the first thing that died was a sacrifice, or Christ in a figure.

22. Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil - See what he has got, what advantages, by eating forbidden fruit! This is said to humble them, and to bring them to a sense of their sin and folly, that seeing themselves thus wretchedly deceived by following the devil's counsel, they might henceforth pursue the happiness God offers, in the way he prescribes.

23. He sent him forth - Bid him go out, told him he should no longer occupy and enjoy that garden; but he was not willing to part with it.

24. God drove him out - This signified the exclusion of him and his guilty race from that communion with God which was the bliss and glory of paradise. But whether did he send him when he turned him out of Eden? He might justly have chased him out of the world, Job xviii, 18, but he only chased him out of the garden: he might justly have cast him down to hell, as the angels that sinned were, when they were shut out from the heavenly paradise, 2 Pet. ii, 4, but man was only sent to till the ground out of which he was taken. He was only sent to a place of toil, not to a place of torment. He was sent to the ground, not to the grave; to the work- house, not to the dungeon, not to the prison-house; to hold the plough, not to drag the chain: his tilling the ground would be recompensed by his eating its fruits; and his converse with the earth, whence he was taken, was improveable to good purposes, to keep him humble, and to mind him of his latter end. Observe then, That though our first parents were excluded from the privileges of their state of innocency,

yet they were not abandoned to despair; God's thoughts of love designing them for a second state of probation upon new terms. And he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, a detachment of cherubim, armed with a dreadful and irresistible power, represented by flaming swords which turned every way, on that side the garden which lay next to the place whither Adam was sent, to keep the way that led to the tree of life.

## IV

In this chapter we have both the world and the church in Adam's family, and a specimen of the character and state of both in all ages. As all mankind were represented in Adam, so that great distinction of mankind into the children of God and the children of the wicked one, was here represented in Cain and Abel; and an early instance of the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. We have here,

I. The birth, names, and callings of Cain and Abel, ver. 1, 2.

II. Their religion, and different success in it, ver. 3, 4, and part of ver. 5.

III. Cain's anger at God, and the reproof of him for that anger, ver. 5, 6, 7.

IV. Cain's murder of his brother, and the process against him for that murder. The murder committed, ver. 8. The proceedings against him. (1.) His arraignment, ver. 9, former part. (2.) His plea, ver. 9. latter part. (3.) His conviction, ver. 10. (4.) The sentence passed upon him, ver. 11, 12. (5.) His complaint against the sentence, ver. 13, 14. (6.) The ratification of the sentence, ver. 15. (7.) The execution of the sentence, ver. 15, 16.

V. The family and posterity of Cain, ver. 17-24.

VI. The birth of another son and grandson of Adam, ver. 25, 26.

1. Adam and Eve had many sons and daughters, chap. v, 4. But Cain and Abel seem to have been the two eldest. Cain signifies possession; for Eve when she bare him said with joy and thankfulness, and great expectation, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

2. Abel signifies vanity. The name given to this son is put upon the whole race, Psalm xxxix, 5. Every man is at his best estate vanity; Abel, vanity. He chose that employment which did most befriend contemplation and devotion, for that hath been looked upon as the advantage of a pastoral life. Moses and David kept sheep, and in their solitudes conversed with God.

3. In process of time - At the end of days, either at the end of the year when they kept their feast of in-gathering, or at the end of the days of the week, the seventh day; at some set time Cain and Abel brought to Adam, as the priest of the family, each of them an offering to the Lord; for which we have reason to think there was a divine appointment given to Adam, as a token of God's favour notwithstanding their apostacy.

4. And the Lord God had respect to Abel and to his offering, and shewed his acceptance of it, probably by fire from heaven but to Cain and to his offering he had not respect. We are sure there was a good reason for this difference: that Governor of the world, though an absolute sovereign, doth not act arbitrarily in dispensing his smiles and frowns.

1. There was a difference in the characters of the persons offering: Cain was a wicked man, but Abel was a righteous man, Matt. xxiii, 35.
2. There was a difference in the offerings they brought. Abel's was a more excellent sacrifice than Cain's; Cain's was only a sacrifice of acknowledgment offered to the Creator; the meat- offerings of the fruit of the ground were no more: but Abel brought a sacrifice of atonement, the blood whereof was shed in order to remission, thereby owning himself a sinner, deprecating God's wrath, and imploring his favour in a Mediator. But the great difference was, Abel offered in faith, and Cain did not. Abel offered with an eye to God's will as his rule, and in dependence upon the promise of a Redeemer. But Cain did not offer in faith, and so it turned into sin to him.

5. And Cain was wroth, and his countenance fell - Not so much out of grief as malice and rage. His sullen churlish countenance, and down-look, betrayed his passionate resentment.

7. If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? - Either,

1. If thou hadst done well, as thy brother did, thou shouldest have been accepted as he was. God is no respecter of persons; so that if we come short of acceptance with him, the fault is wholly our own. This will justify God in the destruction of sinners, and will aggravate their ruin. There is not a damned sinner in hell, but if he had done well, as he might have done, had been a glorified saint in heaven. Every mouth will shortly be stopt with this. Or,
2. If now thou do well: if thou repent of thy sin, reform thy heart and life, and bring thy sacrifice in a better manner; thou shalt yet be accepted. See how early the gospel was preached, and the benefit of it here offered even to one of the chief of sinners. He sets before him death and a curse; but, if not well - Seeing thou didst not do well, not offer in faith, and in a right manner, sin lieth at the door - That is, sin only hinders thy acceptance. All this considered, Cain had no reason to be angry with his brother, but at himself only. Unto thee shall be his desire - He shall continue in respect to thee as an elder brother, and thou, as the first-born, shall rule over him as much as ever. God's acceptance of Abel's offering did not transfer the birth-right to him, (which Cain was jealous of) nor put upon him that dignity, and power, which is said to belong to it, chap. xlix, 3.

8. And Cain talked with Abel his brother - The Chaldee paraphrast adds, that Cain, when they were in discourse, maintained there was no judgment to come, and that when Abel spoke in defense of the truth, Cain took that occasion to fall upon him. The scripture tells us the reason wherefore he slew him, because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous; so that herein he shewed himself to be a child of the devil, as being an enemy to all righteousness. Observe, the first that dies is a saint, the first that went to the grave, went to heaven. God would secure to himself the first fruits, the first born to the dead, that first opened the womb into another world.

9. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? - God knew him to be guilty; yet he asks him, that he might draw from him a confession of his crime; for those who would be justified before God, must accuse themselves. And he said, I know not - Thus in Cain the devil was both a murderer, and a liar from the beginning. Am I my Brother's keeper? - Sure he is old enough to take care of himself, nor did I ever take charge of him. Art not thou his keeper? If he be missing, on thee be the blame, and not on me, who never undertook to keep him.

10. And he said, What hast thou done? - Thou thinkest to conceal it, but the evidence against thee is clear and uncontestable, the voice of thy brother's blood crieth - He speaks as if the blood itself were both witness and prosecutor, because God's own knowledge testified against him, and God's own justice demanded satisfaction. The blood is said to cry from the ground, the earth, which is said, ver. 11, to open her mouth to receive his brother's blood from his hand. The earth did as it were blush to see her own face stained with such blood; and therefore opened her mouth to hide that which she could not hinder.

11. And now art thou cursed from the earth -

1. He is cursed, separated to all evil, laid under the wrath of God, as it is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.
2. He is cursed from the earth. Thence the cry came up to God, thence the curse came up to Cain. God could have taken vengeance by an immediate stroke from heaven: but he chose to make the earth the avenger of blood; to continue him upon the earth, and not presently to cut him off; and yet to make even that his curse. That part of it which fell to his share, and which he had the occupation of, was made unfruitful, by the blood of Abel. Besides, A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. By this he was here condemned, to perpetual disgrace and reproach, and to perpetual disquietment and horror in his own mind. His own guilty conscience should haunt him where ever he went. Now to justify his complaint, Observe his descants upon the sentence.
   1. He sees himself excluded by it from the favour of his God; and concludes, that being cursed, he was hid from God's face, and that is indeed the true nature of God's curse; damned sinners find it so, to whom it is said, Depart from me ye cursed. Those are cursed indeed that are for ever shut out from God's love and care, and from all hopes of his grace.
   2. He sees himself expelled from all the comforts of this life; and concludes, ver. 14. Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth - As good have no place on earth as not have a settled place. Better rest in the grave than not rest at all. And from thy face shall I be hid - Shut out of the church, not admitted to come with the sons of God to present himself before the Lord. And it shall come to pass that every one that finds me shall slay me - Wherever he wanders he goes in peril of his life. There were none alive but his near relations, yet even of them he is justly afraid, who had himself been so barbarous to his own brother.

15. Whosoever slayeth Cain vengeance shall be taken on him seven- fold - God having said in Cain's case Vengeance is mine, I will repay; it had been a daring usurpation for any man to take the sword out of God's hand. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain - To distinguish him from the rest of mankind. What the mark was, God has not told us: therefore the conjectures of men are vain.

16. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt on the east of Eden - Somewhere distant from the place were Adam and his religious family resided: distinguishing himself and his accursed generation from the holy seed; in the land of Nod - That is, of shaking or trembling, because of the continual restlessness of his spirit. Those that depart from God cannot find rest any where else. When Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, he never rested after.

17. And he builded a city - In token of a settled separation from the church of God. And here is an account of his posterity, at least the heirs of his family, for seven generations. His son was Enoch, of the same name, but not of the same character with that holy man that walked with God. The names of more of his posterity are mentioned, and but just mentioned, as those of the holy seed, chap. v, 1-32. They are numbered in haste, as not valued or delighted in, in comparison with God's children.

19. And Lamech took two wives - It was one of the degenerate race of Cain who first transgressed that original law of marriage, that two only should be one flesh.

1. Jabal was a famous shepherd; he delighted much in keeping cattle, and was so happy in devising methods of doing it to the best advantage, and instructing others in them, that the shepherds of those times, nay, the shepherds of after-times, called him Father; or perhaps his children after him, being brought up to the same employment: the family was a family of shepherds.
2. Jubal was a famous musician, and particularly an organist, and the first that gave rules for that noble art or science of music. When Jabal had set them in a way to be rich, Jubal put them in a way to be merry. From Jubal probably the Jubilee trumpet was so called; for the best music was that which proclaimed liberty and redemption.

22. From Tubal-Cain, probably the Heathen Vulcan came. Why Naamah is particularly named, we know not: probably they did, who lived when Moses wrote.

23. This passage is extremely obscure. We know not whom he slew, or on what occasion: neither what ground he had to be so confident of the Divine protection.

25. This is the first mention of Adam in the story of this chapter. No question the murder of Abel, and the impenitency and apostacy of Cain, were a very great grief to him and Eve, and the more because their own wickedness did now correct them, and their backsliding did reprove them. Their folly had given sin and death entrance into the world, and now they smarted by it, being by means thereof deprived of both their sons in one day, chap. xxvii, 45. When parents are grieved by their children's wickedness, they should take occasion from thence to lament that corruption of nature which was derived from them, and which is the root of bitterness. But here we have that which was a relief to our first parents in their affliction, namely, God gave them to see the rebuilding of their family which was sorely shaken and weakened by that sad event. For, they saw their seed, another instead of Abel. And Adam called his name Seth - That is, Set, settled or placed, because in his seed mankind should continue to the end of time.

26. And to Seth was born a son called Enos, which is the general name for all men, and speaks the weakness, frailty, and misery of man's state. Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord - Doubtless God's name was called upon before, but now,

1. The worshippers of God began to stir up themselves to do more in religion than they had done; perhaps not more than had been done at first, but more than had been done since the defection of Cain. Now men began to worship God, not only in their closets and families, but in public and solemn assemblies.
2. The worshippers of God began to distinguish themselves: so the margin reads it. Then began men to be called by the name of the Lord, or, to call themselves by it. Now Cain and those that had deserted religion had built a city, and begun to declare for irreligion, and called themselves the sons of men. Those that adhered

to God began to declare for him and his worship, and called themselves the sons of God.

## V

This chapter is the only authentic history extant of the first age of the world from the creation to the flood, containing (according to the Hebrew text) 1656 years. The genealogy here recorded is inserted briefly in the pedigree of our saviour, Luke iii, 36, 37. and is of great use to shew that Christ was the seed of the woman, that was promised. We have here an account,

I. Concerning Adam, ver. 1-5.
II. Seth, ver. 6-8.
III. Enos, ver. 9-11.
IV. Cainan, ver. 12-14.
V. Mahalaleel, ver. 15-17.
VI. Jared, ver. 18-20.
VII. Enoch, ver. 21-24.
VIII. Mathuselah, ver. 25-27.
IX. Lamech and his son Noah, ver. 28-32.

1. The first words of the chapter are the title of argument of the whole chapter; it is the book of the generations of Adam - It is the list or catalogue of the posterity of Adam, not of all, but only of the holy seed, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came; the names, ages, and deaths of those that were the successors of the first Adam in the custody of the promise, and the ancestors of the second Adam.

1, 2. Where we have a brief rehearsal of what was before at large related concerning the creation of man. This is what we have need frequently to hear of, and carefully to acquaint ourselves with. Observe here.

1. That God created man. Man is not his own maker, therefore he must not be his own master; but the author of his being must be the director of his motions, and the center of them.
2. That there was a day in which God created man, he was not from eternity, but of yesterday; he was not the first-born, but the junior of the creation.
3. That God made him in his own likeness, righteous and holy, and therefore undoubtedly happy; man's nature resembled the divine nature more than that of any of the creatures of this lower world.
4. That God created them male and female, ver. 2, for their mutual comfort, as well as for the preservation and increase of their kind. Adam and Eve were both made immediately by the hand of God, both made in God's likeness; and therefore between the sexes there is not that great difference and inequality which some imagine.

5. That God blessed them. It is usual for parents to bless their children, so God the common Father blessed his; but earthly parents can only beg a blessing, it is God's prerogative to command it. It refers chiefly to the blessing of increase, not excluding other blessings.

2. He called their name Adam - He gave this name both to the man and the woman. Being at first one by nature, and afterwards one by marriage; it was fit they should both have the same name, in token of their union. See note - part two at - "ver. 1"

3. Seth was born in the 130th year of Adam's life, and probably the murder of Abel was not long before. Many other sons and daughters were born to Adam besides Cain and Abel before this; but no notice is taken of them, because an honourable mention must be made of his name only, in whose loins Christ and the church were. But that which is most observable here concerning Seth, is, that Adam begat him in his own likeness after his image - Adam was made in the image of God; but when he was fallen and corrupted, he begat a son in his own image, sinful and defiled, frail and mortal, and miserable like himself; not only a man like himself, consisting of body and soul; but a sinner like himself, guilty and obnoxious, degenerate and corrupt. He was conceived and born in sin, Psalm li, 5. This was Adam's own likeness, the reverse of that Divine likeness in which Adam was made; but having lost it himself he could not convey it to his seed.

5. In the day Adam ate forbidden fruit, he became mortal, he began to die; his whole life after was but a forfeited condemned life, nay it was a wasting dying life; he was not only like a criminal sentenced, but as one already crucified, that dies slowly and by degrees. 6-19. We have here all that the Holy Ghost thought fit to leave upon record concerning five of the patriarchs before the flood, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, and Jared. There is nothing observable concerning any of those particularly, tho' we have reason to think they were men of eminency, both for prudence and piety: But in general, observe how largely and expressly their generations are recorded. We are told how long they lived that lived in God's fear, and when they died, that died in his favour; but as for others it is no matter: the memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot. That which is especially observable, is, that they all lived very long; not one of them died 'till he had seen the revolution of almost eight hundred years, and some of them much longer; a great while for an immortal soul to be imprisoned in an house of clay. The present life surely was not to them such a burden as commonly it is now, else they would have been weary of it; nor was the future life so clearly revealed then, as it is now under the gospel, else they would have been impatient to remove it. Some natural causes may be assigned for their long life in those first ages. It is very probable that the earth was more fruitful, the products of it more strengthening, the air more healthful, and the influences of the heavenly bodies more benign before the flood than they were after. Though man was driven out of paradise, yet the earth itself was then paradisaical; a garden in comparison with its present state: and some think, that their knowledge of the creatures and their usefulness both, for their food and medicine, together with their sobriety and temperance, contributed much to it; yet we do not find that those who were intemperate, as many were, Luke xvii, 27, as short-lived as temperate men generally are now. It must therefore chiefly be resolved into the power and providence of God; he prolonged their lives, both for the more speedy replenishing of the earth, and for the more effectual preservation of the knowledge of God and religion, then when there was no written word, but tradition was the channel of its conveyance. All the patriarchs here (except Noah) were born before Adam died, so that from him they might receive a full account of the creation, paradise, the fall, the promise, and those divine precepts which concerned religious worship

and a religious life: and if any mistake arose, they might have recourse to him while he lived, as to an oracle, for the rectifying of it, and after his death to Methuselah, and others that had conversed with him; so great was the care of Almighty God to preserve in his church the knowledge of his will, and the purity of his worship. See note at "ver. 6"

22. And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah - To walk with God, is to set God always before us, and to act as those that are always under his eye. It is to live a life of communion with God, both in ordinances and providences; it is to make God's word our rule, and his glory our end, in all our actions; it is to make it our constant care and endeavour in every thing to please God, and in nothing to offend him; it is to comply with his will, to concur with his designs, and to be workers together with him. He walked with God after he begat Methuselah, which intimates, that he did not begin to be eminent for piety 'till about that time.

24. He was not, for God took him - That is, as it is explained, Heb. xi, 5, he was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him. But why did God take him so soon? Surely because the world, which was now grown corrupt, was not worthy of him. Because his work was done, and done the sooner for his minding it so closely. He was not, for God took him - He was not any longer in this world: it was not the period of his being, but of his being here. He was not found; so the apostle explains it from the seventy; not found by his friends, who sought him, as the sons of the prophets sought Elijah, 2 Kings ii, 17. God took him body and soul to himself in the heavenly paradise, by the ministry of angels, as afterwards he took Elijah. He was changed, as those saints shall be that will be found alive at Christ's second coming.

25. Methuselah signifies, He dies, there is a sending forth, viz. of the deluge, which came the very year that Methuselah died. If his name was so intended, it was a fair warning to a careless world long before the judgment came. However, this is observable, that the longest liver that ever was, carried death in his name, that he might be minded of its coming surely, tho' it came slowly. He lived nine hundred sixty and nine years, the longest we read of that ever any man lived on earth, and yet he died: the longest liver must die at last. Neither youth nor age will discharge from that war, for that is the end of all men: none can challenge life by long prescription, nor make that a plea against the arrests of death. 'Tis commonly supposed, that Methuselah died a little before the flood; the Jewish writers say, seven days before, referring to chap. vii, 10, and that he was taken away from the evil to come.

29. This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed - Very probably there were some prophecies that went before of him, as a person that should be wonderfully serviceable to his generation.

32. And Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth - These Noah begat (the eldest of these) when he was six hundred years old. It should seem that Japheth was the eldest, chap. x, 21, but Shem is put first, because on him the covenant was entailed, as appears by chap. ix, 26, where God is called the Lord God of Shem. To him 'tis probable the birthright was given, and from him 'tis certain both Christ the head, and the church the body, were to descend; therefore he is called Shem, which signifies a name, because in his posterity the name of God should always remain, 'till He should come out of his loins, whose name is above every name; so that in putting Shem first, Christ was in effect put first, who in all things must have the pre-eminence. For the glory of God's justice, and for warning to a wicked world, before the history of the ruin of the old world we have a full account of its degeneracy, its apostacy from God, and rebellion against him. The destroying of it was an

act not of absolute sovereignty, but of necessary justice for the maintaining of the honour of God's government.

## VI

In this chapter we have,

I. The abounding iniquity of that wicked world, ver. 1-5. and ver. 11, 12.

II. God's just resentment of that iniquity, and his holy resolution to punish it, ver. 6, 7.

III. The special favour of God to his servant Noah. (1.) In the character given of him, ver. 8, 9, 10. (2.) In the communication of God's purpose to him, ver. 13-17. (3.) In the directions he gave him to make an ark for his own safety, ver. 14, 15, 16. (4.) In the employing of him for the preservation of the rest of the creatures, ver. 18, 19, 20, 21. Lastly, Noah's obedience to the instructions given him, ver. 22.

1. Men began to multiply upon the face of the earth - This was the effect of the blessing, chap. i, 28, and yet man's corruption so abused this blessing, that it turned into a curse.

2. The sons of God - Those who were called by the name of the Lord, and called upon that name, married the daughters of men - Those that were profane, and strangers to God. The posterity of Seth did not keep to themselves as they ought, but intermingled with the race of Cain: they took them wives of all that they chose - They chose only by the eye: They saw that they were fair - Which was all they looked at.

3. My spirit shall not always strive with man - The spirit then strove by Noah's preaching, 1 Pet. iii, 19, and by inward checks, but 'twas in vain with the most of men; therefore saith God, he shall not always strive, for that he also is flesh - Incurably corrupt and sensual, so that 'tis labour lost to strive with him. He also, that is, all, one as well as another; they are all sunk into the mire of flesh. Yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years - So long will I defer the judgment they deserve, and give them space to prevent it by their repentance and reformation. Justice said, cut them down; but mercy interceded, Lord, let them alone this year also; and so far mercy prevailed, that a reprieve was obtained for six score years.

4. There were giants, and men of renown - They carried all before them,

1. With their great bulk, as the sons of Anak, Num. xiii, 33, and,
2. With their great name, as the king of Assyria, Isaiah xxxvii, 11. Thus armed, they daringly insulted the rights of all their neighbours, and trampled upon all that is just and sacred.

5. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth - Abundance of sin was committed in all places, by all sorts of people: and those sins in their own nature most gross and heinous, and provoking: and committed daringly, with a defiance of heaven. And that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually - A sad sight, and very offensive to God's holy eye. This was the bitter root, the corrupt spring: all the violence and oppression, all the luxury and wantonness that was in the world, proceeded from the corruption of nature; lust conceives them, James i, 15, see Matt. xv, 19. The heart was evil, deceitful and desperately wicked;

the principles were corrupt, and the habits and dispositions evil. The thoughts of the heart were so. Thought is sometimes taken for the settled judgment, and that was biased and misled; sometimes for the workings of the fancy, and those were always either vain or vile. The imagination of the thought of the heart was so, that is, their designs and devices were wicked. They did not do evil only through carelessness, but deliberately and designedly, contriving how to do mischief. 'Twas bad indeed, for it was only evil, continually evil, and every imagination was so. There was no good to be found among them, no not at any time: the stream of sin was full and strong, and constant; and God saw it. Here is God's resentment of man's wickedness. He did not see it as an unconcerned spectator, but as one injured and affronted by it; he saw it as a tender father sees the folly and stubbornness of a rebellious and disobedient child, which not only angers but grieves him, and makes him wish he had been written childless.

6. And it repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth - That he had made a creature of such noble powers, and had put him on this earth, which he built and furnished on purpose to be a comfortable habitation for him; and it grieved him at his heart - These are expressions after the manner of men, and must be understood so as not to reflect upon God's immutability or felicity. It doth not speak any passion or uneasiness in God, nothing can create disturbance to the eternal mind; but it speaks his just and holy displeasure against sin and sinners: neither doth it speak any change of God's mind; for with him there is no variableness; but it speaks a change of his way. When God had made man upright, he rested and was refreshed, Exod. xxxi, 17. and his way towards him was such as shewed him well pleased with the work of his own hands; but now man was apostatized, he could not do otherwise, but shew himself displeased; so that the change was in man, not in God.

7. I will destroy man - The original word is very significant. I will wipe off man from off the earth; as dirt is wiped off from a place which should be clean, and thrown to the dunghill. Or, I will blot out man from the earth, as those lines are blotted out of a book which displease the author, or as the name of a citizen is blotted out of the rolls of the freemen when he is disfranchised. Both man and beast the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air - These were made for man, and therefore must be destroyed with man. It repenteth me that I have made them - For the end of their creation also was frustrated: they were made that man might serve and honour God with them and therefore were destroyed, because he had served his lusts with them, and made them subject to vanity.

8. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord - This vindicates God's justice in his displeasure against the world, and shews that he had examined the character of every person in it, before he pronounced it universally corrupt; for there being one good man he smiled upon him.

9. Noah was a just man - Justified before God by faith in the promised seed; for he was an heir of the righteousness which is by faith, Heb. xi, 7. He was sanctified, and had right principles and dispositions implanted in him: and he was righteous in his conversation, one that made conscience of rendering to all their due, to God his due, and to men theirs. And he walked with God as Enoch had done before him: in his generation, even in that corrupt degenerate age. It is easy to be religious when religion is in fashion; but it is an evidence of strong faith to swim against the stream, and to appear for God, when no one else appears for him: so Noah did, and it is upon record to his immortal honour.

11. The earth also was corrupt before God - That is, in the matters of God's worship; either they had other gods before him, or worshipped him by images: or, they were corrupt and wicked in despite of God. The earth was also filled with violence, and injustice towards men; there was no

order nor regular government, no man was safe in the possession of that which he had the most clear right to, there was nothing but murders, rapes and rapines.

12. God looked upon the earth - And was himself an eye-witness of the corruption that was in it, for all flesh had corrupted his way - It was not some particular nations that were thus wicked, but the whole world so; there was none good beside Noah.

13. The end of all flesh is come before me; I will destroy them - The ruin of this wicked world is decreed; it is come, that is, it will come surely, and come quickly.

14. I will destroy them with the earth, but make thee an ark - I will take care to preserve thee alive. This ark was like the hulk of a ship, fitted not to sail upon the waters, but to float waiting for their fall. God could have secured Noah, by the ministration of angels without putting him to any care or pains, but he chose to employ him in making that which was to be the means of his preservation, both for the trial of his faith and obedience, and to teach us that none shall be saved by Christ, but those only that work out their salvation; we cannot do it without God, and he will not without us: both the providence of God and the grace of God crown the endeavours of the obedient and diligent. God gave him particular instructions concerning this building.

1. It must be made of Gopher-wood; Noah, doubtless, knew what sort of wood that was, though now we do not.
2. He must make it three stories high within: and,
3. He must divide it into cabins with partitions, places fitted for the several sorts of creatures, so as to lose no room.
4. Exact dimensions are given him, that he might make it proportionable, and might have room enough in it to answer the intention, and no more.
5. He must pitch it within and without: without, to shed off the rain, and to prevent the water from soaking in; within, to take away the ill smell of the beasts when kept close.
6. He must make a little window towards the top to let in light.
7. He must make a door in the side of it by which to go in and out.

17. And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth - I that am infinite in power, and therefore can do it; infinite in justice, and therefore will do it.

18. But with thee will I establish my covenant - (1.) The covenant of Providence, that the course of nature shall be continued to the end of time, not withstanding the interruption which the flood would give to it: this promise was immediately made to Noah and his sons, chap. ix, 8, &c. they were as trustees for all this part of the creation, and a great honour was thereby put upon him and his. God would be to him a God, and that out of his seed God would take to himself a people.

## VII

We have in this chapter,

I. God's gracious call to Noah to come into the ark, ver. 1. and to bring the creatures that were to be preserved alive, with him, ver. 2, 3. in consideration of the deluge at hand, ver. 4.

II. Noah's obedience, ver. 5. he came with his family into the ark, ver. 6, 7. and brought the creatures with him, ver. 8, 9. An account of which is repeated, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16. to which is added God's tender care to shut him in.

III. The coming of the threatened deluge, ver. 10. the causes of it, ver. 11, 12. the prevalency of it, ver. 17, 18, 19, 20.

IV. The dreadful desolations that were made by it, in the death of every living creature upon earth, except what were in the ark, ver. 21, 22,23.

V. The continuance of it in full sea, before it began to ebb, 150 days, ver. 24.

1. Here is a gracious invitation of Noah and his family into a place of safety, now the flood of waters was coming. For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation - Those are righteous indeed that are righteous before God; that have not only the form of godliness by which they appear righteous before men, who may easily be imposed upon; but the power of it, by which they approve themselves to God, who searcheth the heart.

2. Here are necessary orders given concerning the brute creatures that they were to be preserved alive with Noah in the ark. He must carefully preserve every species, that no tribe, no, not the least considerable, might entirely perish out of the creation. Observe in this: (1.) God's care for man. Doth God take care for oxen? 1 Cor. ix, 9, or was it not rather for man's sake that this care was taken? (2.) Even the unclean beasts were preserved alive in the ark, that were least valuable. For God's tender mercies are over all his works, and not only over those that are of most use. (3.) Yet more of the clean were preserved than of the unclean.

1. Because the clean were most for the service of man; and therefore in favour to him, more of them were preserved and are still propagated. Thanks be to God there are not herds of lions as there are of oxen, nor flocks of tigers as there are of sheep.
2. Because the clean were for sacrifice to God; and therefore, in honour to him, more of them were preserved, three couple for breed, and the odd seventh for sacrifice, chap. viii, 20.

4. Yet seven days and I will cause it to rain - It shall be seven days yet before I do it, After the 120 years were expired, God grants them a reprieve of seven days longer, both to shew how slow he is to anger, and to give them some farther space for repentance. But all in vain; these seven days were trifled away after all the rest, they continued secure until the day that the flood came. While Noah told them of the judgment at a distance, they were tempted to put off their repentance: but now he is ordered to tell them that it is at the door; that they have but one week more to turn them in, to see if that will now at last awaken them to consider the things that belong to their peace. But it is common for those that have been careless for their souls during the years of their health, when they have looked upon death at a distance, to be as careless during the days, the seven days of their sickness, when they see it approaching, their hearts being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

7. And Noah went in with his sons, and his wife, and his sons wives - And the brute creatures readily went in with him. The same hand that at first brought them to Adam to be named, now brought them to Noah to be preserved.

11. The six hundredth year of Noah's life, was 1656 years from the creation. In the second month, the seventeenth day of the month - Which is reckoned to be about the beginning of November; so that Noah had had a harvest just before, from which to victual his ark. The same day the fountains of the great deep were broken up - There needed no new creation of waters; God has laid up the deep in store-houses, Psalm xxxiii, 7, and now he broke up those stores. God had, in the creation, set bars and doors to the waters of the sea, that they might not return to cover the earth, Psalm civ; Job xxxviii, 9-11, and now he only removed these ancient mounds and fences, and the waters of the sea returned to cover the earth, as they had done at first, chap. i, 9. And the windows of heaven were opened - And the waters which were above the firmament were poured out upon the world; those treasures which God has reserved against the time of trouble, the day of battle and war, Job xxxviii, 22, 23. The rain, which ordinarily descends in drops, then came down in streams. We read, Job xxvi, 8. That God binds up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them; but now the bond was loosed, the cloud was rent, and such rains descended as were never known before or since.

12. It rained without intermission or abatement, forty days and forty nights - And that upon the whole earth at once.

14. And every beast after his kind - According to the phrase used in the history of the creation, chap. i, 21, 24, 25, to intimate, that just as many species as were created at first were saved now, and no more.

20. The mountains were covered - Therefore there were mountains before the flood.

21. All flesh died, all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was on the dry land, every living substance - And why so? Man only had done wickedly, and justly is God's hand against him, but these sheep what have they done? I answer,

1. We are sure God did them no wrong. He is the sovereign Lord of all life, for he is the sole fountain and author of it. He that made them as he pleased, might unmake them when he pleased, and who shall say unto him, What dost thou?
2. God did admirably serve the purposes of his own glory by their destruction, as well as by their creation. Herein his holiness and justice were greatly magnified: by this it appears that he hates sin, and is highly displeased with sinners, when even the inferior creatures, because they are the servants of man, and part of his possession, and because they have been abused to be the servants of sin, are destroyed with him. It was likewise an instance of God's wisdom. As the creatures were made for man when he was made, so they were multiplied for him when he was multiplied; and therefore, now mankind was reduced to so small a number, it was fit that the beasts should proportionable be reduced, otherwise they would have had the dominion, and would have replenished the earth, and the remnant of mankind that was left would have been overpowered by them.

## VIII

We have here,

I. The earth made anew, by the recess of waters, and the appearing of the dry land a second time. (1.) The increase of the waters is stayed, ver. 1, 2. (2.) They begin sensibly to abate, ver. 3. (3.) After fifteen days ebbing the ark rests, ver. 4. (4.) After sixty days ebbing the tops of the mountains appear, ver.5. (5.) After forty days ebbing, and twenty days before the mountains appeared, Noah begins to send out his spies, a raven and a dove to gain intelligence, ver. 6-12. (6.) Two months after the appearing of the tops of the mountains the waters were gone, and the face of the earth was dry, ver. 13. tho' not dried so as to be fit for man 'till almost two months after, ver. 14.

II. Man placed anew upon the earth. In which,

1. Noah's discharge and departure out of the ark, ver. 15-19.
2. His sacrifice of praise which he offered to God upon his enlargement, ver. 20.

III. God's acceptance of his sacrifice; and the promise he made thereupon not to drown the world again, ver. 21, 22. And thus at length mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

1. And God remembered Noah and every living thing - This is an expression after the manner of men, for not any of his creatures, much less any of his people are forgotten of God. But the whole race of mankind, except Noah and his family, was now extinguished, and gone into the land of forgetfulness, so that God's remembering Noah was the return of his mercy to mankind, of whom he would not make a full end. Noah himself, tho' one that had found grace in the eyes of the Lord, yet seemed to be forgotten in the ark; but at length God returned in mercy to him, and that is expressed by his remembering him.

3. The waters returned from off the earth continually - Hebrew. they were going and returning; a gradual departure. The heat of the sun exhaled much, and perhaps the subterraneous caverns soaked in more.

4. And the ark rested - upon the mountains of Ararat - Or, Armenia, whether it was directed, not by Noah's prudence, but the wise providence of God.

5. The tops of the mountains were seen - Like little islands appearing above water. They felt ground above forty days before they saw it, according to Dr. Lightfoots's computation, whence he infers that if the waters decreased proportionably, the ark drew eleven cubits in water.

7. Noah sent forth a raven through the window of the ark, which went forth, as the Hebrew phrase is, going forth and returning, that is, flying about, but returning to the ark for rest; probably not in it, but upon it. This gave Noah little satisfaction: therefore,

8. He sent forth a dove - Which returned the first time with no good news, but probably wet and dirty; but the second time she brought an olive leaf in her bill, which appeared to be fresh plucked off; a plain indication that now the trees began to appear above water. Note here, that Noah set forth the dove the second time, seven days after the first time, and the third time was after seven days too: and probably the first sending of her out was seven days after the sending forth of the raven. The olive branch is an emblem of peace.

13. Noah removed the covering of the ark - Not the whole covering, but so much as would suffice to give him a prospect of the earth about it: and behold the face of the ground was dry.

14. The earth was dried - So as to be a fit habitation for Noah.

20. And Noah builded an altar - Hitherto he had done nothing without particular instructions and commands from God but altars and sacrifices being already of Divine institution, he did not stay for a particular command thus to express his thankfulness. And he offered on the altar, of every clean beast and of every clean fowl - One, the odd seventh that we read of, ver. 2, 3.

21. And God smelled a sweet savour - Or a savour of rest from it, as it is in the Hebrew. He was well pleased with Noah's pious zeal, and these hopeful beginnings of the new world, as men are with fragrant and agreeable smells. I will not again curse the ground, Hebrew. I will not add to curse the ground any more - God had cursed the ground upon the first entrance of sin, chap. iii, 17, when he drowned it he added to that curse: but now he determines not to add to it any more. Neither will I again smite any more every living thing - That is, it was determined that whatever ruin God might bring upon particular persons, families or countries, he would never again destroy the whole world, 'till the day when time shall be no more. But the reason of this resolve is surprising; for it seems the same with the reason given for the destruction of the world, chap. vi, 5. Because the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. But there is this difference: there it is said, the imagination of man's heart is evil continually, that is, his actual transgressions continually cry against him; here it is said, that it is evil from his youth or childhood; he brought it into the world with him, he was shapen and conceived in it. Now one would think it should follow, therefore that guilty race shall be wholly extinguished: No; therefore I will no more take this severe method; for he is rather to be pitied: and it is but what might be expected from such a degenerate race. So that if he be dealt with according to his deserts, one flood must succeed another 'till all be destroyed. God also promises, that the course of nature should never be discontinued. While the earth remaineth, and man upon it, there shall be summer and winter, not all winter, as had been this last year; day and night, not all night, as probably it was while the rain was descending. Here it is plainly intimated that this earth is not to remain always; it and all the works therein must shortly be burnt up. But as long as it doth remain, God's providence will carefully preserve the regular succession of times and seasons. To this we owe it, that the world stands, and the wheel of nature keeps its tack. See here how changeable the times are, and yet how unchangeable!

1. The course of nature always changing. As it is with the times, so it is with the events of time, they are subject to vicissitudes, day and night, summer and winter counterchanged. In heaven and hell it is not so; but on earth God hath set the one over against the other.
2. Yet never changed; it is constant in this inconstancy; these seasons have never ceased, nor shall cease while the sun continues such a steady measurer of time, and the moon such a faithful witness in heaven. This is God's covenant of the day and of the night, the stability of which is mentioned for the confirming our faith in the covenant of grace, which is no less inviolable, Jer. xxxiii, 20. We see God's promises to the creatures made good, and thence may infer that his promises to believers shall be so.

## IX

In this chapter is,

I. The covenant of providence settled with Noah and his sons, ver. 1-11. In this covenant, (1.) God promiseth them to take care of their lives; so that,
1. They should replenish the earth, ver. 1-7.
2. They should be safe from the insults of the brute creatures, which should stand in awe of them, ver. 2.
3. They should be allowed to eat flesh for the support of their lives, only they must not eat blood, ver. 3, 4.
4. The world should never be drowned again, ver. 8-11. (2.) God requires of them to take care of one another's lives, and of their own, ver. 5, 6.

II. The seal of that covenant, viz. the rainbow, ver. 12-17.

III. A particular passage concerning Noah and his sons, which occasioned some prophecies that related to after-times. (1.) Noah's sin and shame, ver. 20-21. (2.) Ham's impudence and impiety, ver. 22. (3.) The pious modesty of Shem and Japheth, ver. 23. (4.) The curse of Canaan and the blessing of Shem and Japheth, ver. 24-27.

IV. The age and death of Noah, ver. 28, 29.

1. And God blessed Noah and his sons - He assured them of his goodwill to them, and his gracious intentions concerning them. The first blessing is here renewed, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and repeated, ver. 7; for the race of mankind was as it were to begin again. By virtue of this blessing mankind was to be both multiplied and perpetuated upon earth; so that in a little time all the habitable parts of the earth should be more or less inhabited; and tho' one generation should pass away, yet another generation should come, so that the stream of the human race should be supplied with a constant succession, and run parallel with the current of time, 'till both be swallowed up in the ocean of eternity.

2. He grants them power over the inferior creatures. He grants, 1. A title to them; into your hands they are delivered - For your use and benefit. 2. A dominion over them, without which the title would avail little; The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast - This revives a former grant, chap. i, 28, only with this difference, that man in innocency ruled by love, fallen man rules by fear. And thus far we have still the benefit of it,

1. That those creatures which are any way useful to us are reclaimed, and we use them either for service or food, or both, as they are capable.
2. Those creatures that are any way hurtful to us are restrained; so that tho' now and then man may be hurt by some of them, yet they do not combine together to rise up in rebellion against man.

3. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you - Hitherto man had been confined to feed only upon the products of the earth, fruits, herbs and roots, and all sorts of corn and milk; so was the first grant, chap. i, 29. But the flood having perhaps washed away much of the virtue of the earth, and so rendered its fruits less pleasing, and less nourishing, God now enlarged the grant, and allowed man to eat flesh, which perhaps man himself never thought of 'till now. The precepts and provisos of this charter are no less kind and gracious, and instances of God's goodwill to man. The Jewish doctors speak so often of the seven precepts of Noah, or of the sons of Noah, which they say were to be observed by all nations, that it may not be amiss to set them down. The first

against the worship of idols. The second against blasphemy, and requiring to bless the name of God. The third against murder. The fourth against incest and all uncleanness. The fifth against theft and rapine. The sixth requiring the administration of justice. The seventh against eating flesh with the life. These the Jews required the observation of, from the proselytes of the gate. But the precepts here given, all concern the life of man. Man must not prejudice his own life by eating that food which is unwholsome, and prejudicial to his health.

4. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat - Blood made atonement for the soul, Lev. xvii, 11. The life of the sacrifice was accepted for the life of the sinner. Blood must not be looked upon as a common thing, but must be poured out before the Lord, 2 Sam. xxiii, 16. Mark Henry indeed has a strange conceit, That this is only a prohibition to eat flesh. This does such apparent violence to the text, that to mention it, is sufficient.

5. And surely your blood of your lives will I require - Our own lives are not so our own, that we may quit them at our own pleasure; but they are God's, and we must resign them at his pleasure. If we any way hasten our own deaths, we are accountable to God for it. Yea, At the hand of every beast will I require it - To shew how tender God was of the life of man, he will have the beast put to death that kills a man. This was confirmed by the law of Moses, Exod. xxi, 28, and it would not be unsafe to observe it still. And at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of a man - I will avenge the blood of the murdered upon the murderer. When God requires the life of a man at the hand of him that took it away unjustly, he cannot render that, and therefore must render his own in lieu of it, which is the only way left of making restitution.

6. Whoso sheddeth man's blood - Whether upon a sudden provocation, or premeditated, (for rash anger is heart-murder as well as malice prepense, Matt. v, 21, 22), by man shall his blood be shed - That is, by the magistrate, or whoever is appointed to be the avenger of blood. Before the flood, as it should seem by the story of Cain, God took the punishment of murder into his own hands; but now he committed this judgment to men, to masters of families at first, and afterwards to the heads of countries. For in the image of God made he man - Man is a creature dear to his Creator, and therefore ought to be so to us; God put honour upon him, let us not then put contempt upon him. Such remains of God's image are still even upon fallen man, that he who unjustly kills a man, defaceth the image of God, and doth dishonour to him.

9. We have here the general establishment of God's covenant with this new world, and the extent of that covenant.

11. There shall not any more be a flood - God had drowned the world once, and still it is as provoking as ever; yet he will never drown it any more, for he deals not with us according to our sins. This promise of God keeps the sea and clouds in their decreed place, and sets them gates and bars, Hitherto they shall come, Job xxxviii, 10, 11. If the sea should flow but for a few days, as it doth twice every day for a few hours, what desolations would it make? So would the clouds, if such showers as we have sometimes seen, were continued long. But God by flowing seas, and sweeping rains, shews what he could do in wrath; and yet by preserving the earth from being deluged between both, shews what he can do in mercy, and will do in truth.

13. I set my bow in the clouds - The rainbow, 'tis likely was seen in the clouds before, but was never a seal of the covenant 'till now. Now, concerning this seal of the covenant, observe, (1.) This seal is affixed with repeated assurances of the truth of that promise, which it was designed to be the ratification of; I do set my bow in the cloud, ver. 13. It shall be seen in the cloud, ver. 14. and it shall be a token of the covenant, ver. 12, 13. And I will remember my covenant, that the waters

shall no more become a flood, ver. 15. Nay, as if the eternal Mind needed a memorandum, I will look upon it that I may remember the everlasting covenant, ver. 16. (2.) The rainbow appears when the clouds are most disposed to wet; when we have most reason to fear the rain prevailing, God shews this seal of the promise that it shall not prevail. (3.) The rainbow appears when one part of the sky is clear, which imitates mercy remembered in the midst of wrath, and the clouds are hemmed as it were with the rainbow, that it may not overspread the heavens, for the bow is coloured rain, or the edges of a cloud gilded. As God looks upon the bow that he may remember the covenant, so should we, that we also may be ever mindful of the covenant with faith and thankfulness.

20. And Noah began to be an husbandman - Hebrew. a man of the earth, a man dealing in the earth, that kept ground in his hand and occupied it. Sometime after his departure out of the ark he returned to his old employment, from which he had been diverted by the building of the ark first, and probably after by the building an house for himself and family. And he planted a vineyard - And when he had gathered his vintage, probably he appointed a day of mirth and feasting in his family, and had his sons and their children with him, to rejoice with him in the increase of his house, as well as in the increase of his vineyard; and we may suppose he prefaced his feast with a sacrifice to the honour of God. If that was omitted, 'twas just with God to leave him to himself, to end with the beasts that did not begin with God: but we charitably hope he did. And perhaps he appointed this feast with design in the close of it to bless his sons, as Isaac, chap. xxvii, 3, 4. That I may eat, and that my soul may bless thee.

21. And he drank of the wine and was drunk - 'Tis highly probable, he did not know the effect of it before. And he was uncovered in his tent - Made naked to his shame.

22. And Ham saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren - To have seen it accidentally and involuntarily would not have been a crime. But he pleased himself with the sight. And he told his two brethren without - In the street, as the word is, in a scornful deriding manner.

23. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father - They not only would not see it themselves, but provided that no one else might see it; herein setting an example of charity, with reference to other men's sin and shame.

25. A servant of servants - That is, the meanest and most despicable servant shall he be, even to his brethren. Those who by birth were his equals, should by conquest be his lords. This certainly points at the victories obtained by Israel over the Canaanites, by which they were all either put to the sword, or put under tribute. Josh. ix, 23; Jude i, 28, 30,

33, 35, which happened not 'till about eight hundred years after this. God often visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, especially when the children inherit the fathers wicked dispositions, and imitate the father's wicked practices.

26. The God of Shem - All blessings are included in this. This was the blessing conferred on Abraham and his seed, the God of heaven was not ashamed to be called their God, Heb. xi, 16. Shem is sufficiently recompensed for his respect to his father by this, that the Lord himself puts this honour upon him to be his God; which is a sufficient recompense for all our services and all our sufferings for his name.

27. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem - His seed shall be so numerous and so victorious, that they shall be masters of the tents of Shem, which was fulfilled when the people of the Jews, the most eminent of Shem's race, were tributaries to the Grecians first, and after to the Romans, both of Japhet's seed. This also speaks the conversion of the Gentiles, and the bringing of them into the church; and then we should read it, God shall persuade Japheth;

(for so the word signifies) and being so persuaded, he shall dwell in the tents of Shem - That is, Jews and Gentiles shall be united together in the gospel-fold: after many of the Gentiles shall have been proselyted to the Jewish religion, both shall be one in Christ, Eph. ii, 14, 15. When Japheth joins with Shem, Canaan falls before them both: when strangers become friends, enemies become servants.

## X

This chapter contains, the only certain account extant of the original of nations; and yet, perhaps, there is no nation, but that of the Jews, that can be confident from which of these seventy fountains (for many there are here) it derived its streams. Through the want of early records, the mixtures of people, the revolutions of nations, and distance of time, the knowledge of the lineal descent of the present inhabitants of the earth is lost: nor were any genealogies preserved but those of the Jews, for the sake of the Messiah. Only, in this chapter, we have a brief account,

I. Of the posterity of Japheth, ver. 2-5.

II. The posterity of Ham, ver. 6-20. and, in that particular notice taken of Nimrod, ver. 8-9.

III. The posterity of Shem, ver. 23-31.

2. Moses begins with Japhet's family, either because he was the eldest, or because that lay remotest from Israel, and had least concern with them, at that time when Moses wrote; and therefore he mentions that race very briefly; hastening to give account of the posterity of Ham, who were Israel's enemies, and of Shem, who were Israel's ancestors: for it is the church that the scripture designed to be the history of, and of the nations of the world only as they were some way or other interested in the affairs of Israel.

5. The posterity of Japheth were allotted to the isles of the Gentiles, which were solemnly, by lot, after a survey, divided among them, and probably this island of ours among the rest. All places beyond the sea, from Judea, are called isles, Jer. xxv, 22, and this directs us to understand that promise, Isaiah xlii, 4, the isles shall wait for his law, of the conversion of the Gentiles to the faith of Christ.

8. Began to be mighty on the earth - That is, whereas those that went before him were content to stand upon the same level with their neighbours, Nimrod could not rest in this parity, but he would top his neighbours, and Lord over them. The same spirit that the giants before the flood were acted by, chap. vi, 4, now revived in him; so soon was that tremendous judgment, which the pride and tyranny of those mighty men brought upon the world, forgotten.

9. Nimrod was a mighty hunter - This he began with, and for this became famous to a proverb. Some think he did good with his hunting, served his country by ridding it of wild beasts, and so insinuated himself into the affections of his neighbours, and got to be their prince. And perhaps, under pretense of hunting, he gathered men under his command, to make himself master of the country. Thus he became a mighty hunter, a violent invader of his neighbour's rights and properties. And that, before the Lord - Carrying all before him, and endeavouring to make all his own by force and violence. He thought himself a mighty prince; but before the Lord, that is, in God's account,

he was but a mighty hunter. Note, Great conquerers are but great hunters. Alexander and Caesar would not make such a figure in scripture history as they do in common history. The former is represented in prophecy but as a he-goat pushing, Dan. viii, 5. Nimrod was a mighty hunter against the Lord, so the seventy; that is, he set up idolatry, as Jeroboam did, for the confirming of his usurped dominion; that he might set up a new government, he set up a new religion upon the ruin of the primitive constitution of both.

10. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel - Some way or other, he got into power: and so laid the foundations of a monarchy which was afterwards a head of gold. It doth not appear that he had any right to rule by birth; but either his fitness for government recommended him, or by power and policy he gradually advanced into the throne. See the antiquity of civil government, and particularly that form of it which lodges the sovereignty in a single person.

15. The account of the posterity of Canaan, and the land they possessed is more particular than of any other in this chapter, because these were the nations that were to be subdued before Israel, and their land was to become Immanuel's land. And by this account, it appears that the posterity of Canaan was both numerous and rich, and very pleasantly seated, and yet Canaan was under a curse. Canaan here has a better land than either Shem or Japheth and yet they have a better lot, for they inherit the blessing.

21. Two things especially are observable in this account of the posterity of Shem. The description of Shem, ver. 21, we have not only his name, Shem, which signifies a name; but two titles to distinguish him by.

1. He was the father of all the children of Eber. Eber was his great grandson, but why should he be called the father of all his children, rather than of all Arphaxad's or Salah's? Probably because Abraham and his seed, not only descended from Hebser, but from him were called Hebrews. Eber himself, we may suppose, was a man eminent for religion in a time of general apostasy; and the holy tongue being commonly called from him the Hebrew, it is probable he retained it in his family in the confusion of Babel, as a special token of God's favour to him.
2. He was the brother of Japheth the elder; by which it appears, that though Shem be commonly put first, yet he was not Noah's first-born, but Japheth was elder. But why should this also be put as part of Shem's description, that he was the brother of Japheth, since that had been said before? Probably this is intended to signify the union of the Gentiles with the Jews in the church. He had mentioned it as Shem's honour, that he was the father of the Hebrews; but lest Japheth's seed should therefore be looked upon as shut out from the church, he here minds us, that he was the brother of Japheth, not in birth only, but in blessing, for Japheth was to dwell in the tents of Shem. The reason of the name of Peleg, ver. 25, because, in his days, (that is, about the time of his birth) was the earth divided among the children of men that were to inhabit it; either when Noah divided it, by an orderly distribution of it, as Joshua divided the land of Canaan by lot, or when, upon their refusal to comply with that division, God, in justice, divided them by the confusion of tongues.

## XI

The distinction between the sons of God and the sons of men, now appeared again, when men began to multiply. According to this distinction, we have in this chapter,

I. The dispersion of the sons of men at Babel, ver. 1-9. where we have (1.) Their presumptuous design, to build a city and a tower, ver. 1- 4. (2.) The righteous judgment of God upon them in disappointing the design, by confounding their language, and so scattering them, ver. 5-9.

II. The pedigree of the sons of God down to Abraham, ver. 10-26. with a general account of his family, and remove out of his native country, ver. 27-32.

1. And the whole earth was of one language - Now while they all understood one another, they would be the more capable of helping one another, and the less inclinable to separate.

2. And they found a plain in the land of Shinar - A spacious plain, able to contain them all.

3. Go to, let us make brick, let us build us a city - The country being a plain, yielded neither stone nor morter, yet that did not discourage them, but they made brick to serve instead of stone, and slime, or pitch, instead of morter. Some think they intended hereby to secure themselves against the waters of another flood, but if they had, they would have chosen to build upon a mountain rather than upon a plain. But two things it seems they aimed at in building.

1. To make them a name: they would do something to be talked of by posterity. But they could not gain this point; for we do not find in any history the name of so much as one of these Babel - builders. Philo Judeus saith they engraved every one his name upon a brick; yet neither did that serve their purpose.
2. They did it to prevent their dispersion; lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth - It was done (saith Josephus) in disobedience to that command, chap. ix, 1, replenish the earth. God orders them to scatter. No, say they, we will live and die together. In order hereunto they engage themselves and one another in this vast undertaking. That they might unite in one glorious empire, they resolve to build this city and tower, to be the metropolis of their kingdom, and the center of their unity.

5. And the Lord came down to see the city - 'Tis an expression after the manner of men, he knew it as clearly as men know that which they come upon the place to view. And the tower which the children of men builded - Which speaks, (1.) Their weakness and frailty, it was a foolish thing for the children of men, worms of the earth, to defy heaven. (2.) Their sinfulness, they were the sons of Adam, so it is in the Hebrew; nay, of that Adam, that sinful disobedient Adam, whose children are by nature children of disobedience. (3.) Their distinction from the children of God, from whom those daring builders had separated themselves, and built this tower to support and perpetuate the separation.

6. And the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language - And if they continue one, much of the earth will be left uninhabited, and these children of men, if thus incorporated, will swallow up the little remnant of God's children, therefore it is decreed they must

not be one. And now nothing will be restrained from them - And this is a reason why they must be crossed, in their design.

7. Go to, let us go down and there confound their language - This was not spoken to the angels, as if God needed either their advice or their assistance, but God speaks it to himself, or the Father to the Son and Holy Ghost. That they may not understand one another's speech - Nor could they well join hands when their tongues were divided: so that this was a proper means, both to take them off from their building, for if they could not understand one another, they could not help one another; and to dispose them to scatter, for when they could not understand one another, they could not enjoy one another. Accordingly three things were done,

1. Their language was confounded. God, who when he made man taught him to speak, now made those builders to forget their former language; and to speak a new one, which yet was the same to those of the same tribe or family, but not to others: those of one colony could converse together, but not with those of another. We all suffer hereby to this day: in all the inconveniences we sustain by the diversity of languages, and all the trouble we are at to learn the languages we have occasion for, we smart for the rebellion of our ancestors at Babel; nay, and those unhappy controversies, which are strifes of words, and arise from our misunderstanding of one another's languages, for ought I know, are owing to this confusion of tongues. The project of some to frame an universal character in order to an universal language, how desirable soever it may seem, yet I think is but a vain thing for it is to strive against a divine sentence, by which the languages of the nations will be divided while the world stands. We may here lament the loss of the universal use of the Hebrew tongue, which from henceforth was the vulgar language of the Hebrews only, and continued so till the captivity in Babylon, where, even among them, it was exchanged for the Syriac. As the confounding of tongues divided the children of men, and scattered them abroad, so the gift of tongues bestowed upon the Apostles, Acts ii, 4-11, contributed greatly to the gathering together of the children of God, which were scattered abroad, and the uniting of them in Christ, that with one mind and mouth they might glorify God, Rom. xv, 6.
   1. The imagination of a late writer, that God did not confound their tongues, but their religious worship, is grounded on criticisms concerning the meaning of the Hebrew word, which are absolutely false. Beside, would God confound their religious worship? Surely, He is a God of order, and not of confusion.
2. Their building was stopped, they left off to build the city - This was the effect of the confusion of their tongue's; for it not only disabled them from helping one another, but probably struck a damp upon their spirits, since they saw the hand of the Lord gone out against them.
3. The builders were scattered abroad from thence upon the face of the whole earth - They departed in companies after their families and after their tongues, chap. x, 5, 20, 31, to the several countries and places allotted to them in the division that had been made, which they knew before, but would not go to take possession of, 'till now they were forced to it. Observe

1. The very thing which they feared came upon them; that dispersion which they thought to evade.
2. That it was God's work; the Lord scattered them; God's hand is to be acknowledged in all scattering providences; if the family be scattered, relations scattered, churches scattered, it is the Lord's doing.
3. That they left behind them a perpetual memorandum of their reproach in the name given to the place; it was called Babel, confusion.
4. The children of men were now finally scattered, and never will come all together again 'till the great day. when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered before him, Matt. xxv, 31, 32.

10. Observe here,
    1. That nothing is left upon record concerning those of this line, but their names and ages; the Holy Ghost seeming to hasten thro' them to the story of Abraham. How little do we know of those that are gone before us in this world, even those that lived in the same places where we live! Or indeed of those who are our contemporaries, but in distant places.
    2. That there was an observable gradual decrease in the years of their lives. Shem reached to 600 years, which yet fell short of the age of the patriarchs before the flood; the three next came short of 500, the three next did not reach to 300, and after them we read not of any that attained to 200 but Terah; and not many ages after this, Moses reckoned 70 or 80 to be the utmost men ordinarily arrive at. When the earth began to be replenished, mens lives began to shorten so that the decrease is to be imputed to the wise disposal of providence, rather than to any decay of nature.
    3. That Eber, from whom the Hebrews were denominated, was the longest lived of any that were born after the flood; which perhaps was the reward of his strict adherence to the ways of God.

27. Here begins the story of Abram. We have here,
    1. His country: Ur of the Chaldee's - An idolatrous country, where even the children of Eber themselves degenerated.
    2. His relations, mentioned for his sake, and because of their interest in he following story.
        1. His father was Terah, of whom it is said, Josh. xxiv, 2, that he served other gods on the other side the flood; so early did idolatry gain footing in the world. Enough it is said, ver. 26, that when Terah was seventy years old he begat Abram, Nabor and Haran, which seems to tell us that Abram was the eldest son of Terah, and born in the 70th year; yet by comparing ver. 32, which makes Terah to die in his 205th year, with Acts vii, 4, where it is said that Abram removed from Haran when his father was dead, and chap. xii, 4, where it is said that he was but 75 years old when he removed from Haran, it appears that he was born in the 130th year of Terah, and probably was his youngest son. We have,

2. Some account of his brethren (1.) Nahor, out of whole family both Isaac and Jacob had their wives. (2.) Haran, the father of Lot, of whom it is here said, ver. 28, that he died before his father Terah. 'Tis likewise said that he died in Ur of the Chaldees, before that happy remove of the family out of that idolatrous country. (3.) His wife was Sarai, who, tho' some think was the same with Iscah the daughter of Haran. Abram himself saith, she was the daughter of his father, but not the daughter of his mother, chap. xx, 12. She was ten years younger than Abram.
3. His departure out of Ur of the Chaldees, with his father Terah, and his nephew Lot, and the rest of his family, in obedience to the call of God. This chapter leaves them in Haran or Charran, a place about the mid-way between Ur and Canaan, where they dwelt 'till Terah's head was laid; probably because the old man was unable, through the infirmities of age, to proceed in his journey.

## XII

From henceforward Abram and his seed are almost the only subject of the sacred history. In this chapter we have,

I. God's call of Abram to the land of Canaan ver. 1, 2, 3.
II. Abram's obedience to this call, ver. 4, 5.
III. His welcome to the land of Canaan, ver. 6-9.
IV. His occasional remove into Egypt, with an account of what happened to him there. Abram's flight and fault, ver. 10-13. Sarai's danger and deliverance, ver. 14-20.

1. We have here the call by which Abram was removed out of the land of his nativity into the land of promise, which was designed both to try his faith and obedience, and also to set him apart for God. The circumstances of this call we may be somewhat helped to the knowledge of, from Stephen's speech, Acts vii, 2, where we are told, 1. That the God of glory appeared to him to give him this call, appeared in such displays of his glory as left Abram no room to doubt. God spake to him after in divers manners: but this first time, when the correspondence was to be settled, he appeared to him as the God of glory, and spake to him. 2. That this call was given him in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and in obedience to this call, he came out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran or Haran about five years, and from thence, when his father was dead, by a fresh command, he removed him into the land of Canaan. Some think Haran was in Chaldea, and so was still a part of Abram's country; or he having staid there five years, began to call it his country, and to take root there, till God let him know this was not the place he was intended for. Get thee out of thy country - Now, (1.) By this precept he was tried whether he loved God better than he loved his native soil, and dearest friends, and whether he could willingly leave all to go along with God. His country was become idolatrous, his kindred and his father's house were a constant temptation to him, and he could not continue with them without danger of being infected by them; therefore get thee out, (Hebrew.) vade tibi, get thee gone with all speed, escape

for thy life, look not behind thee. (2.) By this precept he was tried whether he could trust God farther than he saw him, for he must leave his own country to go to a land that God would shew him; he doth not say, 'tis a land that I will give thee nor doth he tell him what land it was, or what kind of land; but he must follow God with an implicit faith, and take God's word for it in the general, though he had no particular securities given him, that he should be no loser by leaving his country to follow God.

2. Here is added an encouraging promise, nay a complication of promises,

1. I will make of thee a great nation - When God took him from his own people, he promised to make him the head of another people. This promise was.
    1. A great relief to Abram's burden, for he had now no child.
    2. A great trial to Abram's faith, for his wife had been long barren, so that if he believe, it must be against hope, and his faith must build purely upon that power which can out of stones raise up children unto Abraham.
2. I will bless thee - Either particularly with the blessing of fruitfulness, as he had blessed Adam and Noah; or in general, I will bless thee with all manner of blessings, both of the upper and nether springs: leave thy father's house, and I will give thee a father's blessing, better than that of thy progenitors.
3. I will make thy name great - By deserting his country he lost his name there: care not for that, (saith God) but trust me, and I will make thee a greater name than ever thou couldst have had there.
4. Thou shalt be a blessing - That is, thy life shall be a blessing to the places where thou shalt sojourn.
5. I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee - This made it a kind of league offensive and defensive between God and Abram. Abram heartily espoused God's cause, and here God promiseth to interest himself in his.
6. In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed - This was the promise that crowned all the rest, for it points at the Messiah, in whom all the promises are yea and amen.

4. So Abram departed - He was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. His obedience was speedy and without delay, submissive and without dispute.

5. They took with them the souls that they had gotten - That is, the proselytes they had made, and persuaded to worship the true God, and to go with them to Canaan; the souls which (as one of the Rabbins expresseth it) they had gathered under the wings of the divine Majesty.

6. The Canaanite was then in the land - He found the country possessed by Canaanites, who were likely to be but bad neighbours; and for ought appears he could not have ground to pitch his tent on but by their permission.

7. And the Lord appeared to Abram - Probably in a vision, and spoke to him comfortable words; Unto thy seed will I give this land - No place or condition can shut us out from God's gracious visits. Abram is a sojourner, unsettled, among Canaanites, and yet here also he meets with him that lives, and sees him. Enemies may part us and our tents, us and our altars, but not us and our God.

8. And there he built an altar unto the Lord who appeared to him, and called on the name of the Lord - Now consider this, (1.) As done upon a special occasion when God appeared to him, then and there he built an altar, with an eye to the God that appeared to him: thus he acknowledged with thankfulness God's kindness to him in making him that gracious visit and promise: and thus he

testified his confidence in, and dependence upon the word which God had spoken. (2.) As his constant practice, whithersoever he removed. As soon as Abram was got to Canaan, though he was but a stranger and sojourner there, yet he set up, and kept up, the worship of God in his family; and wherever he had a tent, God had an altar and that an altar sanctified by prayer.

10. And there was a famine in the land - Not only to punish the iniquity of the Canaanites, but to exercise the faith of Abram. Now he was tried whether he could trust the God that brought him to Canaan, to maintain him there, and rejoice in him as the God of his salvation, when the fig-tree did not blossom. And Abram went down into Egypt - See how wisely God provides, that there should be plenty in one place, when there was scarcity in another; that, as members of the great body, we may not say to one another, I have no need of you.

13. Say thou art my sister - The grace Abram was most eminent for was faith, and yet he thus fell through unbelief and distrust of the divine Providence, even after God had appeared to him twice. Alas, What will become of the willows, when the cedars are thus shaken

17. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house - Probably, those princes especially that had commended Sarai to Pharaoh. We are not told, particularly, what these plagues were; but, doubtless, there was something in the plagues themselves, or some explication added to them, sufficient to convince them that it was for Sarai's sake they were thus plagued.

18. What is this that thou hast done? - What an ill thing; how unbecoming a wife and good man! Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? - Intimating, that if he had known that, he would not have taken her. It is a fault, too common among good people, to entertain suspicions of others beyond what there is cause for. We have often found more of virtue, honour, and conscience in some people, than we thought there was; and it ought to be a pleasure to us to be thus disappointed, as Abram was here, who found Pharaoh to be a better man than he expected.

20. And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him - That is, he charged them not to injure him in any thing. And he appointed them, when Abram was disposed to return home, after the famine, to conduct him safe out of the country, as his convoy.

## XIII

In this chapter we have a farther account of Abram;

I. In general, of his condition and behaviour in the land of promise, which was, now, the land of his pilgrimage. (1.) His removes, ver. 1,3, 4, 18. (2.) His riches, ver. 2. (3.) His devotion, ver. 4, 18.

II. A particular account of a quarrel that happened between him and Lot. (1.) The occasion of their strife, ver. 5, 6. (2.) The parties concerned in the strife, with the aggravation of it, ver. 7. (3.) The stopping of it by the prudence of Abram, ver. 8, 9.

III. Lot's departure from Abram to the plain of Sodom, ver. 10-14.

IV. God's appearance to Abram, to confirm the promise of the land of Canaan to him, ver. 14-17.

3. He went on to Bethel - Thither he went, not only because he was willing to go among his old acquaintance; but because there he had formerly had his altar. and though the altar was gone, probably he himself having taking it down when he left the place, lest it should be polluted by the idolatrous Canaanites; yet he came to the place of the altar, either to revive the remembrance of the sweet communion he had had with God at that place, or, perhaps, to pay the vows he had there made to God when he undertook his journey into Egypt.

6. The land was not able to bear them - The place was too strait for them, and they had not room for their flocks.

7. And the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled in the land - This made the quarrel,

1. Very dangerous; if Abram and Lot cannot agree to feed their flocks together, it is well if the common enemy do not come upon them and plunder them both.
2. Very scandalous: No doubt the eyes of all the neighbours were upon them, because of the singularity of their religion, and the extraordinary sanctity they professed; and notice would soon be taken of this quarrel, and improvement made of it to their reproach by the Canaanites and Perizzites.

10. The garden of the Lord - That is, paradise.

13. Sinners before the Lord - That is, impudent daring sinners.

16. I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth - That is, they shall increase incredibly, and take them altogether; they shall be such a great multitude as no man can number. They were so in Solomon's time, 1 Kings iv, 20. Judah and Israel were many as the land which is by the sea in multitude. This God here gives him the promise of.

17. Arise, walk through the land - Enter and take possession, survey the parcels, and it will appear better than upon a distant prospect.

18. Then Abram removed his tent - God bid him walk through the land, that is, Do not think of fixing in it, but expect to be always unsettled, and walking through it to a better Canaan; in compliance with God's will herein, he removed his tent, conforming himself to the condition of a pilgrim. And he built there an altar - in token of his thankfulness to God for the kind visit he had made him.

## XIV

We have in this chapter,

I. A war with the king of Sodom and his allies, ver. 1-12.

II. Abram's rescue of Lot from captivity, ver. 13-16.

III. Abram's return from that expedition, ver. 17. with an account of what passed, (1.) Between him and the king of Salem, ver. 18-20. (2.) Between him and the king of Sodom, ver. 21-24. In part fulfilled, that God would make his name great.

1. We have here an account of the first war that ever we read of in scripture, in which we may observe. [1.] The parties engaged in it. The invaders were four kings; two of them no less than kings of Shinar and Elam - That is, Chaldea and Persia; yet probably not the sovereign princes of

those great kingdoms, but rather the heads of some colonies which came out thence, and settled themselves near Sodom, but retained the names of the countries from which they had their original. The invaded were the kings of five cities that lay near together in the plain of Jordan, Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar. [2.] The occasion of this war was, the revolt of the five kings from under the government of Chedorlaomer.

4. Twelve years they served him - The Sodomites were the posterity of Canaan, whom Noah had pronounced a servant to Shem, from whom Elam descended. Thus soon did that prophecy begin to be fulfilled. In the thirteenth year, beginning to be weary of their subjection, they rebelled - Denied their tribute, and attempted to shake off the yoke.

5. In the fourteenth year - After some pause and preparation, Chedorlaomer, in conjunction with his allies, set himself to reduce the revolters. See note at "ver. 1" (For [1.], [2.]) [3.] The progress of the war. The four kings laid the neighbouring countries waste, and enriched themselves with the spoil of them, ver. 5, 6, 7. Upon the alarm of which, the king of Sodom and his allies went out and were routed.

13. We have here an account of the only military action we ever find Abram engaged in; and this he was not prompted to by avarice or ambition, but purely by a principle of charity.

14. He armed his trained servants, born in his house - To the number of three hundred and eighteen: a great family, but a small army; about as many as Gideon's that routed the Midianites, Jude vii, 7. He drew out his trained servants, or his catechized servants; not only instructed in the art of war, but instructed in the principles of religion; for Abram commanded his household to keep the way of the Lord.

16. His brother Lot - That is, his kinsman.

18. The Rabbins say, that Melchizedek was Shem the son of Noah, who was king and priest to those that descended from him, according to the patriarchal model. Many Christian writers have thought that this was an appearance of the Son of God himself, our Lord Jesus, known to Abram at this time by this name. But as nothing is expressly revealed concerning it, we can determine nothing. He brought forth bread and wine - For the refreshment of Abram and his soldiers, and in congratulation of their victory. This he did as a king. As priest of the most high God he blessed Abram, which we may suppose a greater refreshment to Abram than his bread and wine were.

19. Blessed be Abram, of the most high God - Observe the titles he here gives to God, which are very glorious.

1. The most high God, which speaks his absolute perfections in himself, and his sovereign dominion over all the creatures.
2. Possessor of heaven and earth - That is, rightful owner and sovereign Lord of all the creatures; because he made them.

20. And blessed be the most high God - Note,

1. In all our prayers we must praise God, and join hallelujahs with all our hosannas. These are the spiritual sacrifices we must offer up daily, and upon particular occasions.
2. God as the most high God must have the glory of all our victories. In them he shews himself higher than our enemies, and higher than we, for without him we could do nothing. And he gave him tithes of all - That is, of the spoils, Heb. vii, 4. This may be looked upon, (1.) As a gratuity presented to Melchizedek, by way of return for his respects. (2.) As an offering dedicated to the most high

God, and therefore put into the hands of Melchizedek his priest. Jesus Christ, our great Melchizedek, is to be humbly acknowledged by every one of us as our king and priest, and not only the tithe of all, but all we have, must be given up to him.

21. Give me the souls, and take thou the substance - So the Hebrew reads it. Here he fairly begs the persons, but as freely bestows the goods on Abram. Gratitude teaches us to recompense to the utmost of our power those that have undergone fatigues, or been at expence for our service.

22. I have lift up mine hand to the Lord that I will not take anything - Here Observe, (1.) The titles he gives to God, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth - The same that Melchizedek had just now used. It is good to learn of others how to order our speech concerning God, and to imitate those who speak well in divine things. (2.) The ceremony used in this oath; I have lift up my hand - In religious swearing we appeal to God's knowledge of our truth and sincerity, and imprecate his wrath if we swear falsely; and the lifting up of the hands is expressive of both. Lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich - Probably, Abram knew the king of Sodom to be a proud and scornful man, and one that would be apt to turn such a thing as this to his reproach afterwards, and when we have to do with such men, we have need to act with particular caution.

23. From a thread to a shoe-latchet - Not the least thing that had ever belonged to the king of Sodom.

## XV

In this chapter we have a solemn treaty between God and Abram,

I. A general assurance of God's kindness and goodwill to Abram, ver. 1.

II. A particular declaration of the purposes of his love concerning him, in two things. (1.) That he would give him a numerous issue, ver. 2-7. (2.) That he would give him Canaan for an inheritance, ver. 7-16.

1. After these things - (1.) After that act of generous charity which Abram had done, in rescuing his neighbours, God made him this gracious visit. (2.) After that victory which he had obtained over four kings; lest Abram should be too much elevated with that, God comes to tell him he had better things in store for him. The word of the Lord came unto Abram - That is, God manifested himself to Abram, in a vision - Which supposeth Abram awake, and some sensible token of the presence of the divine glory, saying, Fear not Abram - Abram might fear lest the four kings he had routed, should rally and fall upon him. No, saith God, fear not: fear not their revenge, nor thy neighbour's envy; I will take care of thee. I am thy shield - Or, emphatically, I am a shield to thee, present with thee, actually defending thee. The consideration of this, that God himself is, a shield to his people, to secure them from all destructive evils, a shield ready to them, and a shield round about them, should silence all perplexing fears. And thy exceeding great reward - Not only thy rewarder, but thy reward. God himself is the felicity of holy souls; He is the portion of their inheritance, and their cup.

3. Behold to me thou hast given no seed - Not only no son, but no seed. If he had had a daughter, from her the promised Messias might have come, who was to be the Seed of the Woman; but he had neither son nor daughter.

5. And he brought him forth - It seems, early in the morning, and said, look now toward heaven, and tell the stars: so shall thy seed be -

1. So innumerable, for so the stars seem to a common eye. Abram feared he should have no child at all, but God tells him his descendents should be so many as not to be numbered.
2. So illustrious, as the stars of heaven for splendour; for to them pertained the glory, Rom. ix, 4. Abram's seed according to the flesh were like the dust of the earth, chap. xiii, 16, but his spiritual seed are like the stars of heaven.

6. And he believed in the Lord - That is, believed the truth of that promise which God had now made him, resting upon the power, and faithfulness of him that made it: see how the apostle magnifies this faith of Abram, and makes it a standing example, Rom. iv, 19-21. He was not weak in faith; he staggered not at the promise: he was strong in faith; he was fully persuaded. The Lord work such a faith in every one of us. And he counted it to him for righteousness - That is, upon the score of this he was accepted of God, and, by faith he obtained witness that he was righteous, Heb. xi, 4. This is urged in the New Testament to prove, that we are justified by faith without the works of the law, Rom. iv, 3,Gal. iii, 6, for Abram was so justified, while he was yet uncircumcised. If Abram, that was so rich in good works, was not justified by them, but by his faith, much less can we. This faith, which was imputed to Abram for righteousness, had newly struggled with unbelief, ver. 2, and coming off, conqueror, it was thus crowned, thus honoured.

7. I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees - Out of the fire of the Chaldees, so some: that is, from their idolatries; for the Chaldeans worshipped the fire. Or, from their persecutions. The Jewish writers have a tradition, that Abram was cast into a fiery furnace for refusing to worship idols, and was miraculously delivered. It is rather a place of that name. Thence God brought him by an effectual call, brought him by a gracious violence; snatched him as a brand out of the burning. Observe how God speaks of it as that which he gloried in. I am the Lord that brought thee out - He glories in it as an act both of power and grace. To give thee this land to inherit it - Not only to possess it, but to possess it as an inheritance, which is the surest title. The providence of God hath secret, but gracious designs in all its various dispensations: we cannot conceive the projects of providence, 'till the event shews what it was driving at.

8. Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? - This did not proceed from distrust of God's power or promise, but he desired this,

1. For the strengthening of his own faith. He believed, ver. 6, but here he prays, Lord help me against my unbelief, Now, he believed, but he desired a sign, to be treasured up against an hour of temptation.
2. For the ratifying of the promise to his posterity, that they also might believe it.

9. Take me an heifer - Perhaps Abram expected some sign from heaven, but God gives him a sign upon a sacrifice. Those that would receive the assurances of God's favour, must attend instituted ordinances, and expect to meet with God in them. Observe,

1. God appointed that each of the beasts used for his service should be three years old, because then they were at their full growth and strength. God must be served with the best we have.

2. We do not read that God gave Abram particular directions how to manage these, knowing that he was well versed in the custom of sacrifices.
3. Abram took as God appointed him, though as yet he knew not how these things should become a sign to him. He divided the beasts in the midst, according to the ceremony used in continuing covenants, Jer. xxxiv, 18, 19, where it is said, they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts.
4. Abram, having prepared according to God's appointment, set himself to expect what sign God would give him by these.

12. And when the sun was going down - About the time of the evening oblation. Early in the morning, while the stars were yet to be seen, God had given him orders concerning the sacrifices, ver. 5, and we may suppose it was at least his morning's work to prepare them, and set them in order; which when he had done, he abode by them praying and waiting 'till towards evening. A deep sleep fell upon Abram - Not a common sleep through weariness or carelessness, but a divine extasy, that being wholly taken off from things sensible, he might be wholly taken up with the contemplation of things spiritual. The doors of the body were locked up, that the soul might be private and retired, and might act the more freely. And lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him - This was designed to strike an awe upon the spirit of Abram, and to possess him with a holy reverence. Holy fear prepares the soul for holy joy; God humbles first, and then lifts up.

13. Thy seed shall be strangers - So they were in Canaan first, Psalm cv, 11, 12, and afterwards in Egypt: before they were lords of their own land, they were strangers in a strange land. The inconveniences of an unsettled state make a happy settlement the more welcome. Thus the heirs of heaven are first strangers on earth. And them they shall serve - So they did the Egyptians, Exod. i, 13. See how that which was the doom of the Canaanites, chap. ix, 25, proves the distress of Abram's seed: they are made to serve; but with this difference, the Canaanites serve under a curse, the Hebrews under a blessing. And they shall afflict them - See Exod. i, 11. Those that are blessed and beloved of God are often afflicted by wicked men. This persecution began with mocking, when Ishmael the son of an Egyptian, persecuted Isaac, chap. xxi, 9, and it came at last to murder, the basest of murders, that of their new born children; so that more or less it continued 400 years.

14. That nation whom they shall serve, even the Egyptians, will I judge - This points at the plagues of Egypt, by which God not only constrained the Egyptians to release Israel, but punished them for all the hardships they had put upon them. The punishing of persecutors is the judging of them; it is a righteous thing with God, and a particular act of justice, to recompense tribulation to those that trouble his people. 3. The deliverance of Abram's seed out of Egypt. And afterwards shall they come out with great substance - Either after they have been afflicted 400 years, or, after the Egyptians are judged and plagued.

15. Thou shalt go to thy fathers - At death we go to our fathers, to all our fathers that are gone before us to the state of the dead, to our godly fathers that are gone before us to the state of the blessed. The former helps to take off the terror of death, the latter puts comfort into it. Thou shalt be buried in a good old age - Perhaps mention is made of his burial here, where the land of Canaan is promised him, because a burying-place was the first possession he had in it. Old age is a blessing, if it be a good old age: theirs may be called a good old age,

1. That are old and healthful, not loaded with such distempers as make them weary of life:

2. That are old and holy, whose hoary head is found in the way of righteousness, old and useful, old and exemplary for godliness, that is indeed a good old age.

16. They shall come hither again - Hither to the land of Canaan, wherein thou now art. The reason why they must not have the land of promise in possession till the fourth generation, is because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. The righteous God has determined, that they shall not be cut off till they are arrived to such a pitch of wickedness; and therefore till it come to that, the seed of Abram must be kept out of possession.

17. When the sun was gone down the sign was given - The smoaking furnace signified the affliction of his seed in Egypt: they were there in the furnace of affliction, and labouring in the very fire. They were there in the smoke, their eyes darkened that they could not see to the end of their troubles. 2. The burning lamp speaks comfort in this affliction; and this God shewed Abram at the same time with the smoaking furnace. The lamp notes direction in the smoke; God's word was their lamp, a light shining in a dark place. Perhaps too this burning lamp prefigured the pillar of a cloud and fire which led them out of Egypt. 3. The passing of these between the pieces was the confirming of the covenant God now made with him. It is probable this furnace and lamp, which passed between the pieces, burned and consumed them, and so compleated the sacrifice, and testified God's acceptance of it, as of Gideon's, Jude vi, 21, Manoah's, Jude xiii, 19, 20, and Solomon's, 2 Chron. vii, 1. So it intimates,

1. That God's covenants with man are made by sacrifice, Psalm l, 5, by Christ, the great sacrifice.
2. God's acceptance of our spiritual sacrifices is a token for good, and an earnest of farther favours.

18. In that same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land - He had said before, To thy seed will I give this land, but here he saith, I have given it; that is,

1. I have given the promise, the charter is sealed and delivered, and cannot be disanulled.
2. The possession is as sure in due time, as if it were now actually delivered to them. In David's time and Solomon's their jurisdiction extended to the utmost of these limits, 2 Chron. ix, 26. And it was their own fault that they were not sooner and longer in possession of all these territories. They forfeited their right by their sins, and by their own sloth and cowardice kept themselves out of possession. The present occupants are named, because their number and strength and long prescription, should be no hindrance to the accomplishment of this promise in its season; and to magnify God's love to Abram and his seed, in giving to that one nation the possession of many nations.

## XVI

Hagar probably was one of those maid-servants which the king of Egypt (among other gifts) bestowed upon Abram, chap. xii. 16. Concerning her we have four things in this chapter,

I. Her marriage to Abram her master, ver. 1-3.

II. Her misbehaviour towards Sarai her mistress, ver. 4-6.
III. Her discourse with an angel that met her in her flight, ver. 7- 14.
IV. Her delivery of a son, ver. 15, 16.

1. We have here the marriage of Abram to Hagar, who was his secondary wife. Herein, though he may be excused, he cannot be justified; for from the beginning it was not so: and when it was so, it seems to have proceeded from an irregular desire to build up their families, for the speedier peopling of the world. But now we must not do so? Christ has reduced this matter to the first institution, and makes the marriage union to be between one man and one woman only.

4. We have here the ill consequences of Abram's marriage to Hagar: a deal of mischief it made presently. Hagar no sooner perceives herself with child, but she looks scornfully upon her mistress; upbraids her perhaps with her barrenness, and insults over her. Sarai falls upon Abram, and very unjustly charges him with the injury, suspecting that he countenanced Hagar's insolence: and as one not willing to hear what Abram had to say she rashly appeals to God. The Lord judge between me and thee, as if Abram had refused to right her. When passion is upon the throne, reason is out of doors, and is neither heard nor spoken. Those are not always in the right that are most forward in appealing to God. Rash and bold imprecations are commonly evidences of guilt and a bad cause.

6. Thy maid is in thy hand - Though she was his wife, he would not countenance her in any thing disrespectful to Sarai. Those who would keep up peace and love, must return first answers to hard accusations; husbands and wives particularly should endeavour not to be both angry together. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her - Making her to serve with rigor; she fled from her face - She not only avoided her wrath for the present, but totally deserted her service.

7. Here is the first mention we have in scripture of an angel's appearance, who arrested her in her flight. It should seem she was making towards her own country, for she was in the way to Shur, which lay towards Egypt. 'Twere well if our afflictions would make us think of our home, the better county. But Hagar was now out of the way of her duty, and going farther astray, when the angel found her. It is a great mercy to be stopt in a sinful way, either by conscience or providence.

8. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid -

1. As a check to her pride. Though she was Abram's wife, yet he calls her Sarai's maid to humble her.
2. As a rebuke to her flight. Sarai's maid ought to be in Sarai's tent, and not wandering in the wilderness. Whence comest thou - Consider that thou art running away both from the duty thou wast bound to, and the privileges thou wast blest with, in Abram's tent. And Whither wilt thou go? - Thou art running thyself into sin in Egypt; if she return to that people, she will return to their gods. And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress - She acknowledges her fault in fleeing from her mistress; and yet, excuses it, that it was from the face, or displeasure, of her mistress.

9. And the angel said, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hand - Go home and humble thyself for what thou hast done amiss, and resolve for the future to behave thyself better.

10. I will multiply thy seed exceedingly - Hebrew. multiplying I will multiply it, that is, multiply it in every age, so as to perpetuate it. 'Tis supposed that the Turks at this day descended from Ishmael, and they are a great people.

11. Ishmael, that is, God will hear; and the reason is, because the Lord hath heard: he hath, and therefore he will. The experience we have had of God's seasonable kindness in distress should encourage us to hope for the like help in the like exigencies. Even there, where there is little cry of devotion, the God of pity hears the cry of affliction: tears speak as well as prayers.

12. He will be a wild man - A wild ass of a man, so the word is: rude, and bold and fearing no man; untamed, untractable, living at large, and impatient of service and restraint. His hand will be against every man - That is his sin, and every man's hand against him - That is his punishment. Note, Those that have turbulent spirits have commonly troublesome lives: they that are provoking, and injurious to others, must expect to be repaid in their own coin. And yet, he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren - Though threatened and insulted by all his neighbours, yet he shall keep his ground, and, for Abram's sake more than his own, shall be able to make his part good with them. Accordingly we read, chap. xxv, 18, that he died, as he lived, in the presence of all his brethren.

13. And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her - That is, thus she made confession of his name, Thou God seest me - This should be with her, his name for ever, and this his memorial, by which she will know him, and remember him while she lives, Thou God seest me. Thou seest my sorrow and affliction. This Hagar especially refers to: when we have brought ourselves into distress by our own folly, yet God has not forsaken us. Thou seest the sincerity of my repentance. Thou seest me, if in any instance I depart from thee. This thought should always restrain us from sin, and excite us to duty, Thou God seest me. Have I here also looked after him that seeth me? - Probably she knew not who it was that talked with her till he was departing, and then looking after him, with a reflexion like that of the two disciples, Luke xxiv, 31, 32. Here also - Not only in Abram's tent, and at his altar, but here also, in this wilderness: here, where I never expected it, where I was out of the way of my duty?

14. The well was called Beer-lahai-roi - The well of him that lives and sees me. 'Tis likely Hagar put this name upon it, and it was retained long after. This was the place where the God of glory manifested the special care he took of a poor woman in distress. Those that are graciously admitted into communion with God, and receive seasonable comforts from him, should tell others what he has done for their souls, that they also may be encouraged to seek him and trust in him.

## XVII

This chapter contains articles of agreement betwixt the great Jehovah, the father of mercies, and pious Abram, the father of the faithful. Mention was made of this covenant, chap. xv, 18. but here it is particularly drawn up. Here are,

I. The circumstances of the making of this covenant, the time and manner, ver. 1. and the posture Abram was in, ver. 3.

II. The covenant itself, in the particular instances.

1. That he should be the father of many nations, ver.4. 6. and in token of that his name was changed, ver. 5.
2. That God would be a God to him and his seed, and would give them the land of Canaan, ver. 7, 8. and the seal of this part of the covenant was circumcision, ver. 9-14.
3. That he should have a son by Sarai, and in token of that her name was changed, ver. 15, 16. This promise Abraham received, ver. 17. And his request for Ishmael, (ver. 18.) was answered abundantly to his satisfaction, ver. 19-22.

III. The circumcision of Abraham and his family, according to God's appointment, ver. 23-27.

1. And when Abram was ninety nine years old - Full thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael. So long the promise of Isaac was deferred;

1. Perhaps to correct Abram's over-hasty marrying of Hagar.
2. That Abram and Sarai being so far striken in age, God's power in this matter might be the more magnified. The Lord appeared unto Abram - In some visible display of God's immediate glorious presence with him. And said, I am the Almighty God - By this name he chose to make himself known to Abram, rather than by his name Jehovah, Exod. vi, 3. He used it to Jacob, chap. xxxv, 11. They called him by this name, chap. xxviii, 5; xliii, 14; xlviii, 3. It is the name of God that is mostly used throughout the book of Job, at least 30 times in the discourses of that book, in which Jehovah is used but once. After Moses, Jehovah is more frequently used, and this very rarely. I am El-Shaddai. It speaks the almighty power of God, either
   1. As an avenger, from |wrv| he destroyed, or laid waste; so some: and they think God took this title from the destruction of the old world: Or,
   2. As a benefactor, |v| for |rva| who, and |yr| it sufficeth. Our old English translation reads it here, very significantly, I am God All- sufficient. The God with whom we have to do, is self-sufficient; he hath every thing, and he needs not any thing. And he is enough to us, if we be in covenant with him; we have all in him, and we have enough in him; enough to satisfy our most enlarged desires; enough to supply the defect of every thing else, and to secure us happiness for our immortal souls. But the covenant is mutual, walk before me, and be thou perfect - That is, upright and sincere. Observe,
      1. That to walk before God, is to set God always before us, and to think, and speak, and act, in every thing as those that are always under his eye. It is to have a constant regard to his word, as our rule, and to his glory, as our end, in all our actions. It is to be inward with him in all the duties of religious worship, and to be entire for him in all holy conversation.
      2. That upright walking with God is the condition of our interest in his all-sufficiency. If we neglect him, or dissemble with him, we forfeit the benefit of our relation to him.

3. A continual regard to God's all-sufficiency will have a great influence upon our upright walking with him.

3. And Abram fell on his face while God talked with him - Either,

1. As one overcome by the brightness of the Divine glory: Daniel and John did so likewise. Or.
2. As one ashamed of himself, and blushing to think of the honours done to one so unworthy. He looks upon himself with humility, and upon God with reverence, and, in token of both, falls on his face.

4. The promise is here introduced with solemnity: As for me, saith the Great God, Behold, behold and admire it, behold and be assured of it, my covenant is with thee. And thou shalt be a father of many nations - This implies,

1. That his seed after the flesh should be very numerous, both in Isaac and in Ishmael, and in the sons of Keturah. And the event answered, for there have been, and are, more of the children of men descended from Abraham, than from any one man at equal distance with him from Noah, the common root.
2. That all believers, in every age, should be looked upon as his spiritual seed, as the father of the faithful. In this sense the apostle directs us to understand this promise, Rom. iv, 16, 17. He is the father of those, in every nation, that, by faith, enter into covenant with God, and (as the Jewish writers express it) are gathered under the wings of the divine majesty.

5. In token of this, his name was changed from Abram, a high father, to Abraham, the father of a multitude. This was to confirm the faith of Abraham, while he was childless; perhaps even his own name was sometimes an occasion of grief to him; Why should he be called a high father, who was not a father at all? But now God had promised him a numerous issue, and had given him a name which signified so much; that name was his joy.

7. And I will establish my covenant - Not to be altered or revoked; not with thee only, then it would die with thee but with thy seed after thee; and it is not only thy seed after the flesh, but thy spiritual seed. It is everlasting in the evangelical meaning of it. The covenant of grace is everlasting; it is from everlasting in the counsels of it, and to everlasting in the consequences of it; and the external administration of it is transmitted, with the seal of it, to the seed of believers, and the internal administration of it by the Spirit to Christ's seed in every age. This is a covenant of exceeding great and precious promises. Here are two which indeed are all-sufficient, that God would be their God. All the privileges of the covenant, all its joys, and all its hopes, are summed up in this. A man needs desire no more than this to make him happy. What God is himself, that he will be to his people: wisdom to guide and counsel them, power to protect and support them, goodness to supply and comfort them; what faithful worshippers can expect from the God they serve, believers shall find in God as theirs. This is enough, yet not all.

8. And I will give thee Canaan for an everlasting possession - God had before promised this land to Abraham and his seed, ver. 18. But here, it is promised for an everlasting possession, as a type of heaven, that everlasting rest which remains for the people of God. This is that better country to which Abraham had an eye, and the grant of which was that which answered the vast extent of that promise, that God would be to them a God; so that if God had not designed this, he would have been ashamed to be called their God, Heb. xi, 16. As the land of Canaan was secured to the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh; so heaven is secured to all his spiritual seed for a possession

truly everlasting. The offer of this eternal life is made in the word, and confirmed by the sacraments, to all that are under the external administration of the covenant, and the earnest of it is given to all believers.

10. The token of the covenant, is circumcision, for the sake of which the covenant is itself called the covenant of circumcision, Acts vii, 8. It is here said to be the covenant which Abraham and his seed must keep, as a copy or counterpart, it is called a sign and seal, Rom. iv, 11, for it was.

1. A confirmation to Abraham and his seed of those promises which were God's part of the covenant, assuring them that, in due time, Canaan should be theirs: and the continuance of this ordinance, after Canaan was theirs, intimates, that that promise looked farther, to another Canaan.
2. An obligation upon Abraham and his seed to that duty which was their part of the covenant, not only to the duty of accepting the covenants and putting away the corruption of the flesh, which were primarily signified by circumcision, but in general to the observation of all God's commands. They who will have God to be to them a God, must consent to be to him a people. Now,
   1. Circumcision was a bloody ordinance, for all things by the law were purged with blood, Heb. ix, 22. See Exod. xxiv, 8. But the blood of Christ being shed, all bloody ordinances are now abolished. Circumcision therefore gives way to baptism.
   2. It was peculiar to the males, though the women also were included in the covenant.
   3. Christ having not yet offered himself for us, God would have man to enter into covenant, by the offering of some part of his own body, and no part could be better spared.
   4. The ordinance was to be administered to children when they were eight days old, that they might gather some strength to be able to undergo the pain of it.
   5. The children of the strangers were to be circumcised, which looked favourable upon the Gentiles, who should, in due time be brought into the family of Abraham, by faith. Here is, (1.) The promise made to Abraham of a son by Sarai, that son in whom the promise made to him should be fulfilled, that he should be the father of many nations, for she also shall be a mother of nations, and kings of people shall be of her, ver. 16. Note,
      1. God reveals the purposes of his goodwill to his people by degrees. God had told Abraham long before, that he should have a son, but never 'till now that he should have a son by Sarai.
      2. The blessing of the Lord makes fruitful, and adds no sorrow with it; no such sorrow as was in Hagar's case. I will bless her, with the blessing of fruitfulness, and then thou shalt have a son of her.
      3. Civil government and order is a great blessing to the church. It is promised not only that people, but kings of people should be of her; not a headless rout, but a well modelled, well governed society.

15. Sarah shall her name be - The same letter is added to her name that was to Abraham's. Sarai signifies my princess, as if her honour were confined to one family only: Sarah signifies a princess, viz. of multitudes.

17. Then Abraham fell on his face, and laughed - It was a laughter of delight, not of distrust. Now it was that Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day, now he saw it and was glad, John viii, 56, for as he saw heaven in the promise of Canaan, so he saw Christ in the promise of Isaac, and said, Shall a child be born to him that is an hundred years old? - He doth not here speak of it, as at all doubtful, for we are sure he staggered not at the promise, Rom. iv, 20, but as wonderful, and that which could not be effected but by the almighty power of God.

18. And Abraham said, O that Ishmael might live before thee! - This he speaks nor as desiring that Ishmael might be preferred before the son he should have by Sarah, but as dreading lest he should be forsaken of God, he puts up this petition on his behalf. The great thing we should desire of God, for our children, is, that they may live before him, that is, that they may be kept in covenant with him, and may have grace to walk before him in their uprightness. God's answer to this prayer, is an answer of peace. Abraham could not say he sought God's face in vain.

20. As for Ishmael, I have heard thee; I have blessed him - That is, I have many blessings in store for him.

1. His posterity shall be numerous; I will multiply him exceedingly;
2. They shall be considerable; twelve princes shall he beget. We may charitably hope that spiritual blessings also were bestowed upon him, though the visible church was not brought out of his loins.

21. He names that child, Isaac - Laughter, because Abraham rejoiced in spirit when this son was promised him.

## XVIII

We have an account in this chapter of another interview between God and Abraham, probably within a few days after the former, as the reward of his chearful obedience to the law of circumcision. Here is,

I. The visit which God made him, ver. 1-8

II. The matters discoursed of between them,

1. The purposes of God's love concerning Sarah, ver. 9-15.
2. The purposes of God's wrath concerning Sodom. (1.) The discovery God made to Abraham of his design to destroy Sodom, ver. 16-22. (2.) The intercession Abraham made for Sodom, ver. 23-33.

1. This appearance of God to Abraham seems to have had in it more of freedom and familiarity, and less of grandeur and majesty, than those we have hitherto read of, and therefore more resembles that great visit which in the fulness of time the Son of God was to make to the world. He sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day - Not so much to repose himself, as to seek an opportunity of doing good, by giving entertainment to strangers.

2. And lo three men - These three men were three spiritual heavenly beings, now assuming human shapes, that they might be visible to Abraham, and conversable with him. Some think they were all three created angels; others, that one of them was the Son of God. He bowed himself towards the ground - Religion doth not destroy but improve good manners, and teaches us to honour all men.

9. Where is Sarah thy wife? - By naming her, they gave intimation to Abraham, that tho' they seemed strangers, yet they well knew him and his family: by enquiring after her, they shewed a kind concern for the family of one, whom they found respectful to them. And by speaking of her, she over-hearing it, they drew her to listen to what was farther to be said.

10. I will certainly return unto thee - And visit thee. God will return to those that bid him welcome.

12. Sarah laughed within herself - It was not a laughter of faith, like Abraham's, chap. xvii, 17, but a laughter of doubting and distrust. The great objection which Sarah could not get over was her age. I am waxed old, and past child-bearing in a course of nature, especially having been hitherto barren, and which magnifies the difficulty, My Lord is old also. Observe here, That Sarah calls Abraham her Lord, and the Holy Ghost takes notice of it to her honour, and recommends it to the imitation of all Christian wives, 1Pe iii, 6. Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord, in token of respect and subjection.

17. Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do - Thus doth God in his councils express himself after the manner of men, with deliberation. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Those that by faith live a life of communion with God, cannot but know more of his mind than other people. They have a better insight into what is present, and a better foresight of what is to come.

19. I know Abraham that he will command his children, and his household after him - This is a bright part of Abraham's character. He not only prayed with his family, but he taught them, as a man of knowledge; nay, he commanded them as a man in authority, and was prophet and king, as well as priest, in his own house. And he not only took care of his children, but of his household: his servants were catechized servants. Masters of families should instruct, and inspect the manners of all under their roof. And this is given as the reason why God would make known to him his purpose concerning Sodom; because he was communicative of his knowledge, and improved it for the benefit of those that were under his charge.

21. I will go down now and see - Not as if there were any thing concerning which God is in doubt; but he is pleased thus to express himself after the manner of men.

23. Abraham drew near - This expression intimates, A holy concern. A holy confidence; he drew near with an assurance of faith, drew near as a prince, Job xxxi, 37.

27. Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes - He speaks as one amazed at his own boldness, and the liberty God graciously allowed him, considering God's greatness, he is the Lord; and his own meanness, but dust and ashes. Whenever we draw near to God, it becomes us reverently to acknowledge the vast distance that there is between us and Him. He is the Lord of glory, we are worms of the earth.

30. Oh let not the Lord be angry - The importunity which believers use in their addresses to God is such, that if they were dealing with a man like themselves, they could not but fear that he would be angry with them. But he with whom we have to do is God and not man, and he is pleased

when he is wrestled with. But why then did Abraham leave off asking when he had prevailed so far as to get the place spared if there were but ten righteous in it? Either,

1. Because he owned that it deserved to perish if there were not so many: as the dresser of the vineyard, who consented that the barren tree should be cut down if one year's trial more did not make it fruitful, Luke xiii, 9. Or,
2. Because God restrained his spirit from asking any farther. When God hath determined the ruin of a place, he forbids it to be prayed for, Jer. vii, 16.

33. Abraham returned into his place - To wait what the event would be; and it proved that his prayer was heard, and yet Sodom not spared, because there were not ten righteous in it.

## XIX

We read, chap. 18. of God's coming to take a view of the state of Sodom, what its wickedness was, and what righteous there were in it: here we have the result of that enquiry.

I. It was found upon trial that Lot was very good, ver. 1, 2, 3. and it did not appear that there were any more of the same character.

II. It was found that the Sodomites were very wicked, ver. 4-11.

III. Special care was therefore taken for the securing of Lot and his family, ver, 12-23.

IV. The ruin of Sodom, and of Lot's wife, ver. 24-26. with a general repetition of the story, ver. 27-29.

V. A foul sin that Lot was guilty of, in committing incest with his two daughters, ver. 30-38.

1. And there came two - Probably two of the three that had just before been with Abraham, the two created angels who were sent to execute God's purpose concerning Sodom.

3. And he pressed upon them greatly - Partly because he would by no means have them to expose themselves to the perils of lodging in the streets of Sodom, and partly because he was desirous of their converse.

4. Here were old and young all from every quarter - The old were not past it, and the young were soon come up to it. Either they had no magistrates to protect the peaceable, or their magistrates were themselves aiding and abetting.

8. I have two daughters - This was unadvisedly and unjustifiably offered. It is true, of two evils we must chose the less, but of two sins we must chose neither, nor ever do evil that good may come of it.

11. And they smote the men with blindness - This was designed to put an end to their attempt, and to be an earnest of their utter ruin the next day.

13. We will destroy this place - The holy angels are ministers of God's wrath for the destruction of sinners, as well as of his mercy for the preservation and deliverance of his people.

14. Up, get you out this place - The manner of expression is startling. It was not time to trifle, when the destruction was just at the door. But he seemed to them as one that mocked - They thought perhaps that the assault which the Sodomites had just now made upon his house had disturbed his head, and put him into such a fright that be knew not what he said. They that made a jest of every

thing, made a jest of that, and so perished in the overthrow. Thus many who are warned of the danger they are in by sin, make a light matter of it; such will perish with their blood upon their heads.

16. Tho' Lot did not make a jest of the warning as his sons-in-law, yet he lingered, he did not make so much haste as the case required. And it might have been fatal to him, if the angels had not laid hold on his hand, and brought him forth. Herein the Lord was merciful to him, otherwise he might justly have left him to perish, since he was loath to depart. If God had not been merciful to us, our lingering had been our ruin.

17. Look not behind thee - He must not loiter by the way; stay not in all the plain - For it would all be made one dead sea: he must not take up short of the place of refuge appointed him; escape to the mountain - Such as these are the commands given to those who through grace are delivered out of a sinful state.

1. Return not to sin and Satan, for that's looking back to Sodom.
2. Rest not in the world, for that's staying in the plain. And,
3. Reach toward Christ and heaven, for that is escaping to the mountain, short of which we must not take up.

22. I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither - The very presence of good men in a place helps to keep off judgments. See what care God takes for the preservation of his people!

24. Then the Lord rained - from the Lord - God the Son, from God the Father, for the Father has committed all judgment to the Son. He that is the saviour will be the destroyer of those that reject the salvation.

25. And he overthrew the cities, and all the inhabitants of them, the plain, and all that grew upon the ground - It was an utter ruin, and irreparable; that fruitful valley remains to this day a great lake, or dead sea. Travelers say it is about thirty miles long, and ten miles broad. It has no living creature in it: it is not moved by the wind: the smell of it is offensive: things do not easily sink in it. The Greeks call it Asphaltis, from a sort of pitch which it casts up. Jordan falls into it, and is lost there. It was a punishment that answered their sin. Burning lusts against nature were justly punished with this preternatural burning.

26. But his wife looked back from behind him - Herein she disobeyed an express command. Probably she hankered after her house and goods in Sodom, and was loath to leave them. Christ intimates this to be her sin, Luke xvii, 31, 32, she too much regarded her stuff. And her looking back spoke an inclination to go back; and therefore our saviour uses it as a warning against apostasy from our Christian profession. And she became a pillar of salt - She was struck dead in the place, yet her body did not fall down, but stood fixed and erect like a pillar or monument, not liable to waste or decay, as human bodies exposed to the air are, but metamorphosed into a metallic substance, which would last perpetually. Our communion with God consists in our gracious regard to him, and his gracious regard to us. We have here therefore the communion that was between God and Abraham in the event concerning Sodom, as before in the consultation concerning It; for communion with God is to be kept up in providences as well as in ordinances.

27. And Abraham gat up early - And to see what was become of his prayers, he went to the very place were he had stood before the Lord.

28. And he looked toward Sodom - Not as Lot's wife did, tacitly reflecting upon the divine severity, but humbly adoring it, and acquiescing in it. Here is God's favourable regard to Abraham,

ver. 29. As before when Abraham prayed for Ishmael, God heard him for Isaac, so now when he prayed for Sodom, he heard for Lot.

29. God remembered Abraham, and for his sake sent Lot out of the overthrow - God will certainly give an answer of peace to the prayer of faith in his own way and time.

30. He feared to dwell in Zoar - Here is the great trouble and distress that Lot was brought into after his deliverance, ver. 29. He was frightened out of Zoar, durst not dwell there, either because he was conscious to himself that it was a refuge of his own chusing, and that therein he had foolishly prescribed to God, and therefore could not but distrust his safety in it. Probably he found it as wicked as Sodom; and therefore concluded it could not long survive it; or perhaps he observed the rise and increase of those waters, which, after the conflagration, began to overflow the plain, and which, mixing with the ruins, by degrees made the dead sea; in those waters he concluded Zoar must needs perish, (though it had escaped the fire) because it stood upon the same flat. He was now glad to go to the mountain, the place which God had appointed for his shelter. See in Lot what those bring themselves to at last, that forsake the communion of saints for secular advantages.

## XX

We have here,

I. Abraham's sin in denying his wife, and Abimelech's sin thereupon in taking her, ver. 1, 2.

II. God's discourse with Abimelech in a dream upon this occasion; wherein he shews him his error, ver. 3. accepts his plea, ver. 4, 5, 6. and directs him to make restitution, ver. 7.

III. Abimelech's discourse with Abraham; wherein he chides him for the cheat he had put upon him, ver. 8, 9, 10. and Abraham excuses it as well as he can, ver. 11, 12, 13.

IV. The good issue of the story; in which Abimelech restores Abraham his wife, ver. 14, 15, 16. and Abraham by prayer prevails with God for the removal of the judgment Abimelech was under, ver. 17, 18.

1. And Abraham sojourned in Gerar - We are not told upon what occasion he removed, whether terrified by the destruction of Sodom, or, as some of the Jewish writers say, because he was grieved at Lot's incest with his daughters, and the reproach which the Canaanites cast upon him for his kinsman's sake. The king of Gerar sent and took her - To his house, in order to the taking of her to his bed.

3. But God came to Abimelech in a dream - It appears by this that God revealed himself by dreams, which evidenced themselves to be divine and supernatural, not only to his servants the prophets, but even to those that were out of the pale of the church; but then usually it was with some regard to God's own people.

4. Wilt thou slay also a righteous nation - Not such a nation as Sodom.

6. I withheld thee from sinning against me - It is God that restrains men from doing the ill they would do; it is not from him that there is sin, but it is from him that there is not more sin, either by

his influence on mens minds checking their inclination to sin, or by his providence taking away the opportunity. It is a great mercy to be hindered from committing sin, which God must have the glory of whoever is the instrument.

9. Thou hast done deeds that ought not to be done - Equivocation and dissimulation, however they may be palliated, are very ill things, and by no means to be admitted in any case. He takes it as a very great injury to himself and his family, that Abraham had thus exposed them to sin, What have I offended thee? - If I had been thy worst enemy, thou couldst not have done me a worse turn, nor taken a more effectual course to be avenged on me. Note, We ought to reckon, that those do us the greatest dislikedness in the world, that any way tempt us or expose us to sin, though they may pretend friendship, and offer that which is grateful enough to the corrupt nature. He challenges him to assign any just cause he had to suspect them as a dangerous people for an honest man to live among.

10. What sawest thou that thou hast done this thing - What reason hadst thou to think, that if we had known her to be thy wife, thou wouldst have been exposed to any danger by it?

11. I thought surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me - There are many places and persons that have more of the fear of God in them than we think they have; perhaps they are not called by our name, they do not wear our badges, they do not tie themselves to that which we have an opinion of; and therefore we conclude they have not the fear of God in their hearts!

13. When God caused me to wander from my father's house - Then we settled this matter. It may be, that God denied Abraham and Sarah the blessing of children so long to punish them for this sinful compact they had made to deny one another: if they will not own their marriage, why should God own it? But we may suppose, that alter this reproof they agreed never to do so again, and then presently we read, chap. xxi, 1, 2, that Sarah conceived.

16. Thy brother is to thee a covering of the eyes - Thou must look at no other, nor desire to be looked at by any other. Yoke-fellows must be to each other for a covering of the eyes. The marriage-covenant is a covenant with the eyes, like Job's, Job xxxi, 1.

## XXI

In this chapter we have,

I. Isaac, the child of promise, born into Abraham's family, ver. 1- 8.

II. Ishmael, the son of the bond-woman, cast out of it, ver. 9-21.

III. Abraham's league with Abimelech, ver. 22-32.

IV. His devotion to God, ver. 33, 34.

2. Sarah conceived - Sarah by faith, received strength to conceive, Heb. xi, 11. God therefore, by promise, gave that strength. Abraham was old, and Sarah old, and both as good as dead, and then the word of God took place.

4. He circumcised his son - The covenant being established with him, the seal of the covenant was administered to him.

6. And Sarah said, God has made me to laugh - He hath given me both cause to rejoice, and a heart to rejoice. And it adds to the comfort of any mercy to have our friends rejoice with us in it, See Luke i, 58. They that hear will laugh with me - Others will rejoice in this instance of God's power and goodness, and be encouraged to trust in him.

9. Sarah saw the son of the Egyptian mocking - Mocking Isaac no doubt, for it is sad, with reference to this, Gal. iv, 29, that he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit. Ishmael is here called the son of the Egyptian, because (as some think) the four hundred years affliction of the seed of Abraham by the Egyptians began now, and was to be dated from hence.

10. Cast out the bond-woman - This was a type of the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, who, though they were the seed of Abraham, yet, because they submitted not to the gospel-covenant, were unchurched and disfranchised. And that, which above any thing provoked God to cast them off, was, their mocking and persecuting the gospel-church, God's Isaac, in his infancy.

11. The thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight - it grieved him that Ishmael had given such provocation. And still more that Sarah insisted upon such a punishment.

13. The casting out of Ishmael was not his ruin. He shall be a nation because he is thy seed - We are not sure that it was his eternal ruin. It is presumption to say, that all these who are left out of the external dispensation of God's covenant are excluded from all his mercies. Those may be saved who are not thus honoured.

14. And Abraham rose up early in the morning - We may suppose immediately after he had in the night-visions received orders to do this.

17. God heard the voice of the lad - We read not of a word be said; but his sighs and groans, cried loud in the ears of the God of mercy. An angel was sent to comfort Hagar, who assures her, God has heard the voice of the lad where he is - Though he be in the wilderness; for wherever we are, there is a way open heavenwards; therefore lift up the lad, and hold him in thy hand - God's readiness to help us when we are in trouble must not slacken, but quicken our endeavours to help ourselves. He repeats the promise concerning her son, that he should be a great nation, as a reason why she should bestir herself to help him.

31. Beer-sheba - That is, the well of the oath, in remembrance of the covenant that they swear to, that they might be ever mindful of it.

33. And Abraham planted a grove - For a shade to his tent, or perhaps an orchard of fruit trees; and there, though we cannot say he settled, for God would have him while he lived to be a stranger and a pilgrim, yet he sojourned many days. And called there on the name of the Lord - Probably in the grove he planted, which was his oratory, or house of prayer: he kept up publick worship, to which probably his neighbours resorted, and joined with him. Men should not only retain their goodness wherever they go, but do all they can to propagate it, and make others good. The everlasting God - Though God had made himself known to Abraham as his God in particular; yet he forgets not to give glory to him as the Lord of all, the everlasting God, who was before all worlds, and will be when time and days shall be no more.

## XXII

We have here,

I. The strange command which God gave to Abraham, ver. 1, 2.

II. Abraham's strange obedience to this command, ver. 3-10.

III. The strange issue of this trial. (1.) The sacrificing of Isaac was countermanded, ver. 11, 12. (2.) Another sacrifice was provided, ver. 13, 14. (3.) The covenant was renewed with Abraham hereupon, ver. 15- 19.

IV. An account of some of Abraham's relations, ver. 20-24.

1. Here is the trial of Abraham's faith, whether it continued so strong, so vigourous, so victorious, after a long settlement in communion with God, as it was at first, when by it he left his country: then it appeared that he loved God better than his father; now, that he loved him better than his son. After these things - After all the other exercises he had had, all the difficulties he had gone through: now perhaps he was beginning to think the storms were blown over but after all, this encounter comes, which is stranger than any yet. God did tempt Abraham - Not to draw him to sin, so Satan tempts; but to discover his graces, how strong they were, that they might be found to praise and honour and glory. The trial itself: God appeared to him as he had formerly done, called him by name Abraham, that name which had been given him in ratification of the promise: Abraham, like a good servant, readily answered, Here am I; what saith my Lord unto his servant? Probably he expected some renewed promise, like those, chap. xv, 1; xvii, 1, but to his great amazement that which God hath to say to him is in short, Abraham, go kill thy son: and this command is given him in such aggravating language as makes the temptation abundantly more grievous. When God speaks, Abraham, no doubt, takes notice of every word, and listens attentively to it: and every word here is a sword in his bones; the trial is steel'd with trying phrases. Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that he should afflict? No, it is not; yet when Abraham's faith is to be tried, God seems to take pleasure in the aggravation of the trial.

2. And he said, take thy son - Not thy bullocks and thy lambs; how willingly would Abraham have parted with them by thousands to redeem Isaac! Not thy servant, no, not the steward of thine house. Thine only son - Thine only son by Sarah. Ishmael was lately cast out, to the grief of Abraham, and now Isaac only was left and must he go too? Yes: take Isaac, him by name, thy laughter, that son indeed. Yea, that son whom thou lovest - The trial was of Abraham's love to God, and therefore it must be in a beloved son: in the Hebrew 'tis expressed more emphatically, and I think might very well be read thus, Take now that son of thine, that only son of thine, whom thou lovest, that Isaac. And get thee into the land of Moriah - Three days journey off: so that he might have time to consider it, and if he do it, must do it deliberately. And offer him for a burnt offering - He must not only kill his son, but kill him as a sacrifice, with all that sedateness and composedness of mind, with which he used to offer his burnt- offering.

3. The several steps of this obedience, all help to magnify it, and to shew that he was guided by prudence, and governed by faith, in the whole transaction. (1.) He rises early - Probably the command was given in the visions of the night, and early the next morning he sets himself about it, did not delay, did not demur. Those that do the will of God heartily will do it speedily. (2.) He gets things ready for a sacrifice, and it should seem, with his own hands, cleaves the wood for the burnt-offering. (3.) He left his servants at some distance off, left they should have created him some

disturbance in his strange oblation. Thus when Christ was entering upon his agony in the garden, he took only three of his disciples with him.

6. Isaac's carrying the wood was a type of Christ, who carried his own cross, while Abraham, with a steady and undaunted resolution, carried the fatal knife and fire.

7. Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb? - This is,

1. A trying question to Abraham; how could he endure to think that Isaac is himself the lamb?
2. 'Tis a teaching question to us all, that when we are going to worship God, we should seriously consider whether we have every thing ready, especially the lamb for a burnt-offering. Behold, the fire is ready; that is, the Spirit's assistance, and God's acceptance: the wood is ready, the instituted ordinances designed to kindle our affections, which indeed, without the Spirit, are but like wood without fire, but the Spirit works by them. All things are now ready, but where is the lamb? Where is the heart? Is that ready to be offered up to God, to ascend to him as a burnt- offering?

8. My son, God will provide himself a lamb - This was the language either,

1. Of his obedience; we must offer the lamb which God has appointed now to be offered; thus giving him this general rule of submission to the divine will to prepare him for the application of it to himself. Or,
2. Of his faith; whether he meant it so or no, this proved to be the meaning of it; a sacrifice was provided instead of Isaac. Thus,
    1. Christ the great sacrifice of atonement was of God's providing: when none in heaven or earth could have found a lamb for that burnt-offering, God himself found the ransom.
    2. All our sacrifices of acknowledgement are of God's providing too; 'tis he that prepares the heart. The broken and contrite spirit is a sacrifice of God, of his providing.

9. With the same resolution and composedness of mind, he applies himself to the compleating of this sacrifice. After many a weary step, and with a heavy heart, he arrives at length at the fatal place; builds the altar, an altar of earth, we may suppose, the saddest that ever be built; lays the wood in order for Isaac's funeral pile; and now tells him the amazing news. Isaac, for ought appears, is as willing as Abraham; we do not find that he made any objection against it. God commands it to be done, and Isaac has learned to submit. Yet it is necessary that a sacrifice be bound; the great Sacrifice, which, in the fulness of time, was to be offered up, must be bound, and therefore so must Isaac. Having bound him he lays him upon the altar, and his hand upon the head of the sacrifice. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and wonder, O earth! here is an act of faith and obedience which deserves to be a spectacle to God, angels and men; Abraham's darling, the church's hope, the heir of promise, lies ready to bleed and die by his own father's hands! Now this obedience of Abraham in offering up Isaac is a lively representation,

1. Of the love of God to us, in delivering up his only begotten Son to suffer and die for us, as a sacrifice. Abraham was obliged both in duty and gratitude to part with Isaac and parted with him to a friend, but God was under no obligations to us, for we were enemies.

2. Of our duty to God in return of that love we must tread in the steps of this faith of Abraham. God, by his word, calls us to part with all for Christ, all our sins, tho' they have been as a right hand, or a right eye, or an Isaac; all those things that are rivals with Christ for the sovereignity of our heart; and we must chearfully let them all go. God, by his providence, which is truly the voice of God, calls us to part with an Isaac sometimes, and we must do it by a chearful resignation and submission to his holy will.

11. The Angel of the Lord - That is, God himself, the eternal Word, the Angel of the covenant, who was to be the great Redeemer and Comforter.

12. Lay not thine hand upon the lad - God's time to help his people is, when they are brought to the greatest extremity: the more eminent the danger is, and the nearer to be put in execution, the more wonderful and the more welcome is the deliverance. Now know I that thou fearest God - God knew it before, but now Abraham had given a memorable evidence of it. He need do no more, what he had done was sufficient to prove the religious regard he had to God and his authority. The best evidence of our fearing God is our being willing to honour him with that which is dearest to us, and to part with all to him, or for him.

13. Behold a ram - Tho' that blessed Seed was now typified by Isaac, yet the offering of him up was suspended 'till the latter end of the world, and in the mean time the sacrifice of beasts was accepted, as a pledge of that expiation which should be made by that great sacrifice. And it is observable, that the temple, the place of sacrifice, was afterward built upon this mount Moriah, 2 Chron. iii, 1, and mount Calvary, where Christ was crucified, was not far off.

14. And Abraham called the place Jehovah-jireh - The Lord will provide. Probably alluding to what he had said, ver. 8. God will provide himself a lamb - This was purely the Lord's doing: let it be recorded for the generations to come; that the Lord will see; he will always have his eyes upon his people in their straits, that he may come in with seasonable succor in the critical juncture. And that he will be seen, be seen in the mount, in the greatest perplexities of his people; he will not only manifest but magnify his wisdom, power and goodness in their deliverance. Where God sees and provides, he should be seen and praised. And perhaps it may refer to God manifest in the flesh.

15. And the Angel - Christ. Called unto Abraham - Probably while the ram was yet burning. Very high expressions are here of God's favour to Abraham, above any he had yet been blessed with.

16. Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not with-held thy son, thine only son - He lays a mighty emphasis upon that, and ver. 18, praises it as an act of obedience, in it thou hast obeyed my voice. By myself have I sworn - For he could swear by no greater.

17. Multiplying I will multiply thee - Those that part with any thing for God, shall have it made up to them with unspeakable advantage. Abraham has but one son, and is willing to part with that one in obedience to God; well, saith God, thou shalt be recompensed with thousands and millions. Here is a promise,

1. Of the Spirit, In blessing I will bless thee - The Gift of the Holy Ghost; the promise of the Spirit was that blessing of Abraham which was to come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, Gal. iii, 14.
2. Of the increase of the church; that believers, his spiritual seed, should be many as the stars of heaven.

3. Of spiritual victories; Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies - Believers by their faith overcome the world, and triumph over all the powers of darkness. Probably Zacharias refers to this part of the oath, Luke i, 74. That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear. But the crown of all is the last promise,
4. Of the incarnation of Christ; In thy seed (one particular person that shall descend from thee, for he speaks not of many but of one, as the apostle observes, Gal. iii, 16.) shall all the nations of the earth be blessed - Christ is the great blessing of the world. Abraham was ready to give up his son for a sacrifice to the honour of God, and on that occasion God promised to give his son a sacrifice for the salvation of man.

20. This is recorded here, 1. To show that tho' Abraham saw his own family highly dignified with peculiar privileges, yet he did not look with contempt upon his relations, but was glad to hear of the increase and prosperity of their families. 2. To make way for the following story of the marriage of Isaac to Rebekah, a daughter of this family.

## XXIII

Here is,

I. Abraham a mourner, for the death of Sarah, ver. 1, 2.

II. Abraham a purchaser of a burying place for Sarah. (1.) The purchase proposed by Abraham, ver. 3, 4. (2.) Treated of and agreed, ver. 5-16. (3.) The purchase-money paid, ver. 16. (4.) The premises conveyed and secured to Abraham, ver. 17, 18, 20. (5.) Sarah's funeral, ver. 19.

2. Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep - He did not only perform the ceremonies of mourning according to the custom of those times, but did sincerely lament the great loss he had, and gave proof of the constancy of his affection. Therefore these two words are used, he came both to mourn and to weep.

4. I am a stranger and a sojourner with you - Therefore I am unprovided, and must become a suiter to you for a burying-place. This was one occasion which Abraham took to confess that he was a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth. The death of our relations should effectually mind us that we are not at home in this world. That I may bury my dead out of my sight - Death will make those unpleasant to our sight, who while they lived were the desire of our eyes. The countenance that was fresh and lively becomes pale and ghastly, and fit to be removed into the land of darkness.

6. Thou art a prince of God among us - So the word is; not only great, but good. He called himself a stranger and a sojourner, they call him a great prince.

7. Abraham returns them thanks for their kind offer, with all possible decency and respect. Religion teaches good manners, and those abuse it that place it in rudeness and clownishness.

11. The field give I thee - Abraham thought he must be intreated to sell it, but upon the first mention, without intreaty, he freely gives it.

13. I will give thee money for the field - It was not in pride that Abraham refused the gift; but
    1. In justice. Abraham was rich in silver and gold, and therefore would not take advantage of Ephron's generosity.
    2. In prudence. He would pay for it, lest Ephron, when this good humour was over, should upbraid him with it.

15. The land is worth four hundred shekels of silver - About fifty pounds of our money, but what is that between me and thee? - He would rather oblige his friend than have so much money.

20. A burying place - 'Tis worth noting,
    1. That a burying-place was the first spot of ground Abraham was possessed of in Canaan.
    2. That it was the only piece of land he was ever possessed of, tho' it was all his own in reversion. Those that have least of this earth find a grave in it.

## XXIV

The subjoining of Isaac's marriage to Sarah's funeral (with a particular reference to it, ver. 67.) shews us, that as one generation passeth away, another generation comes; and thus the entail of human nature is preserved. Here is,

I. Abraham's care about the marrying of his son, and the charge he gave to his servant about it, ver. 1-9.

II. The servant's journey into Abraham's country to seek a wife for his young master among his own relations, ver. 10-14.

III. The kind providence which brought him acquainted with Rebekah, whose father was Isaac's cousin german, ver. 15-28.

IV. The treaty of marriage with her relations, ver. 29-49.

V. Their consent obtained, ver. 50-60.

VI. The happy meeting and marriage between Isaac and Rebekah, ver. 61-67.

1. Abraham's pious care concerning his son was, that he should not marry with a daughter of Canaan, but with one of his kindred because he saw, the Canaanites were degenerating into great wickedness, and knew, that they were designed for ruin: would not marry his son among them, lest they should be either a snare to his soul, or, at least, a blot to his name. Yet he would not go himself among his kindred, lest he should be tempted to settle there: this caution is given, ver. 6, and repeated, ver. 8. Parents, in disposing of their children, should carefully consult their furtherance in the way to heaven.

2. His eldest servant - Probably Eliezer of Damascus, one whose conduct and affection he had had long experience of: he trusted him with this great affair, and not Isaac himself, because he would not have Isaac go at all into that country, but marry thither by proxy; and no proxy so fit as the steward of his house. This matter is settled between the master and the servant with a great deal of care and solemnity. The servant is bound by an oath to do his utmost to get a wife for Isaac among his relations, ver. 3, 4. Abraham swears him to it, both for his own satisfaction, and for the

engagement of his servant to all possible care and diligence. Thus God swears his servants to their work, that, having sworn, they may perform it. Swearing being an ordinance, not peculiar to the church, but common to mankind, is to be performed by such signs as are the common usages of our country.

7. God's angels are ministering spirits, sent forth, not only for the protection, but guidance of the heirs of promise, Heb. i, 14. He shall send his angel before thee - And then thou shalt speed well.

11. He made his camels kneel down - Perhaps to unload them.

12. Send me good speed this day - We have leave to be particular in recommending our affairs to the care of Divine providence. Those that would have good speed must pray for it this day, in this affair. Thus we must, in all our ways acknowledge God.

14. Let it come to pass - He prays God, that he would please to make his way plain and clear before him, by the concurrence of minute circumstances in his favour. It is the comfort, as well as the belief, of a good man, that God's providence extends itself to the smallest occurrences, and admirably serves its own purposes by them. And it is our wisdom, in all our affairs, to follow providence. Yea, it is very desirable, and that which we may lawfully pray for, while, in the general, we set God's will before us as our rule, that he will, by hints of providence, direct us in the way of our duty, and give us indications what his mind is. Thus he guides his people with his eye, and leads them in a plain path.

15. And before he had done speaking, behold Rebekah came out - Who in all respects, answered the characters he wished for in the woman that was to be his master's wife, handsome and healthful, humble and industrious, courteous and obliging to a stranger. And providence so ordered it, that she did that which exactly answered his sign. She not only gave him drink, but, which was more than could have been expected, she offered her service to give his camels drink, which was the very sign he proposed. God, in his providence, doth sometimes wonderfully own the prayer of faith, and gratify the innocent desires of his praying people even in little things, that he may shew the extent of his care, and may encourage them at all times, to seek him, and trust in him; yet we must take heed of being over bold in prescribing to God, lest the event should weaken our faith rather than strengthen it. And the concurrence of providences, and their minute circumstances, for the furtherance of our success in any business, ought to be particularly observed with wonder and thankfulness to the glory of God. We have been wanting to ourselves both in duty and comfort, by neglecting to observe providence.

27. Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham - Observe here,

1. He had prayed for good speed, and now he had sped well, he gives thanks.
2. As yet, he was not certain what the issue might prove, yet he gives thanks. When God's favours are coming towards us; we must meet them with our praises. The Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren - Those of them that were come out of Ur of the Chaldees, though they were not come to Canaan, but staid in Haran. They were not idolaters, but worshippers of the true God, and inclinable to the religion of Abraham's family.

29. We have here the making up of the marriage between Isaac and Rebekah, related largely and particularly. Thus we are directed to take notice of God's providence in the little common occurrences of human life, and in them also to exercise our own prudence, and other graces: for

the scripture was not intended only for the use of philosophers and statesmen, but to make us all wise and virtuous in the conduct of ourselves and families.

31. Come in thou blessed of the Lord - Perhaps, because they heard from Rebekah, of the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, they concluded him a good man, and therefore blessed of the Lord.

34. I am Abraham' servant - Abraham's name, no doubt, was well known among them, and respected; and we may suppose them not altogether ignorant of his state, for Abraham knew theirs, chap. xxii, 20.

45. Before I had done speaking in my heart - Which perhaps he mentions, lest it should be suspected that Rebekah had overheard his prayer, and designedly humoured it; no, saith he, I spake it in my heart, so that none heard it but God, to whom thoughts are words, and from him the answer came.

50. The thing proceedeth from the Lord - Providence smiles upon it, and we have nothing to say against it. A marriage is then likely to be comfortable when it appears to proceed from the Lord.

52. He worshipped the Lord - As his good success went on, he went on to bless God: those that pray without ceasing should in every thing give thanks, and own God in every step of mercy.

55. Let her abide a few days, at least ten - They had consented to the marriage, and yet were loth to part with her. It is an instance of the vanity of this world, that there is nothing in it so agreeable but has its allay. They were pleased that they had matched a daughter of their family so well, and yet it was with reluctancy that they sent her away.

57. Call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth - As children ought not to marry without their parents consent, so parents ought not to marry them without their own. Before the matter is resolved on, ask at the damsel's mouth, she is a party principally concerned; and therefore ought to be principally consulted.

61. And her damsels - It seems then, when she went to the well for water, it was not because she had no servants at command, but because she took pleasure in the instances of humanity and industry.

63. He went out to meditate (or pray) in the field at the even tide - Some think he expected his servants about this time, and went out on purpose to meet them. But it should seem he went out to take the advantage of a silent evening, and a solitary field, for mediation and prayer. Our walks in the field are then truly pleasant, when in them we apply ourselves to meditation and prayer, we there have a free and open prospect of the heavens above us, and the earth around us, and the hosts and riches of both, by the view of which we should be led to the contemplation of the Maker and Owner of all. Merciful providences are then doubly comfortable, when they find us in the way of our duty: some think Isaac was now praying for good success in this affair, and meditating upon that which was proper to encourage his hope in God concerning it; and now when he sets himself, as it were, upon his watch-tower, to see what God would answer him, he sees the camels coming.

64. She lighted off her camel, and took a vail and covered herself - In token of humility, modesty and subjection.

## XXV

The sacred historian in this chapter,

I. Takes his leave of Abraham with an account, (1.) Of his children by another wife, ver. 1-4. (2.) Of his last will and testament, ver. 5, 6. (3.) Of his age, death and burial, ver. 7, 8, 9, 10.

II. He takes his leave of Ishmael, with a short account, (1.) Of his children, ver. 12-16. (2.) Of his age and death, ver. 17, 18.

III. He enters upon the history of Isaac; (1.) His posterity, ver. 11. (2.) The conception and birth of his two sons, with the oracle of God concerning them, ver. 19-26. (3.) Their different characters, ver. 27, 28. (4.) Esau's selling his birth-right to Jacob, ver. 29-34.

1. Five and thirty years Abraham lived after the marriage of Isaac, and all that is recorded concerning him during that time lies here in a very few verses: we hear no more of God's extraordinary appearances to him, or trials of him; for all the days even of the greatest saints are not eminent days, some slide on silently, and neither come nor go with observation: such were these last days of Abraham. We have here an account of his children by Keturah, another wife, which he married after the death of Sarah. He had buried Sarah, and married Isaac, the two dear companions of his life, and was now solitary; his family wanted a governess and it was not good for him to be thus alone; he therefore marries Keturah, probably the chief of his maid servants, born in his house, or bought with money. By her he had six sons, in whom the promise made to Abraham concerning the great increase of his posterity was in part fulfilled. The strength he received by the promise still remained in him, to shew how much the virtue of the promise exceeds the power of nature.

5. And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac - As he was bound to do in justice to Sarah his first wife, and to Rebekah who married Isaac upon the assurance of it.

6. He gave gifts - Or portions to the rest of his children, both to Ishmael, though at first he was sent empty away, and to his sons by Keturah. It was justice to provide for them; parents that do not that, are worse than infidels. It was prudence to settle them in places distant from Isaac, that they might not pretend to divide the inheritance with him. He did this while he yet lived, lest it should not have been done, or not so well done afterwards. In many cases it is wisdom for men to make their own hands their executors, and what they find to do, to do it while they live. These sons of the concubines were sent into the country that lay east from Canaan, and their posterity were called the children of the east, famous for their numbers. Their great increase was the fruit of the promise made to Abraham, that God would multiply his seed.

7. And these are the days of Abraham - He lived one hundred and seventy-five years; just a hundred years after he came to Canaan; so long he was a sojourner in a strange country.

8. He died in a good old age, an old man - So God had promised him. His death was his discharge from the burdens of his age: it was also the crown of the glory of his old age. He was full of years - A good man, though he should not die old, dies full of days, satisfied with living here, and longing to live in a better place. And was gathered to his people - His body was gathered to the congregation of the dead, and his soul to the congregation of the blessed. Death gathers us to our people. Those that are our people while we live, whether the people of God, or the children of this world, to them death will gather us.

9. Here is nothing recorded of the pomp or ceremony of his funeral; only we are told, his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him - It was the last office of respect they had to pay to their good father. Some distance there had formerly been between Isaac and Ishmael, but it seems either Abraham had himself brought them together while he lived, or at least his death reconciled them. They buried him, in his own burying-place which he had purchased and in which he had buried Sarah. Those that in life have been very dear to each other, may not only innocently, but laudably, desire to be buried together, that, in their deaths, they may not be divided, and in token of their hopes of rising together.

11. And God blessed Isaac - The blessing of Abraham did not die with him, but survived to all the children of the promise. But Moses presently digresseth from the story of Isaac, to give a short account of Ishmael, for as much as he also was a son of Abraham; and God had made some promises concerning him, which it was requisite we should know the accomplishment of. He had twelve sons, twelve princes they are called, ver. 16, heads of families, which, in process of time, became nations, numerous and very considerable. They peopled a very large continent that lay between Egypt and Assyria, called Arabia. The names of his twelve sons are recorded: Midian and Kedar we oft read of in scripture. And his posterity had not only tents in the fields wherein they grew rich in times of peace, but they had towns and castles, ver. 16, where in they fortified themselves in time of war. Their number and strength was the fruit of the promise made to Hagar concerning Ishmael, chap. xvi, 10. and to Abraham, chap. xvii, 20; xxi, 13.

17. He lived an hundred and thirty and seven years - Which is recorded to shew the efficacy of Abraham's prayer for him, chap. xvii, 18. O that Ishmael might live before thee! Then he also was gathered to his people. And he died in the presence of all his brethren - With his friends about him. Who would not wish so to do?

20. And Isaac was forty years old - Not much is related concerning Isaac, but what had reference to his father, while he lived, and to his sons afterward; for Isaac seems not to have been a man of action, nor much tried, but to have spent his day, in quietness and silence.

21. And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife - Though God had promised to multiply his family, he prayed for it; for God's promises must not supersede but encourage our prayers, and be improved as the ground of our faith. Though he had prayed for this mercy many years, and it was not granted, yet he did not leave off praying for it.

22. The children struggled within her - The commotion was altogether extra-ordinary, and made her very uneasy: If it be so, or, since it is so, why am I thus? - Before the want of children was her trouble, now the struggle of the children is no less so. And she went to inquire of the Lord - Some think Melchizedek was now consulted as an oracle, or perhaps some Urim or Teraphim were now used to inquire of God by, as afterwards in the breast-plate of judgment. The word and prayer, by which we now inquire of the Lord, give great relief to those that are upon any account perplexed: it is a mighty ease to spread our case before the Lord, and ask council at his mouth.

23. Two nations are in thy womb - She was now big not only with two children, but two nations, which should not only in their manners greatly differ from each other, but in their interest contend with each other, and the issue of the contest should be that the elder should serve the younger, which was fulfilled in the subjection of the Edomites for many ages to the house of David.

25. Esau when he was born was red and hairy, as if he had been already a grown man, whence he had his name Esau, made, reared already. This was an indication of a very strong constitution,

and gave cause to expect that he would be a very robust, daring, active man. But Jacob was smooth and tender as other children.

26. His hand took hold on Esau's heel - This signified,

1. Jacob's pursuit of the birth-right and blessing; from the first he reached forth to have catched hold of it, and if possible to have prevented his brother.
2. His prevailing for it at last: that in process of time he should gain his point. This passage is referred to Hosea xii, 3, and from hence he had his name Jacob, a supplanter.

27. Esau was an hunter - And a man that knew how to live by his wits, for he was a cunning hunter. A man of the field - All for the game, and never so well but as when he was in pursuit of it. And Jacob was a plain man - An honest man, that dealt fairly. And dwelt in tents - Either,

1. As a shepherd, loving that safe and silent employment of keeping sheep, to which also he bred up his children, chap. xlvi, 34. Or,
2. As a student, he frequented the tents of Melchizedek or Heber, as some understand it, to be taught by them divine things.

28. And Isaac loved Esau - Isaac though he was not a stirring man himself, yet he loved to have his son active. Esau knew how to please him, and shewed a great respect for him, by treating him often with venison, which won upon him more than one would have thought. But Rebekah loved him whom God loved.

29. Sod - That is, boiled.

30. Edom - That is, red.

31. Sell me this day thy birth-right - He cannot be excused in taking advantage of Esau's necessity, yet neither can Esau be excused who is profane, Heb. xii, 16, because for one morsel of meat he sold his birth-right. The birth-right was typical of spiritual privileges, those of the church of the first-born: Esau was now tried how he would value those, and he shews himself sensible only of present grievances: may he but get relief against them, he cares not for his birth-right. If we look on Esau's birth-right as only a temporal advantage, what he said had something of truth in it, that our worldly enjoyments, even those we are most fond of, will stand us in no stead in a dying hour. They will not put by the stroke of death, nor ease the pangs, nor remove the sting. But being of a spiritual nature, his undervaluing it, was the greatest profaneness imaginable. It is egregious folly to part with our interest in God, and Christ, and heaven, for the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world.

34. He did eat and drink, and rise up and went his way - Without any serious reflections upon the ill bargain he had made, or any shew of regret. Thus Esau despised his birth-right - He used no means to get the bargain revoked, made no appeal to his father about it but the bargain which his necessity had made, (supposing it were so) his profaneness confirmed, and by his subsequent neglect and contempt, he put the bargain past recall.

## XXVI

In this chapter we have,

I. Isaac in adversity, by reason of a famine in the land; which, (1.) Obliges him to change his quarters, ver 1. but, (2.) God visits him with direction and comfort, ver. 2-5. (3.) He denies his wife, and is reproved for it by Abimelech, ver. 6-11.

II. Isaac in prosperity, by the blessing of God upon him, ver. 12- 14. (1.) The Philistines were envious at him, ver. 14-17. (2.) He continued industrious in his business, ver. 18-23. (3.) God appeared to him, and encouraged him, and he returned to his duty, ver. 24-25. (4.) The Philistines at length made court to him, and made a covenant with him, ver. 26-33

III. The disagreeable marriage of his son Esau was an allay to his prosperity, ver. 34. 35.

2. The Lord said, go not down into Egypt. Sojourn in this land - There was a famine in Jacob's days, and God bid him go down into Egypt, chap. xlvi, 3, 4, a famine in Isaac's days, and God bid him not go down: a famine in Abraham's days, and God left him to his liberty, directing him neither way, which (considering that Egypt was always a place of trial to God's people) some ground upon the different characters of these three patriarchs. Abraham was a man of very intimate communion with God, and to him all places and conditions were alike; Isaac a very good man, but not cut out for hardship, therefore he is forbidden to go to Egypt; Jacob inured to difficulties, strong and patient, and therefore he must go down into Egypt, that the trial of his faith might be to praise, and honour, and glory. Thus God proportions his people's trials to their strength.

5. Abraham obeyed my voice - Do thou do so too, and the promise shall be sure to thee. A great variety of words is here used to express the Divine Will to which Abraham was obedient, my voice, my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws - Which may intimate, that Abraham's obedience was universal; he obeyed the original laws of nature, the revealed laws of divine worship, particularly that of circumcision, and all the extraordinary precepts God gave him, as that of quitting his country, and that (which some think is more especially referred to) the offering up of his son, which Isaac himself had reason enough to remember. Those only shall have the benefit of God's covenant with their parents, that tread the steps of their obedience.

7. He said, she is my sister - So Isaac enters into the same temptation that his father had been once and again surprised and overcome by, viz. to deny his wife, and to give out that she was his sister! It is an unaccountable thing, that both these great and good men should be guilty of so odd a piece of dissimulation, by which they so much exposed both their own and their wives reputation.

8. This Abimelech was not the same that was in Abraham's days, chap. xx, 2-18, for this was near an hundred years after, but that was the common name of the Philistine kings, as Caesar of the Roman emperors.

10. Lightly - Perhaps.

12. Isaac received an hundred fold - And there seems to be an emphasis laid upon the time; it was that same year when there was a famine in the land; while others scarce reaped at all, he reaped thus plentifully.

20. Esek - That is, contention.

21. Sitnah - That is, hatred.

22. He digged a well, and for that they strove not - Those that follow peace, sooner or later, shall find peace: those that study to be quiet seldom fail of being so. This well they called Rehoboth - Enlargements, room enough.

24. Fear not, I am with thee, and will bless thee - Those may remove with comfort that are sure of God's presence with them wherever they go.

28. The Lord is with thee, and thou art the blessed of the Lord, q.d. Be persuaded to overlook the injuries offered thee, for God has abundantly made up to thee the damage thou receivedst. Those whom God blesseth and favours, have reason enough to forgive those that hate them, since the worst enemy they have cannot do them any real hurt. Let there be an oath betwixt us - Whatever some of his envious subjects might mean, he and his prime ministers, whom he had now brought with him, designed no other but a cordial friendship. Perhaps Abimelech had received by tradition the warning God gave to his predecessor not to hurt Abraham, chap. xx, 7, and that made him stand in such awe of Isaac, who appeared to be as much the favourite of heaven as Abraham was.

34. He took to wife - Marrying Canaanites, who were strangers to the blessing of Abraham, and subject to the curse of Noah.

## XXVII

We have here,

I. Isaac's purpose to entail the blessing upon Esau, ver. 1-4.

II. Rebekah's plot to procure it for Jacob, ver. 6-17.

III. Jacob's obtaining of the blessing, ver. 18-29.

IV. Esau's resentment of this. In which, (1.) His importunity with his father to obtain a blessing, ver. 30- 40. (2.) His enmity to his brother for defrauding him, ver. 41-46.

1. Here is Isaac's design to declare Esau his heir. The promise of the Messiah and the land of Canaan was a great trust first committed to Abraham, inclusive and typical of spiritual and eternal blessings; this by divine direction he transmitted to Isaac. Isaac being now old, and either not knowing, or not duly considering the divine oracle concerning his two sons, that the elder should serve the younger, resolves to entail all the honour and power that was wrapt up in the promise upon Esau, his eldest son. He called Esau - Tho' Esau, had greatly grieved his parents by his marriage, yet they had not expelled him, but it seems were pretty well reconciled to him.

2. I am old, and know not the day of my death - How soon I may die.

3. Take me some venison that I may; bless thee - Esau must go a hunting and bring some venison. In this he designed not so much the refreshment of his own spirits, as the receiving a fresh instance of his son's, filial duty and affection to him, before he bestowed this favour upon him. That my soul may bless thee before I die - Prayer is the work of the soul, and not of the lips only; as the soul must be employed in blessing God, Psalm ciii, 1, so it must be in blessing ourselves and others: the blessing will not go to the heart, if it do not come from the heart.

6. Rebekah is here contriving to procure the blessing for Jacob, which was designed for Esau. If the end was good, the means were bad, and no way justifiable. If it were not a wrong to Esau to

deprive him of the blessing, he himself having forfeited it by selling the birth right, yet it was a wrong to Isaac, taking advantage of his infirmity, to impose upon him: it was a wrong to Jacob, whom she taught to deceive, by putting a lie in his mouth. If Rebekah, when she heard Isaac promise the blessing to Esau, had gone to him, and with humility and seriousness put him in remembrance of that which God had said concerning their sons; if she had farther shewed him how Esau had forfeited the blessing, both by selling his birth-right, and by marrying of strange wives; 'tis probable Isaac would have been prevailed with to confer the blessing upon Jacob, and needed not thus to have been cheated into it. This had been honourable and laudable, and would have looked well in history; but God left her to herself to take this indirect course, that he might have the glory of bringing good out of evil.

19. And Jacob said, I am Esau - Who would have thought this plain man could have played such a part? His mother having put him in the way of it, he applies himself to those methods which he had never accustomed himself to, but had always conceived an abhorrence of. But lying is soon learned. I wonder how honest Jacob could so readily turn his tongue to say, I am Esau thy first-born: and when his father asked him, ver. 24. Art thou my very son Esau? to reply I am. How could he say, I have done as thou badst me, when he had received no command from his father, but was doing as his mother bid him? How could he say, Eat of my venison, when he knew it came not from the field, but from the fold? But especially I wonder how he could have the forehead to father it upon God, and to use his name in the cheat.

20. The Lord thy God brought it to me - Is this Jacob? It is certainly written not for our imitation, but our admonition, Let him that, standeth, take heed lest he fall. Now let us see how Isaac gave Jacob his blessing. 27-1. He kissed him; in token of particular affection to him. Those that are blessed of God are kissed with the kisses of his mouth, and they do by love and loyalty kiss the son, Psalm ii, 12. 2. He praised him. Upon occasion of the sweet smell of his garments he said, See the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed - That is, like that of the most fragrant flowers and spices. Three things Jacob is here blessed with, (1.) Plenty, ver. 28. Heaven and earth concurring to make him rich. (2.) Power, ver. 29. Particularly dominion over his brethren, viz. Esau and his posterity. (3.) Prevalency with God, and a great interest in heaven, Cursed be every one that curseth thee - Let God be a friend to all thy friends, and an enemy to all thine enemies. Now, certainly more is comprised in this blessing than appears at first; it must amount to an entail of the promise of the Messiah: that was in the patriarchal dialect the blessing; something spiritual doubtless is included in it. First, That from him should come the Messiah, that should have a sovereign dominion on earth. See Num. xxiv, 19. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, the star and scepter, Num. xxiv, 17. Jacob's dominion over Esau was to be only typical of this, chap. xlix, 10. Secondly, That from him should come the church that should be particularly owned and favoured by Heaven. It was part of the blessing of Abraham when he was first called to be the father of the faithful, chap. xii, 3. I will bless them that bless thee; therefore when Isaac afterwards confirmed the blessing to Jacob, he called it the blessing of Abraham, chap. xxviii, 4.

33. Isaac trembled exceedingly - Those that follow the choice of their own affections rather than the dictates of the Divine will, involve themselves in such perplexities as these. But he soon recovers himself, and ratifies the blessing he had given to Jacob, I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed - He might have recalled it, but now at last he is sensible he was in an error when he designed it for Esau. Either recollecting the Divine oracle, or having found himself more than

ordinarily filled with the Holy Ghost when he gave the blessing to Jacob, he perceived that God did as it were say Amen to it.

39. Esau likewise obtained a blessing: yet it was far short of Jacob's.

1. In Jacob's blessing the dew of heaven is put first, as that which he most valued and desired: in Esau's the fatness of the earth is put first, for that was it which he had the principal regard to.
2. Esau hath these, but Jacob hath them from God's hand. God give thee the dew of heaven, ver. 28. It was enough to have the possession, but Jacob desired it by promise.
3. Jacob shall have dominion over his brethren, for the Israelites often ruled over the Edomites. Esau shall have dominion, he shall gain some power, but shall never have dominion over his brother: we never find that the Jews were sold into the hands of the Edomites, or that they oppressed them. But the great difference is, that there is nothing in Esau's blessing that points at Christ, nothing that brings either him or his into the church, and without that the fatness of the earth, and the plunder of the field, will stand him in little stead. Thus Isaac by faith blessed them both, according as their lot should be.

45. Why should I be deprived of you both? - Not only of the murdered, but of the murderer, who either by the magistrate, or by the immediate hand of God would be sacrificed to justice.

46. If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth - As Esau has done. More artifice still. This was not the thing she was afraid of. But if we use guile once, we shall be very ready to use it again. It should be carefully observed, That altho' a blessing came on his posterity by Jacob's vile lying and dissimulation, yet it brought heavy affliction upon himself, and that for a long term of years. So severely did God punish him personally, for doing evil that good might come.

## XXVIII

We have here,

I. Jacob's parting with his parents to go to Padan-aram: the charge his father gave him, ver. 1, 2. the blessing he sent him away with, ver. 3, 4. his obedience to the orders given him, ver. 5-10. and the influence this had upon Esau, ver. 6.

II. Jacob's meeting with God, and his communion with him by the way. And there, (1.) His vision of the ladder, ver. 11, 12. (2.) The gracious promise God made him, ver. 13, 14, 15. (3.) The impression this made upon him, ver. 16-19. (4.) The vow he made to God upon this occasion, ver. 20, 21, 22.

1. Isaac blessed him, and charged him - Those that have the blessing must keep the charge annexed to it, and not think to separate what God has joined.

3, 4. Two great promises Abraham was blessed with, and Isaac here entails them both upon Jacob. (1.) The promise of heirs, God make thee fruitful and multiply thee.

1. Through his loins that people should descend from Abraham which should be numerous as the stars of heaven.
2. Through his loins should descend from Abraham that person in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed. (2.) The promise of an inheritance for those heirs, ver. 4. That thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings - (So the Hebrew) Canaan was hereby entailed upon the seed of Jacob, exclusive of the seed of Esau. Isaac was now sending Jacob away into a distant country to settle there for some time; and lest this should look like disinheriting him, he here confirms the settlement of it upon him. This promise looks as high as heaven, of which Canaan was a type. That was the better country which Jacob, with the other patriarchs, had in his eye when he confessed himself a stranger and pilgrim on the earth, Heb. xi, 16. See note at "ver. 3"

5. Rebekah is here called Jacob's and Esau's mother - Jacob is named first, not only because he had always been his mother's darling, but because he was now made his father's heir, and Esau was postponed.

6. This passage comes in, in the midst of Jacob's story, to shew the influence of a good example. Esau now begins to think Jacob the better man, and disdains not to take him for his pattern in this particular instance of marrying with a daughter of Abraham.

11. The stones for his pillow, and the heavens for his canopy! Yet his comfort in the divine blessing, and his confidence in the divine protection, made him easy, even when he lay thus exposed: being sure that his God made him to dwell in safety, he could lie down and sleep upon a stone.

12. Behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached heaven, the angels ascending and descending on it, and the Lord stood above it - This might represent

1. The providence of God, by which there is a constant correspondence kept up between heaven and earth. The counsels of heaven are executed on earth, and the affairs of this earth are all known in heaven. Providence doth his work gradually and by steps; angels are employed as ministering spirits to serve all the designs of providence, and the wisdom of God is at the upper end of the ladder, directing all the motions of second causes to his glory. The angels are active spirits, continually ascending and descending; they rest not day nor night. They ascend to give account of what they have done, and to receive orders; and desend to execute the orders they have received. This vision gave seasonable comfort to Jacob, letting him know that he had both a good guide and good guard; that though he was to wander from his father's house, yet he was the care of Providence, and the charge of the holy angels.
2. The mediation of Christ. He is this ladder: the foot on earth in his human nature, the top in heaven in his divine nature; or the former is his humiliation, the latter is his exaltation. All the intercourse between heaven and earth since the fall is by this ladder. Christ is the way: all God's favours come to us, and all our services come to him, by Christ. If God dwell with us, and we with him, it is by Christ: we have no way of getting to heaven but by this ladder; for the kind offices the angels do us, are all owing to Christ, who hath reconciled things on earth and things in heaven, Colossians i, 20.

14. In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed - Christ is the great blessing of the world: all that are blessed, whatever family they are of, are blessed in him, and none of any family are excluded from blessedness in him, but those that exclude themselves.

15. Behold I am with thee - Wherever we are, we are safe, if we have God's favourable presence with us. He knew not, but God foresaw what hardships he would meet with in his uncle's service, and therefore promiseth to preserve him in all places. God knows how to give his people graces and comforts accommodated to the events that shall be, as well as to those that are. He was now going as an exile into a place far distant, but God promiseth him to bring him again to this land. He seemed to be forsaken of all his friends, but God gives him this assurance, I will not leave thee.

16. Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not - God's manifestations of himself to his people carry their own evidence along with them. God can give undeniable demonstrations of his presence, such as give abundant satisfaction to the souls of the faithful, that God is with them of a truth; satisfaction not communicable to others, but convincing to themselves. We sometimes meet with God there, where we little thought of meeting with him. He is there where we did not think he had been, is found there where we asked not for him.

17. He was afraid - So far was he from being puffed up. The more we see of God, the more cause we see for holy trembling and blushing before him. Those whom God is pleased to manifest himself to, are laid and kept very low in their own eyes, and see cause to fear even the Lord and his goodness, Hosea iii, 5. And said, How dreadful is this place! - That is, the appearance of God in this place is to be thought of, but with a holy awe and reverence; I shall have a respect for this place, and remember it by this token as long as I live. Not that he thought the place itself any nearer the divine visions than any other places; but what he saw there at this time was, as it were, the house of God, the residence of the Divine Majesty, and the gate of heaven, that is, the general rendezvous of the inhabitants of the upper world; as the meetings of a city were in their gates; or, the angels ascending and descending were like travelers passing and repassing through the gates of a city.

18. He set up the stone for a pillar - To mark the place again, if he came back, and erect a lasting monument of God's favour to him: and because he had not time now to build an altar here, as Abraham did in the places where God appeared to him, chap. xii, 7, he therefore poured oil on the top of this stone, which probably was the ceremony then used in dedicating their altars, as an earnest of his building an altar when he should have conveniencies for it, as afterwards he did, in gratitude to God, chap. xxxv, 7. Grants of mercy call for our returns of duty and the sweet communion we have with God ought ever to be remembered.

19. It had been called Luz, an almond-tree, but he will have it henceforth called Beth-el, the house of God. This gracious appearance of God to him made it more remarkable than all the almond-trees that flourished there.

20. And Jacob vowed a vow - By religious vows we give glory to God, and own our dependance upon him, and we lay a bond upon our own souls, to engage and quicken our obedience to him. Jacob was now in fear and distress, and in times of trouble it is seasonable to make vows, or when we are in pursuit of any special mercy, John i, 16 Psalm lxvi, 13, 14; 1 Sam. i, 11 Num. xxi, 1, 2, 3. Jacob had now had a gracious visit from heaven, God had renewed his covenant with him, and the covenant is mutual; when God ratifies his promises to us, it is proper for us to repeat our promises to him. If thou wilt be with me and keep me - We need desire no more to make us easy and happy wherever we are, but to have God's presence with us, and to be under his protection. It is comfortable in a journey to have a guide in an unknown way, a guard in a dangerous way, to be well carried,

well provided for, and to have good company in any way; and they that have God with them, have all this in the best manner. Then shall the Lord be my God - Then I will rejoice in him as my God, then I will be the more strongly engaged to abide with him. And this pillar shall be God's house - That is, an altar shall be erected here to the honour of God. And of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee - To be spent either upon God's altar or upon his poor, which are both his receivers in the world. The tenth is a very fit proportion to be devoted to God, and employed for him; though as circumstances vary, it may be more or less, as God prospers us.

## XXIX

This chapter gives us an account of God's providences concerning Jacob, pursuant to the promise made him in the foregoing chapter.

I. How he was brought in safety to his journey's end, and directed to his relations there, who bid him welcome, ver. 1-14.

II. How he was comfortably disposed of in marriage, ver. 15-30.

III. How his family was built up in the birth of four sons, ver. 31- 35.

2. Providence brought him to the very field where his uncle's flock's were to be watered, and there he met with Rachel that was to be his wife. The Divine Providence is to be acknowledged in all the little circumstances which concur to make a journey or other undertaking comfortable and successful. If, when we are at a loss, we meet with those seasonably that can direct us; if we meet with a disaster, and those are at hand that will help us; we must not say it was by chance, but it was by providence: our ways are ways of pleasantness, if we continually acknowledge God in them. The stone on the well's mouth was either to secure their property in it, for water was scarce, to save the well from receiving damage from the heat of the sun, or to prevent the lambs of the flock from being drowned in it.

9. She kept her father's sheep - She took the care of them, having servants under her that were employed about them when he understood that this was his kinswoman (probably he had heard of her name before) knowing what his errand was into that country, we may suppose it struck into his mind immediately, that this must be his wife, as one already smitten with an honest comely face (though it is likely, sun-burnt, and she in the homely dress of a shepherdess) he is wonderfully officious, and ready to serve her, ver. 10, and addresses himself to her with tears of joy, and kisses of love, ver. 11, she runs with all haste to tell her father, for she will by no means entertain her kinsman's address without her father's knowledge and approbation, ver. 12. These mutual respects at their first interview were good presages of their being a happy couple. Providence made that which seemed contingent and fortuitous to give a speedy satisfaction to Jacob's mind as soon as ever he came to the place he was bound for. Abraham's servant, when he came upon a like errand, met with the like encouragement. Thus God guides his people with his eye, Psalm xxxii, 8. It is a groundless conceit which some of the Jewish writers have, that Jacob when he kissed Rachel wept, because he had been set upon his journey by Eliphaz the eldest son of Esau, at the command of his father, and robbed him of all his money and jewels, which his mother had given him when she sent

him away: it is plain it was his passion for Rachel, and the surprise of this happy meeting that drew these tears from his eyes. Laban, though none of the best humoured men, bid him welcome, was satisfied in the account he gave of himself, and of the reason of his coming in such poor circumstances. While we avoid the extreme on the one hand of being foolishly credulous, we must take heed of falling into the other extreme of being uncharitably jealous and suspicious. Laban owned him for his kinsman, ver. 14. Thou art my bone and my flesh. Note, Those are hard-hearted indeed that are unkind to their relations, and that hide themselves from their own flesh, Isaiah lviii, 7.

15. Because thou art my brother - That is, kinsman. Should thou therefore serve me for nought? - No, what reason for that? If Jacob be so respectful as to give him his service without demanding any consideration for it, yet Laban will not be so unjust as to take advantage either of his necessity, or of his good nature. It appears by computation that Jacob was now seventy years old when he bound himself apprentice for a wife; probably Rachel was young and scarce marriageable when Jacob came first, which made him the more willing to stay for her till his seven years were expired.

20. They seemed to him but a few days for the love he had to her - An age of work will be but as a few days to those that love God, and long for Christ's appearing.

25. Behold it was Leah - Jacob had cheated his own father when he pretended to be Esau, and now his father-in-law cheated him. Herein, how unrighteous soever Laban was, the Lord was righteous.

26. It must be so done in our country - We have reason to think there was no such custom in his country; but if there was, and that he resolved to observe it, he should have told Jacob so, when he undertook to serve him for his younger daughter.

27. We will give thee this also - Hereby he drew Jacob into the sin and snare, and disquiet of multiplying wives. Jacob did not design it, but to have kept as true to Rachel as his father had done to Rebekah; he that had lived without a wife to the eighty fourth year of his age could then have been very well content with one: but Laban to dispose of his two daughters without portions, and to get seven years service more out of Jacob, thus imposeth upon him, and draws him into such a strait, that he had some colourable reason for marrying them both.

31. When the Lord saw that Leah was hated - That is, loved less than Rachel, in which sense it is required that we hate father and mother, in comparison with Christ, Luke xiv, 26, then the Lord granted her a child, which was a rebuke to Jacob for making so great a difference between those he was equally related to; a check to Rachel, who, perhaps insulted over her sister upon that account; and a comfort to Leah, that she might not be overwhelmed with the contempt put upon her.

32. She appears very ambitious of her husband's love; she reckoned the want of it her affliction, not upbraiding him with it as his fault, nor reproaching him for it; but laying it to heart as her grief, which she had reason to bear, because she was consenting to the fraud by which she became his wife. She called her first-born Reuben, see a son, with this pleasant thought, Now will my husband love me. And her third son Levi, joined, with this expectation, Now will my husband be joined unto me. The Lord hath heard, that is, taken notice of it, that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son. Her fourth she called Judah, praise, saying, Now will I praise the Lord. And this was he, of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came. Whatever is the matter of our rejoicing, ought to be the matter of our thanksgiving. And all our praises must center in Christ, both as the matter of them, and as the Mediator of them. He descended from him whose name was praise, for he is our praise. Is Christ formed in my heart? Now will I praise the Lord.

## XXX

In this chapter we have an account of the increase,

I. Of Jacob's family; eight children more we find registered in this chapter; Daniel and Naphtali by Bilhah, Rachel's maid, ver. 1-8. Gad and Asher by Zilpah, Leah's maid, ver. 9-13. Issachar, Zebulon, and Dinah, by Leah, ver. 14-21. And last of all Joseph by Rachel, ver. 22-24.

II. Of Jacob's estate. He comes upon a new bargain with Laban, ver. 25-34. And in the six years further service he did to Laban, God wonderfully blessed him, so that his flock of all cattle became very considerable, ver. 35-43, And herein was fulfilled the blessing which Isaac dismissed him with, chap. xxviii. 3. God make thee fruitful and multiply thee.

1. Rachel envied her sister - Envy is grieving at the good of another, than which no sin is more injurious both to God, our neighbour, and ourselves. But this was not all, she said to Jacob, give me children or else I die - A child would not content her; but because Leah has more than one, she must have more too; Give me children: her heart is set upon it. Give them me, else I die, That is, I shall fret myself to death. The want of this satisfaction will shorten my days. Observe a difference between Rachel's asking for this mercy, and Hannah's, 1 Sam. i, 10, &c. Rachel envied, Hannah wept: Rachel must have children, and she died of the second; Hannah prayed for this child, and she had four more: Rachel is importunate and peremptory, Hannah is submissive and devout, If thou wilt give me a child, I will give him to the Lord. Let Hannah be imitated, and not Rachel; and let our desires be always under the conduct and check of reason and religion.

2. And Jacob's anger was kindled - He was angry, not at the person, but at the sin: he expressed himself so as to shew his displeasure. It was a grave and pious reply which Jacob gave to Rachel, Am I in God's stead? - Can I give thee that which God denies thee? He acknowledges the hand of God in the affliction: He hath withheld the fruit of the womb. Whatever we want, it is God that with-holds it, as sovereign Lord, most wise, holy, and just, that may do what he will with his own, and is debtor to no man: that never did, nor ever can do, any wrong to any of his creatures. The key of the clouds, of the heart, of the grave, and of the womb, are four keys which God has in his hand, and which (the Rabbins say) he intrusts neither with angel nor seraphin. He also acknowledges his own inability to alter what God appointed, Am I in God's stead? What, dost thou make a God of me? There is no creature that is, or can be, to us in God's stead. God may be to us, instead of any creature, as the sun instead of the moon and stars; but the moon and all the stars will not be to us instead of the sun. No creature's wisdom, power, and love will be to us instead of God's. It is therefore our sin and folly to place that confidence in any creature, which is to be placed in God only.

3. Behold my maid, Bilhah - At the persuasion of Rachel he took Bilhah her handmaid to wife, that, according to the usage of those times, his children by her might be adopted and owned as her mistresses children. She would rather have children by reputation than none at all; children that she might call her own, though they were not so. And as an early instance of her dominion over

the children born in her apartment, she takes a pleasure in giving them names, that carry in them nothing but marks of emulation with her sister. As if she had overcome her,

1. At law, she calls the flrst son of her handmaid, Daniel, Judgment, saying, God hath Judged me - That is, given sentence in my favour.
2. In battle, she calls the next Naphtali, Wrestlings, saying, I have wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed - See what roots of bitterness envy and strife are, and what mischief they make among relations!

9. Rachel had done that absurd and preposterous thing of putting her maid into her husband's bed, and now Leah (because she missed one year in bearing children) doth the same, to be even with her. See the power of rivalship, and admire the wisdom of the divine appointment, which joins together one man and one woman only. Two sons Zilpah bare to Jacob, whom Leah looked upon herself as intitled to, in token of which she called one Gad, promising herself a little troop of children. The other she called Asher, Happy, thinking herself happy in him, and promising herself that her neighbours would think so too.

14. Reuben, a little lad of five or six years old, playing in the field, found mandrakes. It is uncertain what they were; the critics are not agreed about them: we are sure they were some rarities, either fruits or flowers that were very pleasant to the smell, So vii, 13. Some think these mandrakes were Jessamin flowers. Whatever they were, Rachel, could not see them in Leah's hands, but she must covet them.

17. And God hearkened unto Leah - Perhaps the reason of this contest between Jacob's wives for his company, and their giving him their maids to be his wives, was the earnest desire they had to fulfil the promise made to Abraham (and now lately renewed to Jacob) that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude, and that, in one seed of his, the Messiah, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Two sons Leah was now blessed with; the flrst she called Issachar, a hire, reckoning herself well repaid for her mandrakes; nay, (which is a strange construction of the providence) rewarded for giving her maid to her husband. The other she called Zebulun, dwelling, owning God's bounty to her, God has endowed me with a good dowry. Jacob had not endowed her when he married her; but she reckons a family of children, a good dowry.

21. Mention is made, of Dinah, because of the following story concerning her, chap. xxxiv, 1-16, &c. Perhaps Jacob had other daughters, though not registered.

22. God remembered Rachel, whom he seemed to have forgotten, and hearkened to her, whose prayers had been long denied, and then she bare a son. Rachael called her son Joseph, which, in Hebrew, is a-kin to two words of a contrary signification: Asaph, abstulit, he has taken away my reproach, as if the greatest mercy she had in this son were, that she had saved her credit: and Joseph, addidit, the Lord shall add to me another son: which may be looked upon as the language of her faith; she takes this mercy as an earnest of further mercy: hath God given me this grace? I may call it Joseph, and say, he shall add more grace.

34. Laban was willing to consent to this bargain, because he thought if those few he had that were now speckled and spotted were separated from the rest, which was to be done immediately, the body of the flock which Jacob was to tend, being of one colour, either all black or all white, would produce few or none of mixt colours, and so he should have Jacob's service for nothing, or next to nothing. According to this bargain, those few that were party-coloured were separated, and put into the hands of Laban's sons, and sent three days journey off: so great was Laban's jealouly lest any of those should mix with the rest of the flock to the advantage of Jacob.

37. Here is Jacob's policy to make his bargain more advantageous to himself than it was likely to be: and if he had not taken some course to help himself, it would have been an ill bargain indeed; which he knew Laban would never have considered, who did not consult any one's interest but his own.

1. Now Jacob's contrivances were, He set pilled sticks before the cattle where they were watered, that looking much at those unusual party-coloured sticks, by the power of imagination, they might bring forth young ones in like manner party-coloured. Probably this custom was commonly used by the shepherds of Canaan, who coveted to have their cattle of this motly colour.
2. When he began to have a flock of ring-straked and brown, he contrived to set them first, and to put the faces of the rest towards them, with the same design as he did the former. Whether this was honest policy, or no, may admit of a question. Read chap. xxxi, 7- 16, and the question is resolved.

## XXXI

Jacob was in general, a man of devotion and integrity; yet he had more trouble than any of the patriarchs. Here is,

I. His resolution to return, ver. 1-16.

II. His clandestine departure, ver. 17-21.

III. Laban's pursuit of him in displeasure, ver. 22-25.

IV. The hot words that passed between them, ver. 26-42.

V. Their amicable agreement at last, ver. 43-55.

1. It should seem they said it in Jacob's hearing. The last chapter began with Rachel's envying Leah; this begins with Laban's sons envying Jacob. He has gotten all his glory - And what was this glory? It was a parcel of brown sheep and speckled goats, and some camels and asses. Jacob has taken away all that was our fathers - Not all, sure; what was become of those cattle which were committed to the custody of Laban's sons, and sent three days journey off?

3. The Lord said unto Jacob, Return and I will be with thee - though Jacob had met with very hard usage, yet he would not quit his place 'till God bid him. He came thither by orders from heaven, and there he would slay 'till he was ordered back. The direction he had from heaven is more fully related in the account he gives of it to his wives, where he tells them of the dream he had about the cattle, and the wonderful increase of those of his colour; and how the angel of God in that dream instructed him that it was not by chance, nor by his own policy, that he obtained that great advantage but by the providence of God, who had taken notice of the hardships Laban had put upon him, and in performance of his promise.

4. And Jacob sent for Rachel and Leah to the field - That he might discourse with them more privately.

9. God hath taken away the cattle of your father and given them to me - Thus the righteous God paid Jacob for his hard service out of Laban's estate; as afterwards he paid the seed of Jacob for their service of the Egyptians with their spoils.

16. Whereas Jacob looked upon the wealth which God had passed over from Laban to him as his wages, they look upon it as their portions; so that both ways God forced Laban to pay his debts, both to his servant and to his daughters.

19. Laban went to shear his sheep - That part of his flock which was in the hands of his sons, three days journey off. Now, (1.) It is certain it was lawful for Jacob to leave his service suddenly: it was not only justified by the particular instructions God gave him, but warranted by the fundamental law of self- preservation which directs us, when we are in danger, to shift for our own safety, as far as we can do it without wronging our consciences. (2.) It was his prudence to steal away unawares to Laban, lest if Laban had known, he should have hindered him, or plundered him. (3.) It was honestly done to take no more than his own with him, the cattle of his getting. He took what providence gave him, and would not take the repair of his damages into his own hands. Yet Rachel was not so honest as her husband; she stole her father's images, and carried them away. The Hebrew calls them Teraphim. Some think they were only little representations of the ancestors of the family in statue or picture, which Rachel had a particular fondness for, and was desirous to have with her now she was going into another country. It should rather seem they were images for a religious use, penates, household gods, either worshipped, or consulted as oracles; and we are willing to hope, that she took them away, not out of covetousness much less for her own use, or out of any superstitious fear lest Laban, by consulting his teraphim, might know which way they were gone; (Jacob no doubt dwelt with his wives as a man of knowledge, and they were better taught than so) but with a design to convince her father of the folly of his regard to those as gods which could not secure themselves.

23. He took his brethren - That is, his relations, and pursues Jacob to bring him back into bondage, or, to strip him of what he had.

24. Speak not, either good or bad - That is, say nothing against his going on with his journey, for the thing proceedeth from the Lord. The same Hebraism we have, chap. xxiv, 50. The safety of good men is very much owing to the hold God has of the consciences of bad men, and the access he has to them.

27. I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp - Not as Rebekah was sent away out of the same family above one hundred and twenty years before, with prayers and blessings, but with sport and merriment; which was a sign that religion was much decayed in the family.

29. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt - He supposeth that he had both right on his side, and strength on his side, either to revenge the wrong, or recover the right. Yet he owns himself under the restraint of God's power; he durst not injure one of whom he saw to be the particular care of heaven.

30. Wherefore hast thou stolen my gods? - Foolish man! to call those his gods that could be stolen! Could he expect protection from them that could neither resist nor discover their invaders? Happy are they who have the Lord for their God. Enemies may steal our goods, but not our God.

31. Jacob clears himself by giving the true reason why he went away unknown to Laban; he feared lest Laban would by force take away his daughters and so oblige him to continue in his

service. As to the charge of stealing Laban's gods, he pleads not guilty. He not only did not take them himself, but he did not know that they were taken.

42. Jacob speaks of God as the God of his father, intimating that he thought himself unworthy to be thus regarded, but was beloved for his father's sake. He calls him the God of Abraham and the fear of Isaac: for Abraham was dead, and gone to that world where there is no fear; but Isaac was yet alive, sanctifying the Lord in his heart as his fear and his dread.

43. All his mine - That is, came by me.

44. Let us make a covenant - It was made and ratified with great solemnity, according to the usages of those times.

1. A pillar was erected, and a heap of stones raised, to perpetuate the memory of the thing, writing being then not known.
2. A sacrifice was offered, a sacrifice of peace-offerings.
3. They did eat bread together, jointly partaking of the feast upon the sacrifice. This was in token of a hearty reconciliation. Covenants of friendship were anciently ratified by the parties eating and drinking together.
4. They solemnity appealed to God concerning their sincerity herein; (1.) As a witness, ver. 49. The Lord watch between me and thee - That is, the Lord take cognizance of every thing that shall be done on either side in violation of this league. (2.) As a judge, The God of Abraham, from whom Jacob was descended, and The God of Nahor, from whom Laban was descended, the God of their father, the common ancestor from whom they were both descended, judge betwixt us. God's relation to them is thus expressed, to intimate that they worshipped one and the same God, upon which consideration there ought to be no enmity betwixt them. Those that have one God should have one heart: God is judge between contending parties, and he will judge righteously, whoever doth wrong it is at their peril.
5. They gave a new name to the place, ver. 47, 48. Laban called it in Syriac, and Jacob in Hebrew, The heap of witness. And ver. 49, it was called Mizpah, a watch-tower. Posterity being included in the league, care was taken that thus the memory of it should be preserved. The name Jacob gave this heap stuck by it, Galeed, not the name Laban gave it.

54. And Jacob swear by the fear of his father Isaac - The God whom his father Isaac feared, who had never served other gods, as Abraham and Nahor had done.

## XXXII

We have here Jacob still upon his journey towards Canaan. Never did so many memorable things occur in any march, as in this in Jacob's little family. By the way he meets,

I. With good tidings from his God, ver. 1, 2.

II. With bad tidings from his brother, to whom he sent a message to notify his return, ver. 2-7. In his distress,

1. He divides his company, ver. 8.

2. He makes his prayer to God, ver. 9-12.
3. He sends a present to his brother, ver. 13-23.
4. He wrestles with the angel, ver. 24-32.

1. And the Angel of God met him - In a visible appearance; whether in a vision by day, or in a dream by night, as when he saw them upon the ladder, is uncertain. They met him to bid him welcome to Canaan again; a more honourable reception than ever any prince had that was met by the magistrates of a city. They met him to congratulate his arrival, and his escape from Laban. They had invisibly attended him all along, but now they appeared, because he had greater dangers before him. When God designs his people for extraordinary trials, he prepares them by extraordinary comforts.

2. This is God's house - A good man may, with an eye of faith, see the same that Jacob saw with his bodily eyes. What need we dispute whether he has a guardian angel, when we are sure he has a guard of angels about him? To preserve the remembrance of this favour, Jacob gave a name to the place from it, Mahanaim, two hosts, or two camps probably they appeared to him in two hosts, one on either side, or one in the front, and the other in the rear, to protect him from Laban behind, and Esau before, that they might be a compleat guard. Here was Jacob's family that made one army, representing the church militant and itinerant on earth; and the angels another army, representing the church triumphant, and at rest in heaven.

4. He calls Esau his Lord, himself his servant, to intimate that he did not insist upon the prerogatives of the birth-right and blessing he had obtained for himself, but left it to God to fulfil his own purpose in his seed. He gives him a short account of himself, that he was not a fugitive and a vagabond, but though long absent had dwelt with his own relations. I have sojourned with Laban, and staid there till now: and that he was not a beggar, nor likely to be a charge to his relations; no, I have oxen and asses - This he knew would (if any thing) recommend him to Esau's good affection. And, he courts his favour; I have sent that I may find grace in thy sight - It is no disparagement to those that have the better cause to become petitioners for reconciliation, and to sue for peace as well as right.

6. He cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him - He is now weary of waiting for the days of mourning for his father, and before those come resolves to slay his brother. Out he marches with four hundred men, probably such as used to hunt with him, armed no doubt, ready to execute the word of command.

7. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed - A lively apprehension of danger, may very well consist with a humble confidence in God's power and promise.

9. He addresseth himself to God as the God of his fathers: such was the sense he had of his own unworthiness, that he did not call God his own God, but a God in covenant with his ancestors. O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac. And this he could better plead, because the covenant was entailed upon him. Thou saidst unto me, Return unto thy country - He did not rashly leave his place with Laban, out of a foolish fondness for his native country; but in obedience to God's command.

10. I am not worthy - It is a surprising plea. One would think he should have pleaded that what was now in danger was his own against all the world, and that he had earned it dear enough; no,

he pleads, Lord, I am not worthy of it. Of the least of all the mercies - Here is mercies in the plural number, an inexhaustible spring, and innumerable streams; mercies and truth, past mercies given according to the promise and farther mercies secured by the promise. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, much less am I worthy of so great a favour as this I am now suing for. Those are best prepared for the greatest mercies that see themselves unworthy of the least. For with my staff I passed over this Jordan - Poor and desolate, like a forlorn and despised pilgrim: He had no guides, no companions, no attendants. And now I am become two bands - Now I am surrounded with a numerous retinue of children and servants. Those whose latter end doth greatly increase, ought with humility and thankfulness to remember how small their beginning was.

11. Lord, deliver me from Esau, for I fear him - The fear that quickens prayer is itself pleadable. It was not a robber, but a murderer that he was afraid of: nor was it his own life only that lay at stake, but the mothers, and the childrens.

12. Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good - The best we can say to God in prayer is, what he hath said to us. God's promises as they are the surest guide of our desires in prayer, and furnish us with the best petitions, so they are the firmest ground of our hopes, and furnish us with the best pleas. Thou saidst, I will do thee good - Lord, do me good in this matter. He pleads also a particular promise, that of the multiplying of his seed. Lord, what will become of that promise, if they be all cut off?

13. Jacob having piously made God his friend by a prayer, is here prudently endeavouring to make Esau his friend by a present. He had prayed to God to deliver him from the hand of Esau - His prayer did not make him presume upon God's mercy, without the use of means.

17. He sent him also a very humble message, which he ordered his servants to deliver in the best manner. They must call Esau their Lord, and Jacob his servant: they must tell him the cattle they had was a small present which Jacob had sent him. They must especially take care to tell him that Jacob was coming after, that he might not suspect him fled. A friendly confidence in mens goodness may help to prevent the mischief designed us by their badness.

24. Very early in the morning, a great while before day. Jacob had helped his wives and children over the river, and he desired to be private, and was left alone, that he might again spread his cares and fears before God in prayer. While Jacob was earnest in prayer, stirring up himself to take hold on God, an angel takes hold on him. Some think this was a created angel, one of those that always behold the face of our Father. Rather it was the angel of the covenant, who often appeared in a human shape, before he assumed the human nature. We are told by the prophet, Hosea xii, 4, how Jacob wrestled, he wept and made supplication; prayers and tears were his weapons. It was not only a corporal, but a spiritual wrestling by vigourous faith and holy desire.

25. The angel prevailed not against him - That is, this discouragement did not shake his faith, nor silence his prayer. It was not in his own strength that he wrestled, nor by his own strength that he prevails; but by strength derived from heaven. That of Job illustrates this, Job xxiii, 6. Will he plead against me with his great power? No; had the angel done so, Jacob had been crushed; but he would put strength in me: and by that strength Jacob had power over the angel, Hosea xii, 3. The angel put out Jacob's thigh, to shew him what he could do, and that it was God he was wrestling with, for no man could disjoint his thigh with a touch. Some think that Jacob felt little or no pain from this hurt; it is probable be did not, for he did not so much as halt 'till the struggle was over, ver. 31, and if so, that was an evidence of a divine touch indeed, which wounded and healed at the same time.

26. Let me go - The angel, by an admirable condescension, speaks Jacob fair to let him go, as God said to Moses, Exod. xxxii, 10. Let me alone. Could not a mighty angel get clear of Jacob's grapples? He could; but thus he would put an honour upon Jacob's faith and prayer. The reason the angel gives why he would be gone is because the day breaks, and therefore he would not any longer detain Jacob, who had business to do, a journey to go, a family to look after. And he said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me - He resolves he will have a blessing, and rather shall all his bones be put out of joint, than he will go away without one. Those that would have the blessing of Christ must be in good earnest, and be importunate for it.

27. What is thy name? - Jacob (saith he) a supplanter, so Jacob signifies. Well, (faith the angel) be thou never so called any more: thou shalt be called Israel, a prince with God. He is a prince indeed, that is a prince with God; and those are truly honourable that are mighty, in prayer. Yet this was not all; having, power with God, he shall have power with men too; having prevailed for a blessing from heaven, he shall, no doubt, prevail for Esau's favour. Whatever enemies we have, if we can but make God our friend, we are well enough; they that by faith have power in heaven, have thereby as much power on earth as they have occasion for.

29. Wherefore dost thou ask after my name? - What good will it do thee to know that? The discovery of that was reserved for his death-bed, upon which he was taught to call him Shiloh. But instead of telling him his name, he gave him his blessing, which was the thing he wrestled for; he blessed him there, repeated and ratified the blessing formerly given him. See how wonderfully God condescends to countenance and crown importunate prayer? Those that resolve though God slay them, yet to trust in him, will at length be more than conquerors.

30. Peniel - That is, the face of God, because there he had seen the appearance of God, and obtained the favour of God.

31. He halted on his thigh - And some think he continued to do so to his dying day. If he did, he had no reason to complain, for the honour and comfort he obtained by his struggle was abundantly sufficient to countervail the damage, though he went limping to his grave.

## XXXIII

We read in the former chapter how Jacob had power with God, and prevailed; here we find what power he had with men too. Here is,

I. A friendly meeting between Jacob and Esau, ver. 1-4.

II. Their conference at their meeting. Their discourse is, (1.) About Jacob's family, ver. 5-7. (2.) About the present he had sent, ver. 8-11. (3.) About the progress of their journey, ver. 12-15.

III. Jacob's settlement in Canaan, his house-ground, and altar, ver. 16-20.

3. He bowed - Though he feared Esau as an enemy, yet he did obeisance to him as an elder brother.

4. And Esau ran to meet him - Not in passion but in love. Embraced him, fell on his neck and kissed him - God hath the hearts of all men in his hands, and can turn them when and how he

pleases. He can of a sudden convert enemies into friends, as he did two Sauls, one by restraining grace, 1 Sam. xxvi, 21, 25, the other by renewing grace, Acts ix, 21. And they wept - Jacob wept for joy to be thus kindly received; Esau perhaps wept for grief and shame to think of the ill design he had conceived against his brother.

5. Eleven or twelve little ones followed Jacob, the eldest of them not fourteen years old: Who are these? saith Esau. Jacob had sent him an account of the increase of his estate, but made no mention of his children, perhaps because he would not expose them to his rage, if he should meet him as an enemy. Esau therefore had reason to ask who are those with thee? To which Jacob returns a serious answer; they are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant. Jacob speaks of his children,

1. As God's gifts; they are a heritage of the Lord.
2. As choice gifts; he hath graciously given them. Though they were many, and but slenderly provided for, yet he accounts them great blessings.

10. I have seen thy face as though I had seen the face of God - That is, I have seen thee reconciled to me, and at peace with me, as I desire to see God reconciled.

12. Esau offers himself to be his guide and companion, in token of sincere reconciliation. We never find that Jacob and Esau were so loving with one another as they were now. God made Esau not only not an enemy, but a friend. Esau is become fond of Jacob's company, courts him to mount Seir: let us never despair of any, nor distrust God, in whose hands all hearts are. Yet Jacob saw cause modestly to refute this offer, wherein he shews a tender concern for his own family and flocks, like a good shepherd and a good father. He must consider the children, and the flocks with young, and not lead the one or drive the other too fast. Jacob intimates to him, that it was his design to come to him to mount Seir; and we may presume he did so, after he had settled his concerns elsewhere, though that visit be not recorded.

15. Esau offers some of his men to be his guard and convoy; but Jacob humbly refuseth his offer, only desiring he would not take it amiss that he did not accept it. What needs it? He is under the Divine protection. Those are sufficiently guarded that have God for their guard, and are under a convoy of his hosts, as Jacob was. Jacob adds, only let me find grace in the sight of my Lord - Having thy favour I have all I need, all I desire from thee.

16. And Jacob journeyed to Succoth - Having in a friendly manner parted with Esau, who was gone to his own country, he comes to a place, where he rested, set up booths for his cattle, and other conveniences for himself and family. The place was afterwards known by the name of Succoth, a city in the tribe of Gad, on the other side Jordan; it signifies booths: that when his posterity afterwards dwelt in houses of stone, they might remember that the Syrian ready to perish was their father, who was glad of booths, Deut. xxvi, 5.

18. And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem - Or rather he came safe, or in peace, to the city of Shechem. After a perilous journey, in which he had met with many difficulties, he came safe at last, into Canaan.

20. He erected an altar -

1. In thankfulness to God for the good hand of his providence over him.
2. That he might keep up religion, and the worship of God in his family. He dedicated this altar to the honour of El-elohe-israel, God-the God of Israel: to the honour of God in general, the only living and true God, the Best of beings, the First of causes: and to the honour of the God of Israel, as a God in covenant with him.

God had lately called him by the name of Israel; and now he calls God the God of Israel; though he be called a prince with God, God shall still be a prince with him, his Lord and his God.

## XXXIV

In this chapter we have,

1. Dinah debauched, ver. 1, 2-5.
2. A treaty of marriage between her and Shechem who had defiled her, ver. 6-19.
3. The circumcision of the Shechemites, pursuant to that treaty, ver. 20-24.
4. The perfidious and bloody revenge which Simeon and Levi took upon them, ver. 25-31.

1. Dinah was then about fifteen or sixteen years of age when she went out to see the daughters of the land - Probably on some public day. She went to see; yet that was not all, she went to be seen too: she went to see the daughters of the land, but it may be with some thoughts of the sons of the land too.

7. It is called folly in Israel - According to the language of after- times, for Israel was not yet a people, but a family only.

8. Hamor communed - That is, talked. He came to treat with Jacob himself, but he turns them over to his sons. And here we have a particular account of the treaty, in which it is a shame to say the Canaanites were more honest than the Israelites.

18. Hamor and Shechem gave consent themselves to be circumcised. To this perhaps they were moved not only by the strong desire they had to bring about, this match, but by what they might have heard of the sacred and honourable intentions of this sign, in the family of Abraham, which it is probable they had some confused notions of, and of the promises confirmed by it; which made them the more desirous to incorporate with the family of Jacob.

23. Shall not their cattle and their substance be ours? - They observed that Jacob's sons were industrious, thriving people, and promised themselves and their neighbours advantage by an alliance with them: it would improve ground and trade, and bring money into their country.

25. They slew all the males - Nothing can excuse this execrable villainy. It was true Shechem had wrought folly in Israel, in defiling Dinah: but it ought to have been considered how far Dinah herself had been accessary to it. Had Shechem abused her in her mother's tent, it had been another matter; but she went upon his ground, and struck the spark which began the fire. When we are severe upon the sinner, we ought to consider who was the tempter. It was true that Shechem had done ill; but he was endeavouring to atone for it, and was as honest and honourable afterwards as the case would admit. It was true that Shechem had done ill, but what was that to all the Shechemites? Doth one man sin, and must the innocent fall with the guilty? This was barbarous indeed. But that which above all aggravated the cruelty, was the most perfidious treachery that was in it. The Shechemites had submitted to their conditions, and had done that upon which they had promised to become one people with them. Yet they act as sworn enemies to those to whom they were lately

become sworn friends, making as light of their covenant as they did of the laws of humanity. And these are the sons of Israel? Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce.

27. Tho' Simeon and Levi only were the murderers, yet others of the sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city - And so became accessary to the murder.

30. Ye have troubled me, to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land - That is, You have rendered my family odious among them. And what could be expected but that the Canaanites, who were numerous and formidable, would confederate against him, and he and his little family would become an easy prey to them? I shall be destroyed, I and my house - Jacob knew indeed that God had promised to preserve his house; but he might justly fear that these vile practices of his children would amount to a forfeiture, and cut off the entail. When sin is in the house, there is reason to fear ruin at the door.

31. Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot? - No, he should not; but, if he do, Must they be their own avengers? And nothing less than so many lives, and the ruin of a whole city, serve to atone for the abuse.

## XXXV

In this chapter we have,

I. Three communions between God and Jacob.

1. God ordered Jacob to Beth-el, and in obedience to that order, he purged his house of idols, and prepared for that journey, ver. 1-5.
2. Jacob built an altar at Beth-el to the honour of God that had appeared to him, and in performance of his vow, ver. 6, 7.
3. God appeared to him again, and confirmed the change of his name, and the covenant with him, ver 9-13. of which appearance Jacob made a grateful acknowledgement, ver. 14, 15.

II. Three funerals.

1. Deborah's, ver. 8.
2. Rachel's, ver. 16-20.
3. Isaac's, ver. 27-29.

III. Here is also Reuben's incest, ver. 22. and an account of Jacob's sons, ver. 23-26.

1. Arise go to Bethel - Here God minds Jacob of his vow at Beth- el, and sends him thither to perform it, Jacob had said in the day of his distress, If I come again in peace, this stone shall be God's house, chap. xxviii, 22. God had performed his part, had given Jacob more than bread to eat, and raiment to put on; but it should seem he had forgotten his vow, or, at least, deferred the performance of it. And dwell there - That is, Not only go himself, but take his family with him, that they might join with him in his devotions. Put away the strange Gods - Strange God's in Jacob's family! Could such a family, that was taught the knowledge of the Lord, admit them? Could such a master, to whom God had appeared twice, and oftner, connive at them? And be clean, and change your garments - These were ceremonies signifying the purification and change of the heart.

4. And they gave to Jacob - His servants, and even the retainers to his family, gave him all the strange gods, and the ear-rings they wore either as charms, or to the honour of their gods. Jacob took care to bury their images, we may suppose, in some place unknown to them, that they might not afterwards find and return to them.

5. And the terror of God was upon the cities - Though the Canaanites were much exasperated against the sons of Jacob for their barbarous usage of the Shechemites; yet they were so restrained by a divine power, that they could not take this fair opportunity to avenge their neighbours quarrel. God governs the world more by secret terrors on men's minds than we are aware of.

7. He built an altar - And no doubt offered sacrifice upon it, perhaps the tenth of his cattle, according to his vow, I will give the tenth unto thee. And he called the place, That is, the altar, El-beth-el, the God of Beth-el. As when he made a thankful acknowledgement of the honour God had done him in calling him Israel, he worshipped God by the name of El-elohe-israel, so now he was making a grateful recognition of God's former favour at Beth-el, he worships God by the name of El-beth-el, the God of Beth-el, because there God appeared to him.

8. There he buried Deborah, Rebekah's nurse - We have reason to think that Jacob, after he came to Canaan, while his family dwelt near Shechem, went himself to visit his father Isaac at Hebron. Rebekah probably was dead, but her old nurse (of whom mention is made chap. xxiv, 59,) survived her, and Jacob took her to his family. While they were at Beth-el she died, and died lamented, so much lamented, that the oak under which she was buried, was called Allon-bachuth, the oak of weeping.

10. God now confirmed the change of his name. It was done before by the angel that wrestled with him, chap. xxxii, 28, and here it was ratified by the divine majesty, to encourage him against the fear of the Canaanites. Who can be too hard for Israel, a prince with God?

11. He renewed and ratified the covenant with him, by the name of El-Shaddai, I am God Almighty. God All-sufficient, able to make good the promise in due time, and to support thee and provide for thee. Two things are promised him. 1. That he should be the father of a great nation: great in number, a company of nations shall be of thee - Every tribe of Israel was a nation, and all the twelve, a company of nations: great in honour and power, kings shall come out of thy loins. 2. That he should be master of a good land, ver. 12. The land that was given to Abraham and Isaac is here entailed on Jacob and his seed. These two promises had also a spiritual signification, which we may suppose Jacob himself had some notion of: for without doubt Christ is the promised seed, and heaven is the promised land; the former is the foundation, and the latter the top-stone of all God's favours.

13. And God went up from him - Or, from over him - In some visible display of glory, which had hovered over him, while he talked with him.

14. And Jacob set up a pillar - When he was going to Padan-aram he set up that stone which he had laid his head on for a pillar; but now he took time to erect one more stately, and durable, probably inserting that stone into it. And in token of his intending it for a sacred memorial of his communion with God, he poured oil, and the other ingredients of a drink-offering upon it. This stone shall be God's house, that is, shall be set up for his honour, as houses to the praise of their builders; and here he performs it. And he confirmed the name he had formerly given to the place, Beth-el, the house of God. Yet this very place afterwards lost the honour of its name, and became Beth-aven, a house of iniquity, for here it was that Jeroboam set up one of his calves. It is impossible for the best men to entail so much as the profession and form of religion upon a place.

16. She had hard labour - Harder than usual.

17. Rachel had said when she bore Joseph, God shall give me another son, which now the midwife remembers, and tells her, her words were made good. Yet this did not avail; unless God command away fear, no one else can. We are apt in extreme perils to comfort ourselves and our friends with the hopes of a temporal deliverance, in which we may be disappointed; we had better ground our comforts on that which cannot fail us, the hope of eternal life. Rachel had passionately said, Give me children, or else I die; and now she had children (for this was her second) she died.

18. Her dying lips calls her new-born soon Benoni, the son of my sorrow. But Jacob because he would not renew the sorrowful remembrance of his mother's death every time he called his son by name, changed his name, and called him Benjamin, the son of my right hand - That is, very dear to me; set on my right hand for a right hand blessing; the support of my age, like the staff in my right hand. Jacob buried her near the place where she died. If the soul be at rest after death, the matter is not great where the body lies. In the place where the tree falls, there let it lie. The Jewish writers say, The death of Deborah and Rachel was to expiate the murder of the Shechemites, occasioned by Dinah, a daughter of the family.

20. And Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave - So that it was known long after to be Rachel's sepulchre, 1 Sam. x, 2, and Providence so ordered it, that this place afterwards fell in the lot of Benjamin. Jacob set up a pillar in remembrance of his joys ver. 14, and here he set up one in remembrance of his sorrows; for as it may be of use to ourselves to keep both in mind, so it may be of use to others to transmit the memorials of both.

21. Israel, a prince with God, yet dwells in tents; the city is reserved for him in the other world.

22. When Israel dwelt in that land - As if he were then absent from his family, which might be the unhappy occasion of these disorders. Though perhaps Bilhah was the greater criminal, yet Reuben's crime was so provoking that for it he lost his birth-right and blessing, chap. xlix, 4. And Israel heard it - No more is said, that is enough; he heard it with the utmost grief and shame, horror and displeasure.

27. And Jacob came unto Isaac his father - We may suppose he had visited him before since his return, for he sore longed after his father's house, but never 'till now brought his family to settle with him, or near him. Probably he did this now upon the death of Rebekah, by which Isaac was left solitary.

28. The age and death of Isaac are here recorded, though it appears by computation that he died not 'till many years after Joseph was sold into Egypt, and much about the time that he was preferred there. Isaac, a mild quiet man, lived the longest of all the patriarchs, for he was one hundred and eighty years old: Abraham was but one hundred and seventy-five. Isaac lived about forty years after he had made his will, chap. xxvii, 2. We shall not die an hour the sooner, but abundance the better, for our timely setting of our heart and house in order. Particular notice is taken of the amicable agreement of Esau and Jacob in solemnizing their father's funeral, ver. 29, to shew how God had wonderfully changed Esau's mind, since he vowed his brother's murder, upon his father's death, chap. xxvii, 41. God has many ways of preventing ill men from doing the mischief they in tended; he can either tie their hands, or turn their hearts.

## XXXVI

In this chapter we have an account of the posterity of Esau, who were from him, were called Edomites;

1. Because he was the son of Isaac, for whose sake this honour is put upon him.
2. Because the Edomites were neighbours to Israel, and their genealogy would be of use to give light to the following stories of what passed between them.
3. To shew the performance of the promise to Abraham, that he should be the father of many nations, and of that answer which Rebekah had from the oracle she consulted, Two nations are in thy womb; and of the blessing of Isaac, Thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth. Here are,
   I. Esau's wives, ver. 1-5.
   II. His remove to mount Seir, ver. 6-8.
   III. The names of his sons, ver. 9-14.
   IV. The dukes which descended of his sons, ver. 15-19.
   V. The dukes of the Horites, ver. 20-30.
   VI. The kings and dukes of Edom, ver. 31-43.

1. Who is Edom-That name perpetuated the remembrance of the foolish bargain he made, when he sold his birth-right for that red pottage.

6. Esau had begun to settle among his wife's relations in Seir, before Jacob came from Padan-aram, chap. xxxii, 3. Isaac it is likely, had sent him thither, that Jacob might have the clearer way to the possession of the promised land: yet probably during the life of Isaac, Esau had still some effects remaining in Canaan; but after his death, he wholly withdrew to mount Seir, took with him what came to his share of his father's personal estate, and left Canaan to Jacob, not only because he had the promise of it, but because he saw, if they should both continue to thrive, as they had begun, there would not be room for both.

8. Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir - Whatever opposition may be made, God's word will take place, and even those that have opposed it will see themselves, some time or other, under a necessity of yielding to it. Esau had struggled for Canaan, but now he retires to mount Seir; for God's counsels shall certainly stand concerning the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation.

10. These are the names - Observe here,

1. That only the names of Esau's sons and grand-sons are recorded: not their history, for it is the church that Moses preserves the records of, not of those that were without. The elders only that lived by faith obtained a good report. Nor doth the genealogy go any farther than the third and fourth generation, the very names of all after are buried in oblivion; it is only the pedigree of the Israelites who were to be the heirs of Canaan, and of whom were to come the promised seed, and the holy seed, that is drawn out to any length, as far as there was occasion for it, even of all the tribes till Canaan was divided among them, and of the royal line 'till Christ came.

2. That the sons and grand-sons of Esau are called dukes. Probably they were military commanders, dukes or captains that had soldiers under them; for Esau and his family lived by the sword, chap. xxvii, 40.
3. We may suppose those dukes had numerous families of children and servants. God promised to multiply Jacob and to enrich him, yet Esau increases and is enriched first. God's promise to Jacob began to work late, but the effect of it remained longer, and it had its compleat accomplishment in the spiritual Israel.

20. These are the sons of Seir - In the midst of the genealogy of the Edomites is inserted the genealogy of the Horites, those Canaanites, or Hittites, (compare chap. xxvi, 34,) that were the natives of mount Seir. Mention is made of them, chap. xiv, 6, and of their interest in mount Seir before the Edomites took possession of it, Deut. ii, 12, 22. This comes in here, not only to give light to the story, but to be a standing reflexion upon the Edomites for intermarrying with them, by which it is likely they learned their way, and corrupted themselves. Esau having sold his birth-right, and lost his blessing and entered into alliance with the Hittites, his posterity and the sons of Seir are here reckoned together. Those that treacherously desert God's church are justly numbered with those that were never in it: apostate Edomites stand on the same ground with accursed Horites. Notice is taken of one Anah, who fed the asses of Zibeon his father, ver. 20, and yet is called duke Anah, ver. 29. Those that expect to rise high should begin low. An honourable descent should not keep men from an honest employment, nor a mean employment baulk any man's preferment.

24. This Anah was not only industrious in his business, but ingenious too, and successful, for he found mules, or, (as some read it) waters, hot baths in the wilderness. Those that are diligent in their business sometimes find more advantages than they expected.

31. By degrees the Edomites worked out the Horites, and got full possession of the country. 1. They were ruled by kings who governed the whole country, and seem to have come to the throne by election, and not by lineal descent: these kings reigned in Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel - That is, before Moses's time, for he was king in Jeshurun. God had lately promised Jacob that kings shall come out of his loins: yet Esau's blood becomes royal long before any of Jacob's did. Probably it was a trial to the faith of Israel, to hear of the power of the kings of Edom, while they were bond-slaves in Egypt: but those that look for great things from God must be content to wait for them. God's time is the best time. 2. They were afterward's governed by dukes again, here named, who, I suppose, ruled all at the same time in several places in the country. They set up this form of government, either in conformity to the Horites, who had used it, ver. 29, or God's providence reduced them to it, as some conjecture, to correct them for their unkindness to Israel, in refusing them passage through their country, Num. xx, 18.

43. Mount Seir is called the land of their possession - While the Israelites dwelt in the house of bondage, and their Canaan was only the land of promise, the Edomites dwelt in their own habitations, and Seir was in their possession. The children of this world have their all in hand, and nothing in hope, while the children of God have often their all in hope, and next to nothing in hand. But, all things considered, it is better to have Canaan in promise than mount Seir in possession.

## XXXVII

At this chapter begins the story of Joseph, Jacob's eldest son, by his beloved wife Rachel. It is so remarkably divided between his humiliation and his exaltation, that we cannot avoid seeing something of Christ in it, who was first humbled and then exalted; it also shews the lot of Christians, who must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom. In this chapter we have,

I. The malice his brethren bore against him: they hated him, (1.) Because he informed his father of their wickedness, ver. 1, 2. (2.) Because his father loved him, ver. 3, 4. (3.) Because he dreamed of his dominion over them, ver. 5-11.

II. The mischiefs his brethren designed, and did to him. (1.) His visit he made them gave an opportunity, ver. 12-17. (2.) They designed to slay him, but determined to starve him, ver. 18-24. (3.) They changed their purpose, and sold him for a slave, ver. 25- 28. (4.) They made their father believe that he was torn in pieces, ver. 29-35. (5.) He was sold in Egypt to Potiphar, ver. xxxvi, And all this was working together for good.

2. These are the generations of Jacob - It is not a barren genealogy, as those of Esau, but a memorable useful history. Joseph brought to his father their evil report - Jacob's sons did that when they were from under his eye, which they durst not have done if they had been at home with him; but Joseph gave his father an account of their ill carriage, that he might reprove and restrain them.

3. He made him a coat of divers colours - Which probably was significant of farther honours intended him.

5. Though he was now very young, about seventeen years old, yet he was pious and devout, and this fitted him for God's gracious discoveries to him. Joseph had a great deal of trouble before him, and therefore God gave him betimes this prospect of his advancement, to support and comfort him.

8. Shalt thou indeed reign over us? - See here,

1. How truly they interpreted his dream? The event exactly answered this interpretation, chap. xlii, 6, &c.
2. How scornfully they resented it, Shalt thou that art but one, reign over us that are many? Thou that art the youngest, over us that are elder? The reign of Jesus Christ, our Joseph, is despised and striven against by an unbelieving world, who cannot endure to think that this man should reign over them. The dominion also of the upright in the morning of the resurrection is thought of with the utmost disdain.

10. His father rebuked him - Probably to lessen the offense which his brethren would take at it; yet he took notice of it more than he seemed to do.

18. And when they saw him afar off they conspired against him - It was not in a heat, or upon a sudden provocation, that they thought to slay him, but from malice propense, and in cold blood.

21. And Reuben heard it - God can raise up friends for his people, even among their enemies. Reuben of all the brothers had most reason to be jealous of Joseph, for he was the first-born, and so entitled to those distinguishing favours which Jacob was conferring on Joseph, yet he proves his best friend. Reuben's temper seems to have been soft and effeminate, which had betrayed him to the sin of uncleanness, while the temper of the two next brothers, Simeon and Levi, was fierce, which betrayed them to the sin of murder, a sin which Reuben startled at the thought of. He made

a proposal which they thought would effectually destroy Joseph, and yet which he designed should answer his intention of rescuing Joseph out of their hands, probably hoping thereby to recover his father's favour which he had lately lost; but God over-ruled all to serve his own purpose of making Joseph an instrument to save much people alive. Joseph was here a type of Christ. Though he was the beloved Son of his Father, and hated by a wicked world; yet the Father sent him out of his bosom to visit us; he came from heaven to earth to seek and save us; yet then malicious plots were laid against him; he came to his own, and his own not only received him not, but consulted, This is the heir, come let us kill him. This he submitted to, in pursuance of his design to save us.

24. They call him into a pit - To perish there with hunger and cold; so cruel were their tender mercies.

25. They sat down to eat bread - They felt no remorse of conscience, which if they had, would have spoiled their stomach to their meat. A great force put upon conscience commonly stupifies it, and for the time deprives it both of sense and speech.

26. What profit is it if we slay our brother? - It will be less guilt and more gain to sell him. They all agreed to this. And as Joseph was sold by the contrivance of Judah for twenty pieces of silver, so was our Lord Jesus for thirty, and by one of the same name too, Judas. Reuben it seems, was gone away from his brethren when they sold Joseph, intending to come round some other way to the pit, and to help Joseph out of it. But had this taken effect, what had become of God's purpose concerning his preferment, in Egypt? There are many devices of the enemies of God's people to destroy them, and of their friends to help them, which perhaps are both disappointed, as these here; but the counsel of the Lord that shall stand. Reuben thought himself undone because the child was sold; I, whither shall I go? He being the eldest, his father would expect from him an account of him; but it proved they had all been undone, if he had not been sold.

35. He refused to be comforted - He resolved to go down to the grave mourning; Great affection to any creature doth but prepare for so much the greater affliction, when it is either removed from us, or embittered to us: inordinate love commonly ends in immoderate grief.

## XXXVIII

How little reason had the Jews, who were so called from this Judah, to boast, as they did, that they were not born of fornication? John viii, 41. We have in this chapter,

I. Judah's marriage and issue, and the untimely death of his two eldest sons, ver. 1-11.

II. Judah's incest with his daughter-in-law Tamar, ver. 12-23.

III. His confusion when it was discovered, ver. 24-26.

IV. The birth of his twin sons in whom his family was built up, ver. 27-30.

1. Judah went down from his brethren - Withdrew for a time from his father's family, and got intimately acquainted with one Hirah an Adullamite. When young people that have been well educated begin to change their company, they will soon change their manners, and lose their good education. They that go down from their brethren, that forsake the society of the seed of Israel, and pick up Canaanites for their companions, are going down the hill apace.

2. He took her-To wife. His father, it should seem, was not consulted, but by his new friend Hirah.

7. And Er was wicked in the sight of the Lord - That is, in defiance of God and his law. And what came of it? Why God cut him off presently, The Lord slew him. The next brother Onan was, according to the ancient usage, married to the widow, to preserve the name of his deceased brother that died childless. This custom of marrying the brother's widow was afterward made one of the laws of Moses, Deut. xxv, 5. Onan, though he consented to marry the widow, yet to the great abuse of his own body, of the wife he had married, and the memory of his brother that was gone, he refused to raise up seed unto his brother. Those sins that dishonour the body are very displeasing to God, and the evidence of vile actions. Observe, the thing which he did displeased the Lord - And it is to be feared, thousands, especially of single persons, by this very thing, still displeased the Lord, and destroy their own souls.

11. Shelah the third son was reserved for the widow, yet with design that he should not marry so young as his brothers had done, lest he die also. Some think that Judah never intended to marry Shelah to Tamar, but unjustly suspected her to have been the death of her two former husbands, (whereas it was their own wickedness that slew them) and then sent her to her father's house, with a charge to remain a widow. If so, it was an inexcusable piece of prevarication; however Tamar acquiesced, and waited for the issue.

14. Some excuse this by suggesting that she believed the promise made to Abraham and his seed, particularly that of the Messiah, and that she was therefore desirous to have a child by one of that family, that she might have the honour, or at least stand fair for the honour of being the mother of the Messiah. She covered her with a veil - It was the custom of harlots in those times to cover their faces, that tho' they were not ashamed, yet they might seem to be so: the sin of uncleanness did not then go so bare-faced as it now doth.

17. A kid from the flock - A goodly price at which her chastity and honour were valued! Had the consideration been thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil, it had not been a valuable consideration. The favour of God, the purity of the soul, the peace of the conscience, and the hope of heaven: are too precious to be exposed to sale at any such rates. He lost his Jewels by the bargain: He sent the kid according to his promise, to redeem his pawn, but the supposed harlot could not be found. He sent it by his friend, (who was indeed his back-friend, because he was aiding and abetting in his evil deeds) the Adullamite; who came back without the pledge. 'Tis a good account, if it be but true, of any place that which they here gave, that there is no harlot in this place, for such sinners are the scandals and plagues of any place. Judah sits down content to lose his signet and his bracelets, and forbids his friend to make any farther enquiry.

23. Lest we be shamed - Either,

1. Lest his sin should come to be known publicly, Or
2. Lest he should be laughed at as a fool for trusting a whore with his signet and his bracelets. He expresses no concern about the sin, only about the shame. There are many who are more solicitous to preserve their reputation with men, than to secure the savour of God, lest we be shamed goes farther with them than lest we be damned.

28. It should seem the birth was hard to the mother, by which she was corrected for her sin: the children also, like Jacob and Esau, struggled for the birth-right, and Pharez who got it, is ever named first, and from him Christ descended. He had his name from his breaking forth before his brother;

this breach be upon thee - The Jews, as Zarah, bid fair for the birth-right, and were marked with a scarlet thread, as those that come out first; but the Gentiles, like Pharez, or a son of violence got the start of them, by that violence which the kingdom of heaven suffers, and attained to the righteousness which the Jews came short of: yet when the fulness of time is come, all Israel shall be saved. Both these sons are named in the genealogy of our saviour, Matt. i, 3, to perpetuate the story, as an instance of the humiliation of our Lord Jesus.

## XXXIX

At this chapter we return to the story of Joseph. We have him here,

I. A servant, a slave in Potiphar's house, ver. 1. and yet there greatly honoured and favoured, (1.) By the providence of God, which made him in effect a master, ver. 2-6. (2.) By the grace of God, which made him more than conqueror over a strong temptation, ver. 7-12.

II. We have him a sufferer, falsely accused, ver. 13-18. Imprisoned, ver. 19, 20. And yet his imprisonment made both honourable and comfortable by the tokens of God's special presence with him, ver. 21-23.

1. The Jews have a proverb, If the world did but know the worth of good men, they would hedge them about with pearls. Joseph was sold to an officer of Pharaoh, with whom he might get acquainted with public persons, and public business, and so be fitted for the preferment he was afterwards designed for. What God intends men for, he will be sure, some way or other, to qualify them for.

2. Those that can separate us from all our friends, cannot deprive us of the gracious presence of our God. When Joseph had none of his relations with him, he had his God with him, even in the house of the Egyptian: Joseph was banished from his father's house, but the Lord was with him. It is God's presence with us that makes all we do prosperous. Those that would prosper, must therefore make God their friend; and those that do prosper, must therefore give God the praise.

6. He knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat - The servant had all the care and trouble of the estate, the master had only the enjoyment of it; an example not to be imitated by any master, unless he could be sure that he had one like Joseph for a servant.

9. How can I sin against God - Not only how shall I do it and sin against my master, my mistress, myself, my own body and soul, but against God? - Gracious souls look upon this as the worst thing in sin, that it is against God, against his nature and his dominion, against his love and his design. They that love God, for this reason hate sin.

10. He hearkened not to her, so much as to be with her. Those that would be kept from harm, must keep themselves out of harm's way.

12. When she laid hold on him, he left his garment in her hand - He would not stay to parley with the temptation, but flew out from it with the utmost abhorrence, he left his garment as one escaping for his life.

20. Where the king's prisoners were bound - Potiphar, it is likely, chose that prison because it was the worst; for there the irons entered into the soul, Psalm cv, 18, but God designed it to pave

the way to his enlargement. Our Lord Jesus, like Joseph was bound, and numbered with the transgressors.

21. But the Lord was with Joseph and shewed him mercy. God despiseth not his prisoners, Psalm lxix, 33. No gates nor bars can shut out his gracious presence from his people. God gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison - God can raise up friends for his people even where they little expect them. The keeper saw that God was with him, and that every thing prospered under his hand, and therefore intrusted him with the management of the affairs of the prison.

## XL

In this chapter things are working towards Joseph's advancement.

I. Two of Pharaoh's servants are committed to prison, and there, to Joseph's care, and so became witnesses of his extraordinary conduct, ver. 1-4.

II. They dreamed each of them a dream, which Joseph interpreted, ver. 5-19. and they verified the interpretation, ver. 20-22.

III. Joseph recommends his case to one of them whose preferment he foresaw, ver. 14, 15. but in vain, ver. 23.

1. We should not have had this story of Pharaoh's butler and baker recorded in scripture, if it had not been serviceable to Joseph's preferment. The world stands for the sake of the church, and is governed for its good. Observe,

1. Two of the great officers of Pharaoh's court having offended the king are committed to prison. Note, High places are slippery places; nothing more uncertain than the favour of princes. Those that make God's favour their happiness, and his service their business, will find him a better master than Pharaoh was, and not so extreme to mark what they do amiss. Many conjectures there are concerning the offense of these servants of Pharaoh; some make it no less than an attempt to take away his life; others no more but the casual lighting of a fly into his cup, and a little sand in his bread: whatever it was, Providence, by this means, brought them into the prison where Joseph was.

4. The captain of the guard, which was Potiphar, charged Joseph with them - Which intimates that he began now to be reconciled to him.

6. They were sad - It was not the prison that made them sad; they were pretty well used to that, but the dream. God has more ways than one to sadden the spirits of those that are to be made sad. Those sinners that are hardy enough under outward trouble, yet God can find a way to trouble them, and take off their wheels, by wounding their spirits, and laying a load upon them.

8. Do not interpretations belong to God? - He means the God whom he worshipped, to the knowledge of whom he endeavours hereby to lead them. And if interpretations belong to God, he is a free agent, and may communicate the power to whom he pleases, therefore tell me your dreams.

14. Think on me, when it shall be well with thee - Though the respect paid to Joseph, made the prison as easy to him as a prison could be, yet none can blame him to be desirous of liberty. See

what a modest representation he makes of his own case. He doth not reflect upon his brethren that sold him, only saith, I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews. Nor doth he reflect on the wrong done him in this imprisonment by his mistress that was his persecutor, and his master that was his judge, but mildly avers his own innocency. Here have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon - When we are called to vindicate ourselves, we should carefully avoid as much as may be speaking ill of others. Let us be content to prove ourselves innocent, and not fond of upbraiding others with their guilt.

20. He lifted up the head of these two prisoners-That is, arraigned and tried them; and he restored the chief butler, and hanged the chief baker.

## XLI

Two things providence is here bringing about.

1. The advancement of Joseph.
2. The maintenance of Jacob and his family in a time of famine; for the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the earth, and direct the affairs of the children of men. In order to these, here is,
   - I. Pharaoh's dream, ver. 1-8.
   - II. The recommendation of Joseph to him for an interpreter, ver. 9-13.
   - III. The interpretation of the dreams, and the prediction of seven years plenty, and seven years famine in Egypt, with the prudent advice given to Pharaoh thereupon, ver. 14-36.
   - IV. The preferment of Joseph to a place of the highest power and trust, ver. 37-45.
   - V. The accomplishment of Joseph's prediction, and his fidelity to his trust, ver. 46-57.

8. His spirit was troubled - It cannot but put us into a concern to receive any extraordinary message from heaven. And his magicians were puzzled; the rules of their art failed them; these dreams of Pharaoh did not fall within the compass of them. This was to make Joseph's performance by the Spirit of God the more admirable.

9. I remember my faults this day - in forgetting Joseph. Some think he means his faults against Pharaoh, for which he was imprisoned, and then he would insinuate, that through Pharaoh had forgiven him, he had not forgiven himself. God's time for the enlargement of his people will appear, at last, to be the fittest time. If the chief butler had at first used his interest for Joseph's enlargement, and had obtained, it is probable, he would have gone back to the land of the Hebrews, and then he had neither been so blessed himself, nor such a blessing to his family. But staying two years longer, and coming out upon this occasion to interpret the king's dreams, way was made for his preferment. The king can scarce allow him time, but that decency required it, to shave himself, and to change his raiment, chap. xli, 14. It is done with all possible expedition, and Joseph is brought in perhaps almost as much surprised as Peter was, Acts xii, 9, so suddenly is his captivity brought back, that he is as one that dreams, Psalm lxxvi, 1. Pharaoh immediately, without enquiring who or whence he was tells him his business, that he expected he should interpret his dream.

16.(1.) He gives honour to God; It is not in me; God must give it. Great gifts then appear most graceful and illustrious, when those that have them use them humbly, and take not the praise of them to themselves, but give it to God, (2.) He shews respect to Pharaoh, and hearty goodwill to him, supposing that the interpretation would be an answer of peace. Those that consult God's oracles may expect an answer of peace.

29. See the goodness of God, in sending the seven years of plenty before those of famine, that provision might be made accordingly. How wonderful wisely has Providence, that great house-keeper, ordered the affairs of this numerous family from the beginning! Great variety of seasons there have been and the produce of the earth sometimes more, and sometimes less; yet take one time with another, what was miraculous concerning the manna, is ordinarily verified in the common course of Providence; He that gathers much has nothing over, and he that gathers little has no lack, Exod. xvi, 18.

30. See the perishing nature of our worldly enjoyments. The great increase of the years of plenty was quite lost and swallowed up in the years of famine; and the overplus of it, which seemed very much, yet did but just serve to keep men alive.

44. Without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot - All the affairs of the kingdom must pass through his hand. Only in the throne will I be greater than thou - It is probable there were those about court that opposed Joseph's preferment, which occasioned Pharaoh so oft to repeat the grant, and with that solemn sanction, I am Pharaoh. He gave him his own ring as a ratification of his commission, and in token of peculiar favour; or it was like delivering him the great seal. He put fine clothes upon him instead of his prison garments, and adorned him with a chain of gold. He made him ride in the second chariot next his own, and ordered all to do obeisance to him, as to Pharaoh himself; he gave him a new name and such a name as spoke the value he had for him, Zaphnath-paaneah, a Revealer of secrets. He married him honourably to a prince's daughter. Where God had been liberal in giving wisdom and other merits, Pharaoh was not sparing in conferring honours. Now this preferment of Joseph, was, 1st, an abundant recompense for his innocent and patient suffering, a lasting instance of the equity and goodness of providence, and an encouragement to all to trust in a good God. 2ndly, It was typical of the exaltation of Christ, that great revealer of secrets, (John i, 18,) or as some translate Joseph's new name, the saviour of the world. The brightest glories of the upper world are upon him, the highest trusts lodged in his hand, and all power given him both in heaven and earth. He is gatherer, keeper, and disposer of all the stores of divine grace, and chief ruler of the kingdom of God among men. The work of ministers is to cry before him; Bow the knee; kiss the Son.

50. Two sons - In the names he gave them, he owned the divine Providence giving this happy turn to his affairs. He was made to forget his misery, but could he be so unnatural as to forget all his father's house? And he was made fruitful in the land of his affliction. It had been the land of his affliction, and, in some sense, it was still so, for his distance from his father was still his affliction. Ephraim signifies fruitfulness, and Manasseh forgetfulness.

54. The seven years of dearth began to come - Not only in Egypt, but in other lands, in all lands, that is, all the neighbouring countries.

## XLII

We have in this chapter,

I. The humble application of Jacob's sons to Joseph, to buy corn, ver. 1-6.

II. The fright Joseph put them into, for their trial, ver. 7-20.

III. The conviction they were now under of their sin concerning Joseph long before, ver. 21-24.

IV. Their return to Canaan with corn, and the great distress their good father was in upon the account they gave him of their expedition, ver. 25-38.

1. Jacob saw that there was corn - That is, he saw the corn that his neighbours had bought there and brought home.

2. Get you down thither - Masters of families must not only pray for daily bread for their families, but must with care and industry provide it.

7. We may well wonder that Joseph, during the twenty years he had been in Egypt, especially during the last seven years that he had been in power there, never sent to his father to acquaint him with his circumstances; nay, 'tis strange that he who so oft went throughout all the land of Egypt, never made a step to Canaan, to visit his aged father. When he was in the borders of Egypt that lay next to Canaan, perhaps it would not have been above three or four days journey for him in his chariot. 'Tis a probable conjecture, that his whole management of himself in this affair was by special direction from heaven, that the purpose of God, concerning Jacob and his family, might be accomplished. When Joseph's brethren came, he knew them by many a good token, but they knew not him, little thinking to find him there.

9. He remembered the dreams, but they had forgot them. The laying up of God's oracles in our hearts will be of excellent use to us in all our conduct. Joseph had an eye to his dreams, which he knew to be divine, in his carriage towards his brethren, and aimed at the accomplishment of them, and the bringing his brethren to repentance; and both those points were gained.

1. He shewed himself harsh with them: the very manner of his speaking, considering the post he was in, was enough to frighten them, for he spake roughly to them - He charged them with ill designs against the government, treated them as dangerous persons, ye are spies, protesting by the life of Pharaoh that they were so. Some make that an oath, others make it no more but a vehement asseveration; however, it was more than yea, yea, and nay, nay, and therefore came of evil.
2. They hereupon were very submissive; they spoke to him with all respect; nay, my Lord. They modestly deny the charge, we are no spies; they tell him their business, they came to buy food, they give a particular account of themselves and their family, ver. 13, and that was it he wanted.
3. He clapt them all up in prison three days.
4. He concluded with them at last, that one of them should be left as a hostage, and the rest should go home and fetch Benjamin. It was a very encouraging word he said, I fear God; q.d. You may assure yourselves, I will do you no wrong, I dare not, for I know that as high as I am, there is one higher than I. With those that

fear God we have reason to expect fair dealing: the fear of God will be a check upon those that are in power, to restrain them from abusing their power to oppression and tyranny:

21. We are very guilty concerning our brother - We do not read that they said this during their three days imprisonment; but now when the matter was come to some issue, and they saw themselves still embarrassed, they began to relent. Perhaps Joseph's mention of the fear of God, put them upon consideration, and extorted this reflexion.

24. He took Simeon - He chose him for the hostage, probably because he remembered him to have been his most bitter enemy, or because he observed him now to be least humbled and concerned. He bound him before their eyes, to affect them all.

28. Their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done to us? - They knew that the Egyptians abhorred a Hebrew, chap. xliii, 32, and therefore, since they could not expect to receive any kindness from them, they concluded that this was done with a design to pick a quarrel with them, the rather because the man, the Lord of the land, had charged them as spies. Their own conscience were awake, and their sins set in order before them, and this puts them into confusion. When the events of providence concerning us are surprising, it is good to inquire what it is that God has done and is doing with us?

38. My son shall not go down with you - He plainly intimates a distrust of them, remembering that he never saw Joseph since he had been with them; therefore Benjamin shall not go with you.

## XLIII

Here the story of Joseph's brethren is carried on.

I. Their melancholy parting with their father Jacob, in Canaan, ver. 1-14.

II. Their meeting with Joseph in Egypt, ver. 15-34.

9. Judah's conscience had lately smitten him for what he had done a great while ago against Joseph; and as an evidence of the truth of his repentance, he is ready to undertake, as far as a man could do it, for Benjamin's security. He will not only not wrong him but will do all he can to protect him. This is such restitution as the case will admit: when he knew not how he could retrieve Joseph, he would make some amends for the irreparable injury he had done him, by doubling his care concerning Benjamin.

11. If it must be so now, take your brother - If no corn can be had but upon those terms, as good expose him to the perils of the journey, as suffer ourselves and families, and Benjamin among the rest, to perish for want of bread: it is no fault, but our wisdom and duty, to alter our resolutions when there is a good reason for so doing: constancy is a virtue, but obstinacy is not: it is God's prerogative to make unchangeable resolves.

12. Take double money - As much again as they took the time before, upon supposition that the price of corn might be risen, or that, if it should be insisted upon, they might pay a ransom for Simeon. And he sent a present of such things as the land afforded, and were scarce in Egypt, the commodities that Canaan exported.

14. God almighty give you mercy before the man! - Jacob had formerly turned an angry brother into a kind one with a present and a prayer, and here he betakes himself to the same tried method. Those that would find mercy with men must seek it of God. He concludes all with this, if I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved - If I must part with them thus one after another, I acquiesce and say, The will of the Lord be done.

23. Your God, and the God of your father, has given you treasure in your sacks - Hereby he shews that he had no suspicion of dishonesty in them: for what we get by deceit we cannot say God gives it us. He silences their farther enquiry about it: ask not how it came thither, providence brought it you, and let that satisfy you. It appears by what he said, that by his master's instructions he was brought to the knowledge of the true God, the God of the Hebrews. He directs them to look up to God, and acknowledge his providence in the good bargain they had. We must own ourselves indebted to God as our God, and the God of our fathers, (a God in covenant with us and them) for all our successes and advantages, and the kindnesses of our friends; for every creature is that to us, and no more, than God makes it to be.

26. When they brought him the present, they bowed themselves before him, and again, when they gave him an account of their father's health, they made obeisance, and called him, Thy servant, our father - Thus were Joseph's dreams fulfilled more and more; and even the father, by the sons, bowed before him. Probably Jacob had directed them, if they had occasion to speak of him to the man, the Lord of the land, to call him his servant.

29. God be gracious unto thee, my son - Joseph's favour, though he was the Lord of the land, would do him little good, unless God were gracious to him.

33. He placed his brethren according to their seniority, as if he could certainly divine. Some think they placed themselves so according to their custom; but if so, I see not why such particular notice is taken of it, especially as a thing they marvelled at.

34. They drank and were merry - Their cares and fears were now over, and they eat their bread with joy, concluding they were now upon good terms with the man, the Lord of the land. If God accept our works, our present, we have reason to be chearful.

## XLIV

Joseph having entertained his brethren, dismissed them: but here we have them brought back in a greater fright than any they had been in yet. Observe.

I. What method he took, both to humble them farther, and to try their affections to his brother Benjamin, by which he would be able to judge the sincerity of their repentance for what they had done against him. This he contrived to do by bringing Benjamin into distress, ver. 1-17.

II. The good success of the experiment: he found them all heartily concerned, and Judah particularly, both for the safety of Benjamin, and for the comfort of their aged father, ver. 18-34.

5. Is not this it in which my Lord drinketh? And for which he would search thoroughly - So it may be rendered.

16. God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants - Referring to the injury they had formerly done to Joseph, for which they thought God was now reckoning with them. Even in those afflictions wherein we apprehend ourselves wronged by men, yet we must own that God is righteous, and finds out our iniquity. We cannot judge what men are, by what they have been formerly, not what they will do, by what they have done. Age and experience may make men wiser and better, They that had sold Joseph, yet would not abandon Benjamin.

18. And Judah said - We have here a most pathetic speech which Judah made to Joseph on Benjamin's behalf. Either Judah was a better friend to Benjamin than the rest, and more solicitous to bring him off; or he thought himself under greater obligations to endeavour it than the rest, because he had passed his word to his father for his safe return. His address, as it is here recorded, is so very natural, and so expressive of his present passion, that we cannot but suppose Moses, who wrote it so long after, to have written it under the special direction of him that made man's mouth. A great deal of unaffected art, and unstudied rhetoric there is in this speech.

1. He addressed himself to Joseph with a great deal of respect calls him his Lord, himself and his brethren his servants, begs his patient hearing, and passeth a mighty compliment upon him, Thou art even as Pharaoh, whose favour we desire, and whose wrath we dread as we do Pharaoh's.
2. He represented Benjamin as one well worthy of his compassionate consideration, he was a little one, compared with the rest; the youngest, not acquainted with the world, nor inured to hardship, having been always brought up tenderly with his father. It made the case the more piteous that he alone was left of his mother, and his brother was dead, viz. Joseph; little did Judah think what a tender point he touched upon now. Judah knew that Joseph was sold, and therefore had reason enough to think that he was not alive.
3. He urged it closely that Joseph had himself constrained them to bring Benjamin with them, had expressed a desire to see him, had forbidden them his presence, unless they brought Benjamin with them, all which intimated, that he designed him some kindness. And must he be brought with so much difficulty to the preferment of a perpetual slavery? Was he not brought to Egypt in obedience, purely in obedience to the command of Joseph, and would not he shew him some mercy?
4. The great argument he insists upon was the insupportable grief it would be to his aged father, if Benjamin should be left behind in servitude. His father loves him, ver. 20. Thus they had pleaded against Joseph's insisting on his coming down ver. 22. If he should leave his father, his father would die, much more if he now be left behind, never to return. This the old man of whom they spake, had pleaded against his going down. If mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs, that crown of glory, with sorrow to the grave. This therefore Judah presseth with a great deal of earnestness, his life is bound up in the lad's life, when he sees that the lad is not with us, he will faint away and die immediately, or will abandon himself to such a degree of sorrow, as will, in a few days, make an end

of him, And (lastly) Judah pleads, that, for his part, he could not bear to see this. Let me not see the evil that shall come on my father.

5. Judah, in honour to the justice of Joseph's sentence, and to shew his sincerity in this plea, offers himself to become a bond- man instead of Benjamin. Thus the law would be satisfied; Joseph would be no loser, for we may suppose Judah a more able bodied man than Benjamin; Jacob would better bear that than the loss of Benjamin. Now, so far was he from grieving at his father's particular fondness for Benjamin, than he is himself willing to be a bond-man to indulge it. Now, had Joseph been, as Judah supposed, an utter stranger to the family, yet even common humanity could not but be wrought upon by such powerful reasonings as these; for nothing could be said more moving, more tender; it was enough to melt a heart of stone: but to Joseph, who was nearer a-kin to Benjamin than Judah himself, and who, at this time, felt a greater passion for him and his aged father, than Judah did, nothing could be more pleasingly nor more happily said. Neither Jacob nor Benjamin needed an intercessor with Joseph, for he himself loved them. Upon the whole, let us take notice, (1.) How prudently Judah suppressed all mention of the crime that was charged upon Benjamin. Had he said any thing by way of acknowledgment of it, he had reflected on Benjamin's honesty. Had he said any thing by way of denial of it, he had reflected on Joseph's justice; therefore he wholly waves that head, and appeals to Joseph's pity. (2.) What good reason dying Jacob had to say, Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise, chap. xlix, 8, for he excelled them all in boldness, wisdom, eloquence, and especially tenderness for their father and family. (3.) Judah's faithful adherence to Benjamin now in his distress was recompensed long after, by the constant adherence of the tribe of Benjamin to the tribe of Judah, when all the other ten tribes deserted it.

## XLV

Joseph let Judah go on without interruption, heard all he had to say, and then answered it all in one word, I am Joseph. Now he found his brethren humbled for their sins, mindful of himself (for Judah had mentioned him twice in his speech) respectful to their father, and very tender of their brother Benjamin: now they were ripe for the comfort he designed them, by making himself known to them. This was to Joseph's brethren as clear shining after rain; nay, it was to them as life from the dead. Here is,

I. Joseph's discovery of himself to his brethren, and his discourse with them upon that occasion, ver. 1-15.

II. The orders Pharaoh gave to fetch Jacob and his family down to Egypt, and Joseph's dispatch of his brethren back to his father with these orders, ver. 16-24.

III. The joyful tidings of this brought to Jacob, ver. 25-28.

1. Judah and his brethren were waiting for an answer, and could not but be amazed to discover, instead of the gravity of a judge, the natural affection of a father or brother. Cause every man to go out - The private conversations of friends are the most free. When Joseph would put on love, he puts off state, which it was not fit his servants should be witnesses of. Thus Christ graciously manifests himself and his loving kindness to his people, out of the sight and hearing of the world. See note at "ver. 2" for continuation to item

2. Tears were the introduction to his discourse. He had dammed up this stream a great while, and with much ado, but now it swelled so high that he could no longer contain, but he wept aloud, so that those whom he had forbid to see him could not but hear him. These were tears of tenderness and strong affection, and with these he threw off that austerity, with which he had hitherto carried himself towards his brethren; for he could bear it no longer. This represents the Divine compassion towards returning penitents, as much as that of the father of the prodigal, Luke xv, 20 Hosea xi, 8, 9. See note at "ver. 3" for continuation to item No. 3

3. He abruptly tells them; I am Joseph - They knew him only by his Egyptian name, Zaphnath-paaneah, his Hebrew name being lost and forgot in Egypt; but now he teaches them to call him by that, I am Joseph: nay, that they might not suspect it was another of the same name, he explains himself. I am Joseph your brother. This would both humble them yet more for their sin in selling him, and encourage them to hope for kind treatment. This word, at first, startled Joseph's brethren, they started back through fear, or at least stood still astonished: but Joseph called kindly and familiarly to them. Come near, I pray you. Thus, when Christ manifests himself to his people he encourages them to draw near to him with a true heart. Perhaps being about to speak of their selling of him, he would not speak aloud, lest the Egyptians should overhear, and it should make the Hebrews to be yet more an abomination to them; therefore he would have them come near, that he might whisper with them, which, now the tide of his passion was a little over, he was able to do, whereas, at first, he could not but cry out.

4. He endeavours to sweep their grief for the injuries they had done him, by shewing them, that, whatever they designed, God meant it for good, and had brought much good out of it. See note at "ver. 1" for start of item, ie. No. 1

5. Be not grieved or angry with yourselves - Sinners must grieve, and be angry with themselves for their sins; yea, though God, by his power, bring good out of them, for that is no thanks to the sinner: but true penitents should be greatly affected with it, when they see God bringing good out of evil. Though we must not with this consideration extenuate our own sins, and so take off the edge of our repentance; yet it may do well thus to extenuate the sins of others, and so take off the edge of our angry resentments. Thus Joseph doth here. His brethren needed not to fear that he would revenge upon them an injury which God's providence had made to turn so much to his advantage, and that of his family. Now he tells them how long the famine was likely to last, five years yet, ver. 6, and what a capacity he was in of being kind to his relations, which is the greatest satisfaction that wealth and power can give to a good man.

8. See what a favourable colour he puts upon the injury they had done him, God sent me before you - God's Israel is the particular care of God's providence. Joseph reckoned that his advancement was not so much designed to save a whole kingdom of Egyptians, as to preserve a small family of Israelites; for the Lord's portion is his people: whatever goes with others, they shall be secured. How admirable are the projects of Providence! How remote its tendencies! What wheels are there within wheels; and yet all directed by the eyes in the wheels, and the Spirit of the living Creature!

See note at "ver. 1" for start of item, ie. No. [1.] [5.] He promises to take care of his father and all his family, during the rest of the years of famine. (1.) He desires that his father might speedily be made glad with the tidings of his life and honour. His brethren must hasten to Canaan, and acquaint Jacob that his son Joseph was Lord of all Egypt - He knew it would be a refreshing oil to his hoary head, and a sovereign cordial to his spirits. He desires them to give themselves, and take with them to their father, all possible satisfaction of the truth of these surprising tidings.

12. Your eyes see that it is my mouth - If they could recollect themselves, they might remember something of his features and speech, and be satisfied. See note at "ver. 1" for (2.) He is very earnest that his father and all his family should come to him to Egypt. Come down unto me, tarry not - He allots his dwelling in Goshen, that part of Egypt which lay towards Canaan, that they might be mindful of the country from which they were to come out. He promiseth to provide for him, I will nourish - Our Lord Jesus being, like Joseph, exalted to the highest honours and powers of the upper world, it is his will that all that are his should be with him where he is. This is his commandment, that we be with him now in faith and hope, and a heavenly conversation; and this is his promise, that we shall be for ever with him.

24. See that ye fall not out by the way - He knew they were but too apt to be quarrelsome; and what had lately passed, which revived the remembrance of what they had done formerly against their brother, might give them occasion to quarrel. Now Joseph having forgiven them all, lays this obligation upon them, not to upbraid one another. This charge our Lord Jesus has given to us, that we love one another, that we live in peace, that whatever occurs, or whatever former occurrences are remembered, we fall not out. For,

1. We are brethren, we have all one father.
2. We are his brethren; and we shame, our relation to him, who is our peace, if we fall out.
3. We are all guilty, verily guilty, and instead of quarrelling with one another, have a great deal of reason to fall out with ourselves.
4. We are forgiven of God, whom we have all offended, and therefore should be ready to forgive one another.
5. We are by the way, a way that lies through the land of Egypt, where we have many eyes upon us, that seek occasion and advantage against us; a way that leads to Canaan, where we hope to be for ever in perfect peace.

26. We have here the good news brought to Jacob. When, without any preamble, his sons came in crying Joseph is yet alive. The very mention of Joseph's name revived his sorrow, so that his heart fainted. It was a good while before he came to himself. He was in such care and fear about the rest of them, that at this time it would have been joy enough to him to hear that Simeon is released, and Benjamin is come safe home; for he had been ready to despair concerning both these; but to bear that Joseph is alive, is too good news to be true; he faints, for he believes it not.

27. When he saw the waggons his spirit revived - Now Jacob is called Israel, for he begins to recover his wonted vigour. It pleases him to think that Joseph is alive. He saith nothing of Joseph's glory, which they had told him of; it was enough to him that Joseph was alive: it pleases him to think of going to see him. Though he was old, and the journey long, yet he would go to see Joseph, because Joseph's business would not permit him to come to him. Observe, He will go see him, not I will go live with him; Jacob was old, and did not expect to live long: but I will go see him before

I die, and then let me depart in peace; let my eyes be refreshed with this sight before they are closed, and then it is enough, I need no more to make me happy in this world.

## XLVI

Jacob is here removing to Egypt in his old age.
I. God sends him thither, ver. 1-4.
II. All his family goes with him, ver. 5-27.
III. Joseph bids him welcome, ver. 28-34.

1. And Israel came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac - He chose that place in remembrance of the communion which his father and grandfather had with God in that place. In his devotion he had an eye to God as the God of his father Isaac, that is, a God in covenant with him, for by Isaac the covenant was entailed upon him. He offered sacrifices, extraordinary sacrifices, besides those at his stated times. These sacrifices were offered,

1. By way of thanksgiving for the late blessed change of the face of his family, for the good news he had received concerning Joseph, and the hopes he had of seeing him.
2. By way of petition for the presence of God with him in his intended journey.
3. By way of consultation. Jacob would not go on 'till he had asked God's leave.

2. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night - (Probably the next night after he had offered his sacrifices.) Those who desire to keep up communion with God, shall find that it never fails on his side. If we speak to him as we ought, he will not fail to speak to us. God called him by his name, by his old name, Jacob, Jacob, to mind him of his low estate. Jacob, like one well acquainted with the visions of the Almighty, answers, Here am I - Ready to receive orders. And what has God to say to him?

3. I am God, the God of thy father - That is, I am what thou ownest me to be: thou shalt find me a God of divine wisdom and power engaged for thee: and thou shalt find me the God of thy father, true to the covenant made with him. Fear not to go down into Egypt - It seems though Jacob, upon the first intelligence of Joseph's life and glory in Egypt, resolved without any hesitation I will go and see him, yet upon second thoughts he saw difficulties in it.

1. He was old, 130 years old; it was a long journey, and he was unfit to travel.
2. He feared lest his sons should be tainted with the idolatry of Egypt, and forget the God of their fathers.
3. Probably he thought of what God had said to Abraham concerning the bondage and affliction of his seed.
4. He could not think of laying his bones in Egypt. But whatever his discouragements were, this was enough to answer them all, Fear not to go down into Egypt.

4. I will go down with thee into Egypt - Those that go where God sends them shall certainly have God with them. And I will surely bring thee up again - Tho' Jacob died in Egypt, yet this promise was fulfilled,

1. In the bringing up of his body to be buried in Canaan.
2. In the bringing up of his seed to be settled in Canaan. Whatever low and darksome valley we are called into, we may be confident if God go down with us, he will surely bring us up again. If he go with us down to death, he will surely bring us up again to glory. And Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes - That is a promise that Joseph should live as long as he lived, that he should be with him at his death, and close his eyes with all possible tenderness. Probably Jacob, in the multitude of his thoughts within him, had been wishing that Joseph might do this last office of love for him; and God thus answered him in the letter of his desire. Thus God sometimes gratifies the innocent wishes of his people, and makes not only their death happy, but the very circumstances of it agreeable.

7. All his seed - 'Tis probable they continued to live together in common with their father, and therefore when he went they all went; which perhaps they were the more willing to do, because, tho' they had heard that the land of Canaan was promised them, yet to this day they had none of it in possession. We have here a particular account of the names of Jacob's family; his sons sons, most of which are afterwards mentioned, as heads of houses in the several tribes. See Num. xxvi, 5, &c. Issachar called his eldest son Tola, which signifies a worm, probably because when he was born he was a little weak child, not likely to live, and yet there sprang from him a very numerous off-spring, 1Ch vii, 2. The whole number that went down into Egypt were sixty-six, to which add Joseph and his two sons, who were there before, and Jacob himself, the head of the family, and you have the number of seventy. 'Twas now 215 years since God had promised Abraham to make of him a great nation, chap. xii, 2, and yet that branch of his seed, on which the promise was entailed, was as yet increased but to seventy, of which this particular account is kept, that the power of God in multiplying these seventy to so vast a multitude, even in Egypt, may be the more illustrious. When he pleases, A little one shall become a thousand.

30. Now let me die - Not but that it was farther desirable to live with Joseph, and to see his honour and usefulness; but he had so much satisfaction in this first meeting, that he thought it too much to desire or expect any more in this world.

## XLVII

In this chapter we have instances,

I. Of Joseph's kindness to his relations, presenting his brethren first, and then his father to Pharaoh, ver. 1-10. setting them in Goshen, and providing for them there, ver. 11, 12. paying his respects to his father when he sent for him, ver. 27-31.

II. Of Joseph's justice between prince and people in a very critical affair; selling Pharaoh's corn to his subjects with reasonable profit to Pharaoh, and yet without any wrong to them, ver. 13-26.

3. What is your occupation? - Pharaoh takes it for granted they had something to do. All that have a place in the world should have an employment in it according to their capacity, some

occupation or other. Those that need not work for their bread, yet must have something to do to keep them from idleness.

4. To sojourn in the land are we cane - Not to settle there for ever; only to sojourn, while the famine prevailed so in Canaan, which lay high, that it was not habitable for shepherds, the grass being burnt up much more than in Egypt, which lay low, and where the corn chiefly failed, but there was tolerable good pasture.

8. How old art thou? - A question usually put to old men, for it is natural to us to admire old age, and to reverence it. Jacob's countenance no doubt shewed him to be old, for be had been a man of labour and sorrow. In Egypt people were not so long-lived as in Canaan, and therefore Pharaoh looks upon Jacob with wonder.

9. Observe

1. Jacob calls his life a pilgrimage, looking upon himself as a stranger in this world, and a traveler towards another. He reckoned himself not only a pilgrim now he was in Egypt, a strange country in which he never was before, but his life even in the land of his nativity was a pilgrimage.
2. He reckoned his life by days; for even so it is soon reckoned, and we are not sure of the continuance of it for a day to an end, but may be turned out of this tabernacle at less than an hours warning.
3. The character he gives of them was, (1.) That they were few. Though he had now lived 130 years, they seemed to him but as a few days, in comparison of the days of eternity, in which a thousand years are but as one day; (2.) That they were evil. This is true concerning man in general, Job xiv, 1, he is of few days and full of trouble: Jacob's life particularly had been made up of evil days. the pleasantest days of his life were yet before him. (3.) That they were short of the days of his fathers; not so many, not so pleasant as their days. Old age came sooner upon him than it had done upon some of his ancestors.

10. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh - Which was not only an act of civility but an act of piety; he prayed for him, as one having the authority of a prophet and a patriarch: and a patriarch's blessing was not a thing to be despised, no not by a potent prince.

21. He removed them to cities - He transplanted them, to shew Pharaoh's sovereign power over them, and that they might, in time, forget their titles to their lands, and be the easier reconciled to their new condition of servitude. How hard soever this seems to have been upon them, they themselves were sensible of it as a great kindness, and were thankful they were not worse used.

28. Jacob lived seventeen years after he came into Egypt, far beyond his own expectation: seventeen years he had nourished Joseph, for so old he was when he was sold from him, and now, seventeen years Joseph nourished him. Observe how kindly Providence ordered Jacob's affairs; that when he was old, and least able to bear care and fatigue, he had least occasion for it, being well provided for by his son without his own forecast.

29. And the time drew nigh that Israel must die - Israel, that had power over the angel, and prevailed, yet must yield to death. He died by degrees; his candle was not blown out, but gradually burnt down, so that he saw, at some distance, the time drawing nigh. He would be buried in Canaan, not because Canaan was the land of his nativity, but in faith, because it was the land of promise, which he desired thus, as it were to keep possession of 'till the time should come when his posterity should be masters of it: and because it was a type of heaven, that better country, which he was in

expectation of. When this was done, Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head - Worshipping God, as it is explained, Heb. xi, 21, giving God thanks for all his favours, and particularly for this, that Joseph was ready, to put his hand upon his eyes. Thus they that go down to the dust should, with humble thankfulness, bow before God, the God of their mercies.

## XLVIII

In this chapter Jacob's dying words are recorded, because he speaks by a spirit of prophecy; Abraham's and Isaac's are not. God's gifts and graces shine forth much more in some than in others upon their death-beds. Here is,

I. Joseph hearing of his father's sickness goes to visit him, and takes his two sons with him, ver. 1-2.

II. Jacob solemnly adopts his two sons, and takes them for his own, ver. 3-7.

III. He blesseth them, ver. 8-16.

IV. He explains and justifies the crossing of his hands in blessing them, ver. 17-20.

V. He leaves a particular legacy to Joseph, ver. 21-22.

3. God blessed me - And let that blessing be entailed upon them. God had promised him two things, a numerous issue, and Canaan for an inheritance. And Joseph's sons, pursuant hereunto, should each of them multiply into a tribe, and each of them have a distinct lot in Canaan, equal with Jacob's own sons. See how he blessed them by faith in that which God had said to him Heb. xi, 21.

7. Mention is made of the death and burial of Rachel, Joseph's mother, and Jacob's best beloved wife. The removal of dear relations from us is an affliction, the remembrance of which cannot but abide with us a great while. Strong affections in the enjoyment cause long afflictions in the loss.

11. I had not thought to see thy face, (having many years given him up for lost) and lo God hath shewed me also thy seed? - See here, How these two good men own God in their comforts. Joseph saith, They are my sons whom God has given me - And to magnify the favour he adds, in this place of my banishment, slavery and imprisonment. Jacob saith here, God hath shewed me thy seed - Our comforts are then doubly sweet to us, when we see them coming from God's hand.

15. The God who fed me all my life long unto this day - As long as we have lived in this world we have had continual experience of God's goodness to us in providing for the support of our natural life. Our bodies have called for daily food, and we have never wanted food convenient. He that has fed us all our life long will not fail us at last.

16. The angel who redeemed me from all evil - A great deal of hardship he had known in his time, but God had graciously kept him from the evil of his troubles. Christ, the angel of the covenant is he that redeems us from all evil. It becomes the servants of God, when they are old and dying, to witness for our God that they have found him gracious. Joseph had placed his children so, as that Jacob's right-hand should be put on the head of Manasseh the eldest, ver. 12, 13, but Jacob would put it on the head of Ephraim the youngest, ver. 14. This displeased Joseph, who was willing to support the reputation of his first-born and would therefore have removed his father's hands, ver.

17, 18, but Jacob gave him to understand that he knew what he did, and that he did it neither by mistake nor in a humour, nor from a partial affection to one more than the other, but from a spirit of prophecy.

19. Ephraim shall he greater - When the tribes were mustered in the wilderness Ephraim was more numerous than Manasseh, and had the standard of that squadron, Num. i, 32, 33, 35-ii, 18, 20, and is named first, Psalm lxxx, 2. Joshua was of that tribe. The tribe of Manasseh was divided, one half on one side Jordan, the other half on the other side, which made it the less powerful and considerable. God, in bestowing his blessings upon his people, gives more to some than to others, more gifts, graces and comforts, and more of the good things of this life. And he often gives most to those that are least likely: he chuseth the weak things of the world, raiseth the poor out of the dust. Grace observes not the order of nature, nor doth God prefer those whom we think fittest to be preferred but as it pleaseth him.

21. I die, but God shall be with you, and bring you again - This assurance was given them, and carefully preserved among them, that they might neither love Egypt too much when it favoured them, nor fear it too much when it frowned upon them. These words of Jacob furnish us with comfort in reference to the death of our friends: But God shall be with us, and his gracious presence is sufficient to make up the loss. They leave us, but he will never fail us. He will bring us to the land of our fathers, the heavenly Canaan, whither our godly fathers are gone before us. If God be with us while we stay behind in this world, and will receive us shortly to be with them that are gone before to a better world, we ought not to sorrow as those that have no hope.

22. He bestowed one portion upon him above his brethren. The lands bequeathed are described to be those which he took out of the hand of the Amorite with his sword and with his bow. He purchased them first, Josh. xxiv, 32, and it seems was afterwards disseized of them by the Amorites, but retook them by the sword, repelling force by force, and recovering his right by violence when he could not otherwise recover it. These lands he settled upon Joseph. Mention is made of this grant, John iv, 5. Pursuant to it, this parcel of ground was given to the tribe of Ephraim as their right, and the lot was never cast upon it: and in it Joseph's bones were buried, which perhaps Jacob had an eye to as much as to any thing in this settlement. It may sometimes be both just and prudent to give some children portions above the rest: but a grave is that which we can most count upon as our own in this earth.

## XLIX

Jacob is here upon his death-bed making his will: what he said here he could not say when he would, but as the Spirit gave him utterance, who chose this time that divine strength might be perfected in this weakness. The twelve sons of Jacob were in their day men of renown; but the twelve tribes of Israel, which descended and were denominated from them, were much more renowned, we find their names upon the gates of the new Jerusalem, Rev. xxi, 12. In the prospect of which their dying father saith something remarkable of each son, or of the tribe that bore his name. Here is,

I. The preface, ver. 1, 2.

II. The prediction concerning each tribe, ver. 3-28.

III. The charge repeated concerning his burial, ver. 29-32.
IV. His death, ver. 33.

1. Gather yourselves together - Let them all be sent for to see their father die, and to hear his dying words. "Twas a comfort to Jacob, now he was dying, to see all his children about him tho' he had sometimes thought himself bereaved: 'twas of use to them to attend him in his last moments, that they might learn of him how to die, as well as how to live; what he said to each, he said in the hearing of all the rest, for we may profit by the reproofs, counsels and comforts that are principally intended for others. That I may tell you that which shall befall you, not your persons but your posterity, in the latter days - The prediction of which would be of use to those that come after them, for confirming their faith, and guiding their way, at their return to Canaan. We cannot tell our children what shall befall them, or their families, in this world; but we can tell them from the word of God, what will befall them in the last day of all, according as they carry themselves in this world.

2. Hearken to Israel your father - Let Israel that has prevailed with God, prevail with you.

3. Reuben thou art my first-born - Jacob here puts upon him the ornaments of the birth-right, that he and all his brethren might see what he had forfeited and in that might see the evil of his sin. As the first-born he was his father's joy, being the beginning of his strength. To him belonged the excellency of dignity above his brethren, and some power over them.

4. Thou shalt not excel - A being thou shalt have as a tribe, but not an excellency. No judge, prophet, or prince, are found of that tribe, nor any person of renown only Dathan and Abiram, who were noted for their impious rebellion. That tribe, as not aiming to excel, chose a settlement on the other side Jordan. The character fastened upon Reuben, for which he is laid under this mark of infamy, is, that he was unstable as water. His virtue was unstable, he had not the government of himself, and his own appetites. His honour consequently was unstable, it vanished into smoke, and became as water spilt upon the ground. Jacob charges him particularly with the sin for which he was disgraced, thou wentest up to thy father's bed - It was forty years ago that he had been guilty of this sin, yet now it is remembered against him. Reuben's sin left an indelible mark of infamy upon his family; a wound not to be healed without a scar.

5. Simeon and Levi are brethren - Brethren in disposition, but unlike their father: they were passionate and revengeful, fierce and wilful; their swords, that should have been only weapons of defense, were (as the margin reads it) weapons of violence, to do wrong to others, not to save themselves from wrong.

6. They slew a man - Shechem himself, and many others; and to effect that, they digged down a wall, broke the houses to plunder them, and murder the inhabitants. O my soul, come not thou into their secret - Hereby he professeth not only his abhorrence of such practices in general, but his innocency particularly in that matter. Perhaps he had been suspected as under-hand aiding and abetting; he therefore solemnly expresseth his detestation of the fact.

7. Cursed be their anger - Not their persons. We ought always in the expressions of our zeal carefully to distinguish between the sinner and the sin, so as not to love or bless the sin for the sake of the person, nor to hate or curse the person for the sake of the sin. I will divide them - The Levites were scattered throughout all the tribes, and Simeon's lot lay not together, and was so strait that many of that tribe were forced to disperse themselves in quest of settlements and subsistence. This

curse was afterwards turned into a blessing to the Levites; but the Simeonites, for Zimri's sin, Num. xxv, 6-14, had it bound on.

8. Judah's name signifies praise, in allusion to which he saith, Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise, God was praised for him, chap. xxix, 35, praised by him, and praised in him; and therefore his brethren shall praise him. Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies - This was fulfilled in David, Psalm xviii, 40. Thy father's children shall bow down before thee - Judah was the law-giver, Psalm lx, 7. That tribe led the van through the wilderness, and in the conquest of Canaan, Jude i, 2. The prerogatives of the birth-right which Reuben had forfeited, the excellency of dignity and power, were thus conferred upon Judah. Thy brethren shall bow down before thee, and yet shall praise thee, reckoning themselves happy in having so wise and bold a commander.

9. Judah is a lion's whelp - The lion is the king of beasts, the terror of the forest when he roars; when he seizeth his prey, none can resist him; when he goes up from the prey, none dares pursue him to revenge it. By this it is foretold that the tribe of Judah should become very formidable, and should not only obtain great victories but should peaceably enjoy what was got by those victories. Judah is compared not to a lion rampant, always raging but to a lion couching, enjoying the satisfaction of his success, without creating vexation to others.

10. The scepter shall not depart from Judah till Shiloh come - Jacob here foretels, (1.) That the scepter should come into the tribe of Judah, which was fulfilled in David, on whose family the crown was entailed. (2.) That Shiloh should be of this tribe; that seed in whom the earth should be blessed. That peaceable prosperous one, or, the saviour, so others translate it, shall come of Judah. (3.) That the scepter should continue in that tribe, till the coming of the Messiah, in whom as the king of the church, and the great High-priest, it was fit that both the priesthood and the royalty should determine. Till the captivity, all along from David's time, the scepter was in Judah, and from thence governors of that tribe, or of the Levites that adhered to it, which was equivalent; till Judea became a province of the Roman empire just at the time of our saviour's birth, and was at that time taxed as one of the provinces, Luke ii, 1, and at the time of his death the Jews expressly owned, We have no king but Caesar. Hence it is undeniably inferred against the Jews, that our Lord Jesus is be that should come, and we are to look for no other, for he came exactly at the time appointed. (4.) That it should be a fruitful tribe, especially that it should abound with milk and wine, ver. 11, 12, vines so common, and so strong, that they should tye their asses to them, and so fruitful, that they should load their asses from them; wine as plentiful as water, so that the men of that tribe should be very healthful and lively, their eyes brisk and sparkling, their teeth white. Much of that which is here said concerning Judah is to be applied to our Lord Jesus.

1. He is the ruler of all his Father's children, and the conqueror of all his Father's enemies, and he it is that is the praise of all the saints.
2. He is the lion of the tribe of Judah, as he is called with reference to this, Rev. v, 5, who having spoiled principalities and powers, went up a conqueror, and couched so as none can stir him up when he sat down on the right hand of the Father.
3. To him belongs the scepter, he is the lawgiver, and to him shall the gathering of the people be, as the desire of all nations, Haggai ii, 7, who being lifted up from the earth should draw all men unto him, John xii, 32, and in whom the children of God that are scattered abroad should meet as the center of their unity, John xi, 52.

4. In him there is plenty of all that which is nourishing and refreshing to the soul, and which maintains and chears the divine life in it; in him we may have wine and milk, the riches of Judah's tribe, without money, and without price, Isaiah lv, 1.

13. Zebulon shall dwell at the haven of the sea - This was fulfilled, when 2 or 300 years after, the land of Canaan was divided by lot, and the border of Zebulon went up towards the sea, Josh. xix, 11.

14. Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens - The men of that tribe shall be strong and industrious, fit for and inclined to labour, particularly the toil of husbandry, like the ass that patiently carries his burden. Issachar submitted to two burdens, tillage and tribute.

16. Daniel shall judge his people - Though Daniel was one of the sons of the concubines, yet he shall be a tribe governed by Judges of his own as well as other tribes; and shall by art and policy, and surprise, gain advantages against his enemies, like a serpent suddenly biting the heel of the traveler.

18. I have waited for thy salvation, Lord - If he must break off here, and his breath will not serve him to finish what he intended, with these words he pours out his soul into the bosom of his God, and even breaths it out. The pious ejaculations of a warm and lively devotion, though sometimes they maybe incoherent, yet they are not impertinent; that may be uttered affectionately, which doth not come in methodically. It is no absurdity, when we are speaking to men, to lift up our hearts to God. The salvation he waited for was, 1st, Christ, the promised seed, whom he had spoken of, ver. 10, now he was going to be gathered to his people, he breathes after him to whom the gathering of the people shall be. 2ndly, Heaven, the better country, which he declared plainly that he sought, Heb. xi, 13, 14, and continued seeking now he was in Egypt.

19. Concerning Gad, he alludes to his name, which signifies a troop, foresees the character of that tribe, that it should be a warlike tribe; and so we find, 1Ch xii, 8, the Gadites were men of war fit for the battle. He foresees, that the situation of that tribe on the other side Jordan would expose it to the incursions of its neighbours, the Moabites and Ammonites; and that they might not be proud of their strength and valour, he foretells that the troops of their enemies should, in many skirmishes, overcome them; yet, that they might not be discouraged by their defeats, he assures them, that they should overcome at the last, which was fulfilled, when in Saul's time and David's the Moabites and Ammonites were wholly subdued.

20. Concerning Asher, he foretells, That it should be a rich tribe, replenished not only with bread for necessity, but with fatness, with dainties, royal dainties, and these exported out of Asher, to other tribes, perhaps to other lands. The God of nature has provided for us not only necessaries but dainties, that we might call him a bountiful benefactor; yet, whereas all places are competently furnished with necessaries, only some places afford dainties. Corn is more common than spices. Were the supports of luxury as universal as the supports of life, the world would be worse than it is, and that needs not.

21. Naphtali is a hind let loose - Those of this tribe were, as the loosen'd hind, zealous for their liberty, and yet affable and courteous, their language refined, and they complaisant, giving goodly words. Among God's Israel there is to be found a great variety of dispositions, yet all contributing to the beauty and strength of the body. He closes with the blessings of his best beloved sons, Joseph and Benjamin, with these he will breathe his last.

22. Joseph is a fruitful bough, or young tree, for God had made him fruitful in the land of his affliction, as branches of a vine, or other spreading plant, running over the wall.

23. The archer have sorely grieved him - Tho' he now lived at ease and in honour, Jacob minds him of the difficulties he had formerly waded through. He had many enemies here called archers, being skilful to do mischief; they hated him, they shot their poisonous darts at him. His brethren were spiteful towards him, mocked him, stripped him, sold him, thought they had been the death of him. His mistress sorely grieved him, and shot at him, when she solicited his chastity; and then shot at him by her false accusations.

24. But his bow abode in strength - His faith did not fail; he kept his ground, and came off conqueror. The arms of his hands were made strong - That is, his other graces did their part, his wisdom, courage, patience, which are better than weapons of war: By the hands of the mighty God - Who was therefore able to strengthen him; and the God of Jacob, a God in covenant with him. From thence, from this strange method of Providence, he became the shepherd and stone, the feeder and supporter of Israel, Jacob and his family. Herein Joseph was a type of Christ: He was shot at and hated, but born up under his sufferings, and was afterwards advanced to be the shepherd and stone: and of the church in general, hell shoots its arrows against her, but heaven protects and strengthens her.

25. Even by the God of thy father Jacob, who shall help thee - Our experiences of God's power and goodness in strengthning us hitherto, are encouragements still to hope for help from him. He that has helped us, will. And by the Almighty, who shall bless thee; and he only blesseth indeed. Observe the blessings conferred on Joseph; First, Various and abundant blessings. Blessings of heaven above, rain in its season, and fair weather in its season; blessings of the deep that lies under this earth, or with subterraneous mines and springs. Blessings of the womb and the breasts are given when children are safely born and comfortably nursed. Secondly, Eminent and transcendent blessings, which prevail above the blessings of my progenitors - His father Isaac had but one blessing, and when he had given that to Jacob, he was at a loss for a blessing to bestow upon Esau; but Jacob had a blessing for each of his twelve sons, and now at the latter end, a copious one for Joseph. Thirdly, Durable and extensive blessings: unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills - Including all the products of the most fruitful hills, and lasting as long as they last. Of these blessings it is here said they shall be, so it is a promise; or, let them be, so it is a prayer, on the head of Joseph, to which let them be as a crown to adorn it, and a helmet to protect it.

27. Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf - It is plain, Jacob was guided in what he said by a spirit of prophecy, and not by natural affection, else he would have spoken with more tenderness of his beloved son Benjamin, concerning whom he only foretells, that his posterity should be a warlike tribe, strong and daring, and that they should enrich themselves with the spoil of their enemies, that they should be active in the world, and a tribe as much feared by their neighbours as any other; in the morning he shall devour the prey which he seized and divided over night.

29. I am to be gathered unto my people - Though death separate us from our children, and our people in this world, it gathers us to our fathers, and to our people in the other world. Perhaps Jacob useth this expression concerning death, as a reason why his sons should bury him in Canaan, for (saith he) I am to be gathered unto my people, my soul must be gone to the spirits of just men made perfect, and therefore bury me with my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and their wives.

33. And when Jacob had made an end of commanding of his sons - He addressed himself to his dying work. He put himself into a posture for dying; having sat upon the bed-side to bless his

sons, the spirit of prophecy bringing fresh oil to his expiring lamp, when that work was done, he gathered up his feet into the bed, that he might lie along, not only as one patiently submitting to the stroke, but as one chearfully composing himself to rest. He then freely resigned his spirits into the hand of God, the father of spirit; he yielded up the ghost; and his separated soul went to the assembly of the souls of the faithful, who after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh are in joy and felicity; he was gathered to his people.

## L

Here, is,

I. The preparation for Jacob's funeral, ver. 1-6.

II. The funeral itself, ver. 7-14.

III. The settling of a good understanding between Joseph and his brethren, after the death of Jacob, ver. 15-21.

IV. The age and death of Joseph, ver. 22-26.

1. And Joseph fell upon his father's face and wept upon him, and kissed him - Joseph shewed his faith in God, and love to his father, by kissing his pale and cold lips, and so giving an affectionate farewell. Probably the rest of Jacob's sons did the same, much moved, no doubt, with his dying words.

2. He ordered the body to be embalmed, not only because he died in Egypt, and that was the manner of the Egyptians, but because he was to be carried to Canaan, which would be a work of time.

3. He observed the ceremony of solemn mourning for him. Forty days were taken up in embalming the body, which the Egyptians had an art of doing so curiously, as to preserve the very features of the face unchanged. All this time, and thirty days more, seventy in all, they either confined themselves and sat solitary, or when they went out, appeared in the habit of close mourners, according to the decent custom of the country. Even the Egyptians, many of them, out of the respect they had for Joseph, put themselves into mourning for his father.

5. He asked and obtained leave of Pharaoh to go to Canaan, to attend the funeral of his father. It was a piece of necessary respect to Pharaoh, that he would not go without leave; for we may suppose, though his charge about the corn was long since over, yet he continued a prime minister of state, and therefore would not be so long absent from his business without license.

11. The solemn mourning for Jacob gave a name to the place; Abel-mizraim - The mourning of the Egyptians: which served for a testimony against the next generation of the Egyptians, who oppressed the posterity of this Jacob, to whom their ancestors shewed such respect.

15. Joseph will peradventure hate us - While their father lived, they thought themselves safe under his shadow; but now he was dead, they feared the worst. A guilty conscience exposeth men to continual frights; those that would be fearless must keep themselves guiltless.

16. Thy father did command - Thus in humbling ourselves to Christ by faith and repentance, we may plead that it is the command of his father and our father we should do so.

17. We are the servants of the God of thy father - Not only children of the same Jacob, but worshippers of the same Jehovah. Though we must be ready to forgive all that injure us, yet we must especially take heed of bearing malice towards any that are the servants of the God of our father; those we should always treat with a peculiar tenderness, for we and they have the same master. He wept when they spake to him - These were tears of sorrow for their suspicion of him, and tears of tenderness upon their submission.

19. Am I in the place of God? - He in his great humility thought they shewed him too much respect, and faith to them in effect, as Peter to Cornelius, Stand up, I myself also am a man. Make your peace with God, and then you will find it an easy matter to make your peace with me.

20. Ye thought evil, but God meant it unto good - In order to the making Joseph a greater blessing to his family than otherwise he could have been.

21. Fear not, I will nourish you - See what an excellent spirit Joseph was of, and learn of him to render good for evil. He did not tell them they were upon their good behaviour, and he would be kind to them if he saw they carried themselves well: no, he would not thus hold them in suspence, nor seem jealous of them, though they had been suspicious of him. He comforted them, and, to banish all their fears, he spake kindly to them. Those we love and forgive we must not only do well for, but speak kindly to.

24. I die, but God will surely visit you - To this purpose Jacob had spoken to him, chap. xlviii, 21. Thus must we comfort others with the same comforts wherewith we ourselves have been comforted of God, and encourage them to rest on those promises which have been our support. Joseph was, under God, both the protector and benefactor of his brethren, and what would become of them now he was dying? Why let this be their comfort, God will surely visit you. God's gracious visits will serve to make up the loss of our best friends, and bring you out of this land - And therefore, they must not hope to settle there, nor look upon it as their rest for ever; they must set their hearts upon the land of promise, and call that their home.

25. And ye shall carry up my bones from hence - Herein he had an eye to the promise, chap. xv, 13, 14, and in God's name assures them of the performance of it. In Egypt they buried their great men very honourably, and with abundance of pomp; but Joseph prefers a plain burial in Canaan, and that deferred almost two hundred years, before a magnificent one in Egypt. Thus Joseph by faith in the doctrine of the resurrection, and the promise of Canaan, gave commandment concerning his bones, Heb. xi, 22. He dies in Egypt; but lays his bones at stake, that God will surely visit Israel, and bring them to Canaan.

26. He was put in a coffin in Egypt - But not buried till his children had received their inheritance in Canaan, Josh. xxiv, 32. If the soul do but return to its rest with God, the matter is not great, though the deserted body find not at all, or not quickly, its rest in the grave. Yet care ought to be taken of the dead bodies of the saints, in the belief of their resurrection; for there is a covenant with the dust which shall be remembered, and a commandment given concerning the bones.

## NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES CALLED EXODUS

MOSES having in the first book of his history preserved the records of the church, while it existed in private families, comes, in the second book, to give us an account of its growth into a great nation. The beginning of the former book shews us how God formed the world for himself, the beginning of this shews us how he formed Israel for himself. There we have the creation of the world in history, here the redemption of the world in type. The Greek translators called this book Exodus, which signifies a going out, because it begins with the story of the going out of the children of Israel from Egypt. This book gives us,

I. The accomplishment of the promise made before to Abraham, to chap. xix. and then,

II. The establishment of the ordinances which were afterwards observed by Israel: thence to the end. Moses in this book begins, like Caesar, to write his own commentaries; and gives us the history of those things which he was himself an eye and ear witness of. There are more types of Christ in this book than perhaps in any other book of the Old Testament. The way of man's reconciliation to God, and coming into covenant and communion with him by a Mediator, is here variously represented; and it is of great use to us for the illustration of the New Testament. We have here,

I. God's kindness to Israel, in multiplying them exceedingly, ver. 1-7.

II. The Egyptians wickedness to them;

1. Oppressing and enslaving them, ver. 8-14.
2. Murdering their children, ver. 15-22.

## I

1. Every man of his household - That is, children and grand- children.

3. And Benjamin - Who tho' youngest of all is placed before Daniel, Naphtali, &c. because they were the children of the hand- maidens.

5. Seventy souls - According to the computation we had, Gen. xlvi, 27, including Joseph and his two sons. This was just the number of the nations by which the earth was peopled, Gen. x, 1-32, for when God separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, Deut. xxxii, 8.

6. All that generation by degrees wore off: perhaps all Jacob's sons died much about the same time, for there was not past seven years difference in age between the eldest and the youngest of them, except Benjamin.

7. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly - Like fishes or insects, so that they multiplied; and being generally healthful and strong, they waxed exceeding mighty, so that the land was filled with them, at least Goshen, their own allotment. This wonderful increase was the product of the promise long before made to the fathers. From the call of Abraham, when God first told him he would make him a great nation, to the deliverance of his seed out of Egypt, was 430 years; during the first 215 of which, they were increased to 70, but in the latter half, those 70 multiplied to 600, 000 fighting men.

8. There arose a new king (after several successions in Joseph's time) which knew not Joseph - All that knew him loved him, and were kind to his relations for his sake; but when he was dead he was soon forgotten, and the remembrance of the good offices he had done was either not retained

or not regarded. If we work for men only, our works at farthest will die with us; if for God, they will follow us, Rev. xiv, 13.

10. Come on, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply - When men deal wickedly it is common for them to imagine that they deal wisely, but the folly of sin will at last be manifested before all men.

11. They set over them task-masters, to afflict them - With this very design. They not only made them serve, which was sufficient for Pharaoh's profit, but they made them serve with rigor, so that their lives became bitter to them; intending hereby to break their spirits, and to rob them of every thing in them that was generous: to ruin their health, and shorten their days, and so diminish their numbers: to discourage them from marrying, since their children would be born to slavery; and to oblige them to desert the Hebrews, and incorporate with the Egyptians. And 'tis to be feared the oppression they were under did bring over many of them to join with the Egyptians in their idolatrous worship; for we read, Josh. xxiv, 14, that they served other gods in Egypt; and we find, Ezek. xx, 8, that God had threatned to destroy them for it, even while they were in the land of Egypt. Treasure-cities - To keep the king's money or corn, wherein a great part of the riches of Egypt consisted.

12. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied - To the grief and vexation of the Egyptians. Times of affliction, have oft been the church's growing times: Christianity spread most when it was persecuted.

15. And the king spake to the Hebrew midwives - The two chief of them. They are called Hebrew midwives, probably not because they were themselves Hebrews; for sure Pharaoh could never expect they should be so barbarous to those of their own nation, but because they were generally made use of by the Hebrews, and being Egyptians he hoped to prevail with them.

16. The stools - Seats used on that occasion.

17. But the midwives feared God - Dreaded his wrath more than Pharaoh's, and therefore saved the men-children alive.

19. I see no reason we have to doubt the truth of this; it is plain they were now under an extraordinary blessing of increase, which may well be supposed to have this effect, that the women had quick and easy labour, and the mothers and children being both lively, they seldon needed the help of midwives; this these midwives took notice of, and concluding it to be the finger of God, were thereby emboldened to disobey the king, and with this justify themselves before Pharaoh, when he called them to an account for it.

20. Therefore God dealt well with them - That is, built them up in families, and blessed their children.

## II

This chapter begins the story of Moses, the most remarkable type of Christ as prophet, saviour, law-giver, and mediator, in all the Old Testament. In this chapter we have,

I. The perils of his birth and infancy, ver. 1-4.

II. His preservation through those perils, and the preferment of his childhood and youth, ver. 5-10.

III. The pious choice of his riper years, which was to own the people of God, (1.) He offered them his service, so they would have accepted it, ver. 11-14. (2.) He retired, that he might reserve himself for farther service, ver. 15-22.

IV. The dawning of the day of Israel's deliverance, ver. 23-25.

1. And there went a man - Amram, from the place of his abode to another place. A daughter - That is, grand-daughter of Levi.

2. Bare a son - It seems just at the time of his birth that cruel law was made for the murder of all the male-children of the Hebrews, and many no doubt perished by the execution of it. Moses's parents had Miriam and Aaron, both elder than he, born to them before that edict came out. Probably his mother had little joy of her being with child of him, now this edict was in force. Yet this child proves the glory of his father's house. Observe the beauty of providence: just when Pharaoh's cruelty rose to this height, the deliverer was born. She hid him three months - In some private apartment of their own house, though probably with the hazard of their lives had he been discovered. It is said, Heb. xi, 23. That Moses's parents hid him by faith: some think they had a special Revelation that the deliverer should spring from their loins; however, they believed the general promise of Israel's preservation, and in that faith hid their child.

3. And when she could no longer hide him, she put him in an ark of bulrushes - By the river side. God put it into their hearts to do this, to bring about his own purposes: that Moses might by this means be brought into the hands of Pharaoh's daughter, and that by his deliverance, a specimen might be given of the deliverance of God's church.

5. And the daughter of Pharaoh came - Providence brings no less a person than Pharaoh's daughter just at that juncture, guides her to the place where this poor infant lay, inclines her heart to pity it, which she dares do, when none else durst. Never did poor child cry so seasonably, as this did; the babe wept, which moved her compassion, as no doubt his beauty did.

10. And he became her son - The tradition of the Jews is, that Pharaoh's daughter had no child of her own, and that she was the only child of her father, so that when he was adopted for her son, he stood fair for the crown: however, it is certain he stood fair for the best preferments of the court in due time, and in the mean time had the advantage of the best education, with the help of which, he became master of all the lawful learning of the Egyptians Acts vii, 22. Those whom God designs for great services he finds out ways for to qualify them. Moses, by having his education in a court, is the fitter to be a prince, and king in Jeshurun; by having his education in a learned court, (for such the Egyptian then was) is the fitter to be an historian; and by having his education in the court of Egypt, is the fitter to be employed as an ambassador to that court in God's name. The Jews tell us, that his father at his circumcision called him Joachim, but Pharaoh's daughter called him Moses, Drawn out of the water, so it signifies in the Egyptian language, The calling of the Jewish lawgiver by an Egyptian name is a happy omen to the Gentile world, and gives hopes of that day when it should be said, Blessed be Egypt my people, Isaiah xix, 25. And his tuition at court was an earnest of the performance of that promise, Isaiah xlix, 23. Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers.

11. When Moses was grown he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens - He looked on their burdens as one that not only pitied them, but was resolved to venture with them, and for them.

12. He slew the Egyptian - Probably it was one of the Egyptian task-masters, whom he found abusing his Hebrew slave. By special warrant from heaven (which makes not a precedent in ordinary cases) Moses slew the Egyptian, and rescued his oppressed brother. The Jew's tradition is, that he did not slay him with any weapon, but as Peter slew Ananias and Sapphira, with the word of his mouth.

14. He said, Who made thee a prince? - He challengeth his authority; Who made thee a prince? - A man needs no great authority for giving a friendly reproof; it is an act of kindness; yet this man needs will interpret it an act of dominion, and represents his reprover as imperious and assuming. Thus, when people are sick of good discourse, or a seasonable admonition, they will call it preaching, as if a man could not speak a word for God, and against sin, but he took too much upon him. Yet Moses was indeed a prince, and a judge, and knew it, and thought the Hebrews would have understood it; but they stood in their own light, and thrust him away. Acts vii, 25, 27. Intendest thou to kill me? - See what base constructions malice puts upon the best words and actions. Moses, for reproving him, is presently charged with a design to kill him.

15. Moses fled from Pharaoh - God ordered this for wise ends. Things were not yet ripe for Israel's deliverance. The measure of Egypt's iniquity was not yet full; the Hebrews were not sufficiently humbled, nor were they yet increased to such a multitude as God designed: Moses is to be farther fitted for the service, and therefore is directed to withdraw for the present, till the time to favour Israel, even the set time, come. God guided Moses to Midian, because the Midianites were of the seed of Abraham, and retained the worship of the true God; so that he might have not only a safe, but a comfortable settlement among them; and through this country he was afterwards to lead Israel, which, that he might do the better, he now had opportunity of acquainting himself with it. Hither he came, and sat down by a well; tired and thoughtful, waiting to see which way Providence would direct him. It was a great change with him, since he was but the other day at ease in Pharaoh's court.

17. Stood up and helped them - This be did, because wherever he was, as occasion offered itself, he loved to be doing justice, and appearing in the defense of such as he saw injured. He loved to be doing good: wherever the Providence of God call us, we should desire and endeavour to be useful; and when we cannot do the good we would, we must be ready to do the good we can.

18. Reul or Raguel (see Num. x, 29,) seems to have been their grandfather and father of Hobab or Jethro, their immediate father.

22. Gershom - That is, A stranger there. Now this settlement of Moses in Midian was designed by Providence. To shelter him for the present; God will find hiding places for his people in the day of their distress. It was also designed to prepare him for the services he was farther designed to. His manner of life in Midian, where he kept the flock of his father-in-law would be of use to him, to inure him to hardship and poverty; and to inure him to contemplation and devotion. Egypt accomplished him for a scholar, a gentleman, a statesman, a soldier, all which accomplishments would be afterwards of use to him; but yet lacketh he one thing, in which the court of Egypt could not befriend him. He that was to do all by divine Revelation must know, what it was to live a life of communion with God, and in this he would be greatly furthered by the retirement of a shepherd's life in Midian. By the former he was prepared to rule in Jeshurun, but by the latter he was prepared

to converse with God in mount Horeb. Those that know what it is to be alone with God, are acquainted with better delights than ever Moses tasted in the court of Pharaoh.

23. The king of Egypt died - And after him, one or two more of his sons or successors. And the children of Israel sighed by reason of bondage - Probably the murdering of their infants did not continue, that part of their affliction only attended the birth of Moses, to signalize that. And now they were content with their increase, finding that Egypt was enriched by their labour; so they might have them for their slaves, they cared not how many they were. On this therefore they were intent, to keep them all at work, and make the best hand they could of their labour. When one Pharaoh died, another rose up in his place, that was as cruel to Israel as his predecessors. And they cried - Now at last they began to think of God under their troubles, and to return to him from the idols they had served, Ezek. xx, 8. Hitherto they had fretted at the instruments of their trouble, but God was not in all their thoughts. But before God unbound them, he put it into their hearts to cry unto him. It is a sign God is coming towards us with deliverance, when he inclines us to cry to him for it.

24. And God heard their groaning - That is, he made it to appear that he took notice of their complaints. The groans of the oppressed cry loud in the ears of the righteous God, to whom vengeance belongs; especially the groans of God's children, the burdens they groan under, and the blessings they groan after. And God remembered his covenant - Which he seemed to have forgotten, but really is ever mindful of. This God had an eye to, and not to any merit of theirs in what he did for them. And God looked upon the children of Israel - Moses looked upon them and pitied them, but now God looked upon them and helped them. And God had respect unto them - A favourable respect to them as his own. The frequent repetition of the name of God intimates, that now we are to expect something great. His eyes which run to and fro through the earth, are now fixed on Israel, to shew himself strong, to shew himself a God in their behalf.

## III

In this chapter we have,

I. The discovery God was pleased to make of his glory to Moses at the bush, ver. 1-5.

II. A general declaration of God's goodwill to his people, who were beloved for the Father's sake, ver. 6.

III. A particular notification of God's purpose concerning the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt.

1. He assures Moses it should now be done, ver. 7-9.
2. He gives him a commission to act in it as his ambassador both to Pharaoh, ver. 10, and to Israel, ver. 16.
3. He answers the objection Moses made of his own unworthiness, ver. 11, 12.
4. He gives him full instructions what to say, both to Pharaoh and to Israel, ver. 13-18.
5. He tells him before-hand what the issue would be, ver. 14-22.

1. Now Moses - The years of Moses's life are remarkably divided into three forties; the first forty he spent as a prince in Pharaoh's court, the second a shepherd in Midian, the third a king in Jeshurun. He had now finished his second forty when he received his commission to bring Israel out of Egypt. Sometimes it is long before God calls his servants out to that work which of old he designed them for. Moses was born to be Israel's deliverer, and yet not a word is said of it to him till he is eighty years of age. Even to Horeb - Horeb and Sinai were two tops of the same mountain.

2. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him - It was an extraordinary manifestation of the divine glory; what was visible was produced by the ministry of an angel, but he heard God in it speaking to him. In a flame of fire - To shew that God was about to bring terror and destruction to his enemies, light and heat to his people, and to display his glory before all. And the bush burned, and yet was not consumed - An emblem of the church now in bondage in Egypt, burning in the brick-kilns, yet not consumed; cast down, but not destroyed.

3. I will turn aside and see - He speaks as one inquisitive, and bold in his inquiry; whatever it was, he would if possible know the meaning of it.

4. When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see it, God called to him - If he had carelessly neglected it, it is likely God had departed and said nothing to him. God called and said, Moses, Moses - This which he heard could not but surprise him much more than what he saw. Divine calls are then effectual, when the spirit of God makes them particular, and calls us as by name. The Word calls, Ho, every one; the Spirit, by the application of that, calls, Ho, such a one; I know thee by name. Here am I - Not only to hear what is said, but to do what I am bidden.

5. Put off thy shoes from off thy feet - The putting off the shoe was then what the putting off the hat is now, a token of respect and submission. The ground is holy ground, made so by this special manifestation of the divine presence. We ought to approach to God with a solemn pause and preparation; and to express our inward reverence, by a grave and reverent behaviour in the worship of God, carefully avoiding every thing that looks light, or rude.

6. I am the God of thy father - He lets him know it is God that speaks to him, to engage his reverence, faith and obedience. Thy father, thy pious father Amram, and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, thy ancestors. Engaged to them by solemn covenant, which I am now come to perform. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God - The more we see of God, the more cause we shall see to worship him with reverence and godly fear. And even the manifestations of God's grace should increase our humble reverence of him.

8. I am come down to deliver them - When God doth something very extraordinary, he is said to come down to do it, as Isaiah lxiv, 1. This deliverance was typical of our redemption by Christ, and in that the eternal Word did indeed come down from heaven to deliver us. A large land - So it was, according to its true and ancient bounds, as they are described, Gen. xv, 18, and not according to those narrow limits, to which they were afterwards confined for their unbelief and impiety. A land flowing with milk and honey - A proverbial expression, abounding with the choicest fruits, both for necessity and delight.

10. I will send thee - And the same hand that now fetched a shepherd out of a desert to be the planter of the Jewish church, afterwards fetched fishermen from their ships to be the planters of the Christian church, that the excellency of the power might be of God.

11. Who am I? - He thinks himself unworthy of the honour and unable for the work. He thinks he wants courage, and therefore cannot go to Pharaoh: he thinks he wants conduct, and therefore cannot bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt; they are unarmed, undisciplined, quite

dispirited, utterly unable to help themselves, Moses was incomparably the fittest of any man living for this work, eminent for learning, wisdom, experience, valour, faith, holiness, and yet Who am I? The more fit any person is for service, commonly the less opinion he has of himself.

12. Certainly I will be with thee - Those that are weak in themselves, yet may do wonders being strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. God's presence puts wisdom and strength into the weak and foolish, and is enough to answer all objections.

13. When they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? - What name shall I use, whereby thou mayest be distinguished from false gods, and thy people may be encouraged to expect deliverance from thee?

14. And God said - Two names God would now be known by.

1. A name that speaks what he is in himself, I am that I am - This explains his name Jehovah, and signifies, 1st, That he is self- existent; he has his being of himself, and has no dependence upon any other. And being self-existent he cannot but be self-sufficient, and therefore all-sufficient, and the inexhaustible fountain of being and bliss. 2ndly, That he is eternal and unchangeable, always the same, yesterday today, and for ever: he will be what he will be, and what he is. 3rdly. That he is faithful and true to all his promises, unchangeable in his word as well as in his nature, and not a man that he should lie. Let Israel know this, I am hath sent me unto you.
2. A name that speaks what he is to his people. Lest that name I am should puzzle them, he is farther directed to make use of another name of God, more familiar.

15. The Lord God of our fathers hath sent me unto you - Thus God made himself known, that he might revive among them the religion of their fathers, which was much decayed, and almost lost. And that he might raise their expectations of the speedy performance of the promises made unto their fathers: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are particularly named, because with Abraham the covenant was first made, and with Isaac and Jacob oft expressly renewed, and these three were distinguished from their brethren, and chosen to be the trustees of the covenant. This God will have to be his name for ever, and it has been, is, and will be his name, by which his worshippers know him, and distinguish him from all false gods.

18. Hath met with us - Hath appeared to us, declaring his will, that we should do what follows.

19. I am sure he will not let you go - God sends his messengers to those whose obstinacy he foresees, that it may appear he would have them turn and live.

22. Everywoman shall ask (not borrow!) jewels. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians - God sometimes makes the enemies of his people not only to be at peace with them, but to be kind to them. And he has many ways of balancing accounts between the injured and the injurious, of righting the oppressed, and compelling those that have done wrong to make restitution.

## IV

This chapter,

I. Continues and concludes God's discourse with Moses, concerning bringing Israel out of Egypt. [1.] Moses objects the peoples unbelief, ver. 1. and God answers that objection by giving him a power to work miracles: (1.) To turn his rod into a serpent, and then into a rod again, ver. 2-5. (2.) To make his hand leprous, and then whole again, ver. 6-8. (3.) To turn the water into blood, ver. 9. [2.]Moses objects his own slowness of speech, ver. 10. and begs to be excused, ver. 13. But God answers this objection, (1.) By promising him his presence, ver. 11, 12. (2.) By joining Aaron in commission with him, ver. 14-16. (3.) By putting an honour upon the very staff in his hand, ver. 17.

II. Moses's execution of his commission. (1.) He obtains leave of his father-in-law to return into Egypt, ver. 18. (2.) He receives further instructions from God, ver. 19, 21-23. (3.) He hastens his departure, and takes his family with him, ver. 20. (4.) He meets with some difficulty about the circumcising of his son, ver. 24. 26. (5.) He has the satisfaction of meeting his brother Aaron, ver. 27, 28. (6.) He produceth his commission before the elders of Israel, to their great joy, ver. 29-31.

1. They will not hearken to my voice-That is, they would not take his bare word, unless he shewed them some sign. He remembered how they had once rejected him, and feared it would be so again.

2. A rod - Or staff.

5. That they may believe - An imperfect sentence to be thus compleated, This thou shalt do, before them, that they may believe.

6. His hand was leprous, as snow - For whiteness. This signified, That Moses, by the power of God, should bring sore diseases upon Egypt, that at his prayer they should be removed. And that whereas the Israelites in Egypt were become leprous, polluted by sin, and almost consumed by oppression, by being taken into the bosom of Moses they should be cleansed and cured.

8. The voice of the first sign - God's works have a voice to speak to us, which we must diligently observe.

10. O my Lord, I am not eloquent - He was a great philosopher, statesman, and divine, and yet no orator; a man of a clear head, great thought and solid judgment, but had not a voluble tongue, nor ready utterance; and therefore he thought himself unfit to speak before great men, and about great affairs. Moses was mighty in word, Acts vii, 22, and yet not eloquent: what he said was strong and nervous, and to the purpose, and distilled as the dew, Deut. xxxii, 2, though he did not deliver himself with that readiness, ease and fineness that some do.

13. Send by whom thou wilt send - By any but me.

14. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against him - Even self-diffidence when it grows into an extreme, when it either hinders us from duty, or clogs us in duty, is very displeasing to him.

15. I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth - Even Aaron that could speak well, yet could not speak to purpose, unless God were with his mouth; without the constant aids of divine grace, the best gifts will fail.

16. Instead of God - To teach and to command him.

17. Take this rod - The staff or crook he carried as a shepherd, that he might not be ashamed of that mean condition out of which God called him. This rod must be his staff of authority, and must be to him instead, both of sword and scepter.

19. The Lord said unto Moses - This seems to have been a second vision, whereby God calls him to the present execution of the command given before.

20. The rod of God - His shepherd's crook so called, as it was God's instrument in so many glorious works.

21. In thy hand - in thy power: I will harden his heart - After he has frequently harden'd it himself, wilfully shutting his eyes against the light, I will at last permit Satan to harden it effectually.

22. Thus saith the Lord - This is the first time that preface is used by any man, which afterwards is used so frequently by all the prophets: Israel is my son, my first-born - Precious in my sight, honourable, and dear to me.

23. Let my son go - Not only my servant whom thou hast no right to detain, but my son whose liberty and honour I am jealous for. If thou refuse, I will slay thy son, even thy first-born - As men deal with God's people, let them expect to be themselves dealt with.

24. It seems the sin of Moses, was neglecting to circumcise his son, which perhaps was the effect of his being unequally yoked with a Midianite, who was too indulgent of her child, and Moses so of her. The Lord met him, and, probably, by a sword in an angel's hand, sought to kill him - This was a great change. Very lately God was conversing with him as a friend, and now coming forth against him as an enemy. In this case of necessity Zipporah herself circumcised the child without delay; whether with passionate words, expressing the dislike of the ordinance itself, or at least the administration of it to so young a child.

26. So he let him go - The destroying angel withdrew. But still Zipporah cannot forget, but will unreasonably call Moses a bloody husband, because he obliged her to circumcise the child; and upon this occasion, (it is probable) he sent them back to his father-in-law, that they might not create him any farther uneasiness. When we have any special service to do for God, we should remove that as far from us as we can, which is likely to be our hindrance: let the dead bury their dead, but follow thou me.

27. In the mount of God - That is, the place where God had met with him.

28. Moses told Aaron all - Those that are fellow-servants to God in the same work, should use a mutual freedom, and endeavour, rightly and fully to understand one another.

30. Aaron did the signs - By the direction of Moses.

## V

Moses and Aaron here deal with Pharaoh to get leave of him to go to worship in the wilderness.

I. They demand leave in the name of God, ver. 1. and he answers their demand with a defiance of God, ver. 2.

II. They beg leave in the name of Israel, ver. 3. and he answers their request with further orders to oppress Israel, ver. 4-9. These cruel orders were,

1. Executed by the task-masters, ver. 10-14.
2. Complained of to Pharaoh, but in vain, ver. 15-19.

3. Complained of by the people to Moses, ver. 20, 21. and by him to God, ver. 22, 23.

1. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go - Moses, in treating with the elders of Israel, is directed to call God the God of their fathers; but, in treating with Pharaoh, they call him the God of Israel, and it is the first time we find him called so in scripture. He is called the God of Israel, the person, Gen. xxxiii, 20, but here it is Israel the people. They are just beginning to be formed into a people when God is called their God. Let my people go - They were God's people, and therefore Pharaoh ought not to detain them in bondage. And he expected services and sacrifices from them, and therefore they must have leave to go where they could freely exercise their religion, without giving offense to, or receiving offense from, the Egyptians.

2. Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? - Being summoned to surrender, he thus hangs out the flag of defiance. Who is Jehovah? I neither know him nor care for him; neither value nor fear him. It is a hard name that he never heard of before, but he resolves it shall be no bugbear to him. Israel was now a despised, oppressed people, and by the character they bore he makes his estimate of their God, and concludes that he made no better figure among the gods, than his people did among the nations.

3. We pray thee, let us go three days journey into the desert - And that on a good errand, and unexceptionable: we will sacrifice to the Lord our God - As other people do to theirs; lest if we quite cast off his worship, he fall upon us - With one judgment or other, and then Pharaoh will lose his vassals.

5. The people are many - Therefore your injury to me is the greater, in attempting to make them rest from their labours.

6. The task-masters, were Egyptians, the officers were Israelites employed under them.

7. Straw - To mix with the clay, or to burn the brick with.

8. They are idle - The cities they built for Pharaoh, were witnesses for them that they were not idle; yet he thus basely misrepresents them, that he might have a pretense to increase their burdens.

9. Vain words - Those of Moses and Aaron.

14. In thy own people - For if they had given us straw, we should have fulfilled our task.

21. The Lord look upon you, and judge - They should have humbled themselves before God, but instead of that they fly in the face of their best friends. Those that are called to public service for God and their generation, must expect to be tried not only by the threats of proud enemies, but by the unjust and unkind censures of unthinking friends. To put a sword in their hand to slay us - To give them the occasion they have long sought for.

22. He expostulated with him. He knew not how to reconcile the providence with the promise, and the commission he had received. Is this God's coming down to deliver Israel? Must I who hoped to be a blessing to them become a scourge to them? By this attempt to get them out of the pit, they are but sunk the farther into it. Wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people - Even when God is coming towards his people in ways of mercy, yet sometimes he takes such methods that they may think themselves but ill-treated: when they think so, they should go to God by prayer, and that is the way to have better treatment in God's good time. Why is it that thou hast sent me - Pharaoh has done evil to this people, and not one step seems to be taken towards their deliverance.

It cannot but sit very heavy upon the spirits of those whom God employs for him, to see that their labour doth no good, and much more to see that it doth hurt, eventually, though not designedly.

## VI

In this chapter,

I. God satisfies Moses as to his complaints, ver. 1.

II. He gives him fuller instructions what to say to the children of Israel, ver. 2-8. but to little purpose, ver. 9.

III. He sends him again to Pharaoh, ver. 10, 11. But Moses objects against that, ver. 12. upon which a strict charge is given to him and his brother, to execute their commission with vigour, ver. 13.

IV. An abstract of the genealogy of the tribes of Reuben and Simeon, to introduce that of Levi, that the pedigree of Moses and Aaron might be cleared, ver. 14-27

V. A repetition of the preceding story, ver. 28-30.

1. With a strong hand - That is, being forced to it by a strong hand, he shall let them go.

2. I am Jehovah - The same with I am that I am, the fountain of being and blessedness, and infinite perfection. The patriarchs knew this name, but they did not know him in this matter by that which this name signifies. God would now be known by his name Jehovah, that is,

1. A God performing what he had promised, and so giving being to his promises.
2. A God perfecting what he had begun, and finishing his own work. In the history of the creation God is never called Jehovah, till the heavens and the earth were finished, Gen. ii, 4. When the salvation of the saints is compleated in eternal life, then he will be known by his name Jehovah, Rev. xxii, 13, in the mean time they shall find him for their strength and support, El-shaddai, a God All-sufficient, a God that is enough.

5. I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel - He means their groaning on occasion of the late hardships put upon them. God takes notice of the increase of his people's calamities, and observes how their enemies grow upon them.

6. I will bring you out: I will rid you: I will redeem you: I will bring you into the land of Canaan; and, I will give it you - Let man take the shame of his unbelief which needs such repetitions, and let God have the glory of his condescending grace which gives us such repeated assurances. With a stretched out arm - With almighty power: A metaphor taken from a man that stretches out his arm, to put forth all his strength.

7. I will take you to me for a people - A peculiar people, and I will be to you a God - And more than this we need not ask, we cannot have, to make us happy.

8. I am the Lord - And therefore have power to dispose of lands and kingdoms as I please.

9. But they hearkened not to Moses for anguish of spirit - That is, They were so taken up with their troubles that they did not heed him.

11. That he let the children of Israel go - God repeats his precepts, before he begins his punishments. Those that have oft been called in vain to leave their sins, yet must be called again, and again.

12. Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened to me; they gave no heed to what I have said, how then shall Pharaoh hear me? - If the anguish of their spirit makes them deaf to that which would compose and comfort them, much more will his pride and insolence, make him deaf to that which will but exasperate him. Who am of uncircumcised lips - He was conscious to himself that he had not the gift of utterance.

13. The Lord gave them a charge, both to the children of Israel, and to Pharaoh - God's authority is sufficient to answer all objections, and binds us to obedience without murmuring or disputing.

14. This genealogy ends in those two great patriots, Moses and Aaron; and comes in here to shew that they were Israelites, bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh, whom they were sent to deliver, raised up unto them of their brethren, as Christ also should be, who was to be the prophet and priest, the Redeemer and law-giver of the house of Israel, and whose genealogy also like this was to be carefully preserved. The heads of the houses of three of the tribes are here named, agreeing with the accounts we had, Gen. xlvi, 8-27. Reuben and Simeon seem to be mentioned only for the sake of Levi, from whom Moses and Aaron descended, and all the priests of the Jewish church.

16. The age of Levi, Kohath, and Amram, the father, grandfather, and great grandfather of Moses is here recorded; and they all lived to a great age, Levi to one hundred thirty seven, Kohath to one hundred thirty three, and Amram to one hundred thirty seven: Moses himself came much short of them, and fixed seventy or eighty for the ordinary stretch of human life. Psalm xc, 10. For now Israel was multiplied, and become a great nation, and divine Revelation was by the hand of Moses committed to writing, and no longer trusted to tradition; the two great reasons for the long lives of the patriarchs were ceased, and therefore from henceforward fewer years must serve men.

20. His father's sister - That is, kins-woman. So the Hebrew word is frequently used.

23. Aminadab - A prince of the tribe of Judah. The Levites might marry into any tribe, there being no danger of confusion or loss of inheritance thereby.

26. According to their armies - Like numerous armies, in military order, and with great power. In the close of the chapter, he returns to his narrative, from which he had broken off somewhat abruptly ver. 13, and repeats, the charge God had given him to deliver his message to Pharaoh, ver. 29.

29. Speak all that I say unto thee - As a faithful ambassador. Those that go on God's errand must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God.

## VII

In this chapter,

I. Moses applies himself to the execution of his commission, ver. 1-7.

II. The dispute between Moses and Pharaoh begins. Moses in God's name demands Israel's release, Pharaoh denies it; the contest is between the power of the great God and the power of a proud prince.

1. Moses confirms the demand he made to Pharaoh by a miracle, turning his rod into a serpent, but Pharaoh hardens his heart, ver. 8-13.
2. He chastiseth his disobedience by a plague, the first of ten, turning the waters into blood; but Pharaoh hardens his heart again, ver. 14-25.

1. I have made thee a God to Pharaoh - That is, my representative in this affair, as magistrates are called gods, because they are God's vicegerents. He was authorized to speak and act in God's name, and endued with a divine power, to do that which is above the ordinary course of nature. And Aaron shall be thy prophet - That is, he shall speak from thee to Pharaoh, as prophets do from God to the children of men. Thou shalt as a God inflict and remove the plagues, and Aaron as a prophet shall denounce them.

7. Moses was fourscore years old - Joseph, who was to be only a servant to Pharaoh, was preferred at thirty years old; but Moses, who was to be a God to Pharaoh, was not so dignified till he was eighty years old. It is fit he should long wait for such an honour, and be long in preparing for such a service.

9. Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod - This Moses ordinarily held in his hand, and delivered it to Aaron upon occasion, for the execution of his commands.

10. And Aaron cast his rod down, and it became a serpent - This was proper not only to affect Pharaoh with wonder, but to strike a terror upon him. This first miracle, though it was not a plague, yet amounted to the threatening of a plague; if it made not Pharaoh feel, it made him fear; this is God's method of dealing with sinners he comes upon them gradually.

11. Moses had been originally instructed in the learning of the Egyptians, and was suspected to have improved in magical arts in his long retirement. The magicians are therefore sent for to vie with him. The two chief of them were Jannes and Jambres. Their rods became serpents; probably by the power of evil angels artfully substituting serpents in the room of the rods, God permitting the delusion to be wrought for wise and holy ends. But the serpent which Aaron's rod was turned into, swallowed up the others, which was sufficient to have convinced Pharaoh on which side the right lay.

13. And he harden'd Pharaoh's heart - That is, permitted it to be hardened.

20. The waters that were in the river were turned into blood - This was a plague justly inflicted upon the Egyptians; for Nilus the river of Egypt was their idol; they and their land had so much benefit by that creature, that they served and worshipped it more than the creator. Also they had stained the river with the blood of the Hebrew children, and now God made that river all bloody; thus he gave them blood to drink, for they were worthy, Rev. xvi, 6. See the power of God. Every creature is that to us which he makes it to be, water or blood. See the mutability of all things under the sun, and what changes we may meet with in them. That which is water to day may be blood to morrow; what is always vain may soon become vexatious. And see what mischievous work sin makes! It is sin that turns our waters into blood.

22. And the magicians did so - By God's permission with their enchantments; and this served Pharaoh for an excuse not to set his heart to this also, (ver. 23,) and a poor excuse it was. Could they have turned the river of blood into water again, it had been something; then they had proved their power, and Pharaoh had been obliged to them as his benefactors.

25. Seven days were fulfilled - Before this plague was removed.

## VIII

Three more of the plagues of Egypt are related in this chapter.

I. That of the frogs, which is,
1. Threatened, ver. 1-4.
2. Inflicted, ver. 5, 6.
3. Mimicked by the magicians, ver. 7.
4. Removed at the request of Pharaoh, ver. 8-14. who yet hardens his heart, and notwithstanding his promise, ver. 8. refused to let Israel go, ver. 15.

II. The plague of lice, ver. 16, 17. By which,
1. The magicians were baffled, ver. 18, 19. and yet,
2. Pharaoh was hardened, ver. 19.

III. That of flies:
1. Pharaoh is warned of it before, ver. 20, 21. and told that the land of Goshen should be exempt from this plague, ver. 22, 23.
2. The plague is brought, ver. 24.
3. Pharaoh treats with Moses, and humbles himself, ver. 25-29.
4. The plague is thereupon removed, ver. 31. and Pharaoh's heart hardened, ver. 32.

2. All thy borders - All the land that is within thy borders.

3. The River - Nile. Under which are comprehended all other rivers and waters.

9. Glory over me - That is, I yield to thee.

10. And he said, Tomorrow - Why not immediately? Probably he hoped that this night they would go away of themselves, and then he should get clear of the plague, without being obliged either to God or Moses. However, Moses joins issue with him upon it. Be it according to thy word - It shall be done just when thou wouldst have it done, that thou mayst know, that whatever the magicians pretend to, there is none like unto the Lord our God - None has such a command as he has over all creatures, nor is any so ready to forgive those that humble themselves before him. The great design both of judgments and mercies, is to convince us that there is none like the Lord our God; none so wise, so mighty, so good; no enemy so formidable, no friend so desirable, so valuable.

15. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart - Observe he did it himself, not God, any otherwise than by not hindering.

17. The frogs were produced out of the waters, but the lice out of the dust of the earth; for out of any part of the creation God can fetch a scourge wherewith to correct those that rebel against him.

18. And the magicians did so - That is, endeavoured to do so.

19. This is the finger of God - The power of God. The devil's agents, when God permitted them, could do great things; but when he laid an embargo upon them, they could do nothing. The magicians inability in this instance shewed whence they had their ability in the former instances, and that they

had no power against Moses but what was given them from above. But Pharaoh's heart was hardened - By himself and the devil.

20. Rise up early - Those that would bring great things to pass for God and their generation must rise early, and redeem time in the morning. Pharaoh was early up at his superstitious devotions to the river; and shall we be for more sleep, and more slumber, when any service is to be done which would pass well in our account in the great day?

21. Flies - Or insects of various kinds; not only flies, but gnats, wasps, hornets; and those probably more pernicious than the common ones were.

22. Know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth - In every part of it. Swarms of flies, which seem to us to fly at random, shall be manifestly under the conduct of an intelligent mind. Hither they shall go, saith Moses, and thither they shall come, and the performance is punctual according to this appointment; and both compared amount to a demonstration, that he that said it, and he that did it, was the same, even a being of infinite power and wisdom.

23. A division - A wall of partition.

24. There came a grievous swarm of flies - The prince of the power of the air has gloried in being Beel-zebub, the God of flies; but here it is proved that even in that he is a pretender, and an usurper; for even with swarms of flies God fights against his kingdom and prevails.

26. The abomination of the Egyptians - That which they abominate to see killed, because they worshipped them as gods.

27. As he shall command us - For he has not yet told us what sacrifices to offer.

28. Ye shall not go very far away - Not so far but that he might fetch them back again. It is likely he suspected that if once they left Egypt, they would never come back; and therefore when he is forced to consent that they shall go, yet he is not willing they should go out of his reach. See how ready God is to accept sinners submissions. Pharaoh only says, Intreat for me - Moses promises immediately, I will intreat the Lord for thee; and that he might see what the design of the plague was, not to bring him to ruin, but to repentance.

32. But Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also - Still it is his own act and deed, not God's.

## IX

In this chapter we have an account of three more plagues.

I. Murrain among the cattle, ver. 1-7.

II. Boils upon man and beast, ver. 8-12.

III. Hail, with thunder and lightning. (1.) Warning is given of this plague, ver. 13-21. (2.) It is inflicted to their great terror, ver 22-26. (3.) Pharaoh renews his treaty with Moses, but instantly breaks his word, ver 27-35.

3. The hand of the Lord - Immediately, without the stretching out of Aaron's hand, is upon the cattle, many of which, some of all kinds, shall die by a sort of pestilence. The hand of God is to be acknowledged even in the sickness and death of cattle, or other damage sustained in them; for a

sparrow falls not to the ground without our father. And his providence is to be acknowledged with thankfulness in the life of the cattle, for he preserveth man and beast, Psalm xxxvi, 6.

6. All the cattle died - All that were in the field. The creature is made subject to vanity by the sin of man, being liable, according to its capacity, both to serve his wickedness, and to share in his punishment. The Egyptians worshipped their cattle; it was among them that the Israelites learned to make a God of a calf; in that therefore this plague meets with them. But not one of the cattle of the Israelites died - Doth God take care for oxen? Yes, he doth, his providence extends itself to the meanest of his creatures.

9. A boil breaking forth with blains - A burning scab, which quickly raised blisters and blains.

10. Ashes of the furnace - Sometimes God shews men their sin in their punishment: they had oppressed Israel in the furnaces, and now the ashes of the furnace are made as much a terror to them as ever their task-masters had been to the Israelites. This is afterwards called the botch of Egypt, Deut. xxviii, 27, as if it were some new disease, never heard of before, and known ever after by that name.

11. The magicians were forced to retreat, and could not stand before Moses - To which the apostle refers, 2 Tim. iii, 9, when he saith, that their folly was manifested unto all men.

12. Now the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart - Before he had hardened his own heart, and resisted the grace of God, and now God justly gave him up to his own heart's lusts, to strong delusions, permitting Satan to blind and harden him. Wilful hardness is commonly punished with judicial hardness. Let us dread this as the sorest judgment a man can be under on this side hell.

14. I will find all my plagues upon thy heart - Hitherto thou hast not felt my plagues on thy own person, the heart is put for the whole man.

16. For this cause have I raised thee up - A most dreadful message Moses is here ordered to deliver to him, whether he will hear, or whether he will forbear. He must tell him, that he is marked for ruin: that he now stands as the butt at which God would shoot all the arrows of his wrath. For this cause have I raised thee up to the throne at this time, and made thee to stand the shock of the plagues hitherto, to shew in thee my power - Providence so ordered it, that Moses should have a man of such a fierce and stubborn spirit to deal with, to make it a most signal and memorable instance of the power God has to bring down the proudest of his enemies; that my name, irresistable power, and my inflexible justice, might be declared throughout all the earth - Not only to all places, but through all ages while the earth remains. This will be the event. But it by no means follows, that this was the design of God. We have numberless instances in scripture of this manner of speaking, to denote not the design, but only the event.

17. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people - Wilt thou not yet submit?

18. Since the foundation thereof - Since it was a kingdom.

29. The earth - The world, the heaven and the earth.

30. Bolled - Grown up into a stalk.

33. Moses went out of the city - Not only for privacy in his communion with God, but to shew that he durst venture abroad into the field, notwithstanding the hail and lightning, knowing that every hail-stone had its direction from God. Peace with God makes men thunder-proof, for it is the voice of their father. And spread abroad his hands unto the Lord - An outward expression of earnest desire, and humble expectation. He prevailed with God; but he could not prevail with Pharaoh; he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart - The prayer of Moses opened and shut heaven, like Elijah's. And such is the power of God's two witnesses, Rev. xi, 6. Yet neither Moses nor Elijah, nor those

two witnesses, could subdue the hard hearts of men. Pharaoh was frighted into compliance by the judgment, but, when it was over, his convictions vanished.

## X

The eighth and ninth plagues are recorded in this chapter.

I. Concerning the plague of locusts, (1.) God instructs Moses in the meaning of these amazing dispensations of his providence, ver. 1, 2. (2.) He threatens the locusts, ver. 3-6. (3.) Pharaoh, at the persuasion of his servants, is willing to treat again with Moses, ver. 7, 8, 9. but they cannot agree, ver. 10, 11, (4.) The locusts come, ver. 12-15. (5.) Pharaoh cries for mercy, ver. 16, 17. whereupon Moses prays for the removal of the plague, and it is done, but Pharaoh's heart is still hardened, ver. 18-20.

II. Concerning the plague of darkness, (1.) 'Tis inflicted, ver. 21-23. (2.) Pharaoh again treats with Moses, but the treaty breaks off, ver. 24-29.

1. These plagues are standing monuments of the greatness of God, the happiness of the church, and the sinfulness of sin; and standing monitors to the children of men in all ages, not to provoke the Lord to jealousy, nor to strive with their Maker. The benefit of these instructions to the world doth sufficiently balance the expence.

3. Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? - It is justly expected from the greatest of men, that they humble themselves before the great God, and it is at their peril if they refuse to do it. Those that will not humble themselves, God will humble.

10. Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones - He now curses and threatens them, in case they offered to remove their little ones, telling them it was at their peril. Satan doth all he can to hinder those that serve God themselves, from bringing their children in to serve him. He is a sworn enemy to early piety, knowing how destructive it is to the interests of his kingdom.

13. The east-wind brought the locusts - From Arabia, where they are in great numbers: And God miraculously increased them.

15. They covered the face of the earth, and eat up the fruit of it - The earth God has given to the children of men; yet when God pleaseth he can disturb his possession even by locusts or caterpillars. Herb grows for the service of man; yet, when God pleaseth, those contemptible insect's shall not only be fellow- commoners with him, but shall eat the bread out of his mouth.

17. Pharaoh desires their prayers that this death only might be taken away, not this sin: he deprecates the plague of locusts, not the plague of a hard heart.

19. An east-wind brought the locusts and now a west-wind carried them off. Whatever point of the compass the wind is in, it is fulfilling God's word, and turns about by his counsel; the wind blows where it listeth for us, but not where it listeth for him; he directeth it under the whole heaven.

21. We may observe concerning this plague.

1. That it was a total darkness. We have reason to think, not only that the lights of heaven were clouded, but that all their fires and candles were put out by the damps or clammy vapors which were the cause of this darkness, for it is said, they saw not one another.
2. That it was darkness which might be felt, felt in its causes by their finger-ends, so thick were the fogs, felt in its effects, (some think) by their eyes which were pricked with pain, and made the more sore by their rubbing them. Great pain is spoken of as the effect of that darkness, Rev. xvi, 10, which alludes to this.
3. No doubt it was very frightful and amazing. The tradition of the Jews is, that in this darkness they were terrified by the apparition of evil spirits, or rather by dreadful sounds and murmurs which they made; and this is the plague which some think is intended (for otherwise it is not mentioned at all there) Psalm lxxviii, 49. He poured upon them the fierceness of his anger, by sending evil angels among them; for those to whom the devil has been a deceiver, he will at length be a terror to.
4. It continued three days; six nights in one; so long they were imprisoned by those chains of darkness. No man rose from his place - They were all confined to their houses; and such a terror seized them, that few of them had the courage to go from the chair to the bed, or from the bed to the chair. Thus were they silent in darkness, 1 Sam. ii, 9. Now Pharaoh had time to consider, if he would have improved it.

23. But the children of Israel had light in their dwellings - Not only in the land of Goshen, where most of them inhabited, but in the particular dwellings which in other places the Israelites had dispersed among the Egyptians, as it appears they had by the distinction afterwards appointed to be put on their door-posts. And during these three days of darkness to the Egyptians, if God had so pleased, the Israelites by the light which they had, might have made their escape, and have asked Pharaoh no leave; but God would bring them out with a high hand, and not by stealth or in haste.

29. I will see thy face no more - Namely, after this time, for this conference did not break off till chap. xi, 8, when Moses went out in great anger and told Pharaoh how soon his proud stomach would come down; which was fulfilled chap. xii, 31, when Pharaoh became an humble supplicant to Moses to depart. So that after this interview Moses came no more till he was sent for.

## XI

Pharaoh had bid Moses get out of his presence, chap. x, 28. and Moses had promised this should be the last time he would trouble him, yet he refuses to say out what he had to say, before he left him. Accordingly we have in this chapter,

I. The instructions God had given to Moses, which he was now to pursue, ver. 1, 2. together with the interest Israel and Moses had in the esteem of the Egyptians, ver. 3.

II. The last message Moses delivered to Pharaoh, concerning the death of the first-born, ver. 4-8.

III. A repetition of the prediction of Pharaoh's hardening his heart, ver. 9. and the event answering it, ver. 10.

2. Let every man ask (not borrow!) of his neighbour jewels - This was the last day of their servitude, when they were to go away, and their masters, who had abused them in their work, would now have defrauded them of their wages, and have sent them away empty, and the poor Israelites were so fond of liberty that they themselves would be satisfied with that, without pay: but he that executeth righteousness and judgment for the oppressed, provided that the labourers should not lose their hire. God ordered them to demand it now at their departure, in jewels of silver, and jewels of gold; to prepare for which, God had now made the Egyptians as willing to part with them upon any terms, as before the Egyptians had made them willing to go upon any terms.

5. The death of the first-born had been threatened, chap. iv, 23, but is last executed, and less judgments tried, which, if they had done the work, would have prevented this. See how slow God is to wrath, and how willing to be met in the way of his judgments, and to have his anger turned away! That sitteth upon his throne - That is to set. The maid-servant behind the mill - The poor captive slave, employed in the hardest labour.

8. All these thy servants - Thy courtiers and great officers: The people that follow thee - That are under thy conduct: and command. When Moses had thus delivered his message, he went out from Pharaoh in great anger, though he was the meekest of all the men of the earth. Probably he expected that the very threatening of the death of the first-born should have wrought upon Pharaoh to comply; especially he having complied so far already, and having seen how exactly all Moses's predictions were fulfilled. But it had not that effect; his proud heart would not yield, no not to save all the first-born of his kingdom. Moses hereupon was provoked to a holy indignation, being grieved, as our saviour afterwards, for the hardness of his heart, Mark iii, 5.

## XII

This chapter gives an account of one of the most memorable ordinances, and one of the most memorable providences of all that art recorded in the old testament.

I. None of all the ordinances of the Jewish church were more eminent than that of the passover. It consisted of three parts.
   1. The killing and eating of the paschal lamb, ver. 1-6, 8-11.
   2. The sprinkling of the blood upon the doorposts, peculiar to the first passover, ver. 7. with the reason for it, ver. 11-13.
   3. The feast of unleavened bread for seven days after; this points rather at what was to be done after in the observance of this ordinance, ver. 14-20. This institution is communicated to the people, and they instructed in the observance. (1.) Of this first passover, ver. 21-23. (2.) Of the after passovers, ver. 24-27. And the Israelites obedience to these orders, ver. 28.

II. None of all the providences of God concerning the Jewish church was more illustrious, than the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt.

1. The first-born of the Egyptians are slain, ver. 29, 30.
2. Orders are given immediately for their discharge, ver. 31-33.
3. They begin their march,
    1. Loaded with their own effects, ver. 34.
    2. Enriched with the spoils of Egypt, ver. 35, 36.
    3. Attended with a mixed multitude, ver. 37, 38,
    4. Put to their shifts for present supply, ver. 39. This event is dated, ver. 40-42.

III. A recapitulation in the close, 1st. Of this memorable ordinance, with some additions, ver. 43-49; 2ndly. Of this memorable providence, ver. 50, 51.

1. The Lord spake - Had spoken, before the three days darkness. But the mention of it was put off to this place, that the history of the plagues might not be interrupted.

2. This shall be to you the beginning of months - They had hitherto begun their year from the middle of September, but hence-forward they were to begin it from the middle of March, at least in all their ecclesiastical computations. We may suppose that while Moses was bringing the ten plagues upon the Egyptians, he was directing the Israelites to prepare for their departure at an hour's warning. Probably he had, by degrees, brought them near together from their dispersions, for they are here called the congregation of Israel; and to them, as a congregation, orders are here sent.

3. Take every man a lamb - In each of their families, or two or three families, if they were small, join for a lamb. The lamb was to be got ready four days before. and that afternoon they went, they were to kill it, (ver. 6,) as a sacrifice, not strictly, for it was not offered upon the altar, but as a religious ceremony, acknowledging God's goodness to them, not only in preserving them from, but in delivering them by the plagues inflicted on the Egyptians. The lamb so slain they were to eat roasted (we may suppose in its several quarters) with unleavened bread and bitter herbs; they were to eat it in haste, ver. 11, and to leave none of it until the morning; for God would have them to depend upon him for their daily bread. Before they eat the flesh of the lamb, they were to sprinkle the blood upon the door-posts; by which their houses were to be distinguished from the houses of the Egyptians, and so their first-born secured from the sword of the destroying angel. Dreadful work was to be made this night in Egypt; all the first-born both of man and beast were to be slain; and judgment executed upon the gods of Egypt, Num. xxxiii, 4. It is probable the idols which the Egyptians worshipped were defaced, those of metal melted, those of wood consumed, and those of stone broke to pieces. This was to be annually observed as a feast of the Lord in their generations, to which the feast of unleavened bread was annexed, during which, for seven days, they were to eat no bread but what was unleavened, in remembrance of their being confined to such bread for many days after they came out of Egypt, ver. 14- 20. There was much of the gospel in this ordinance: (1.) The paschal lamb was typical. Christ is our passover, 1 Cor. v, 7, and is the Lamb of God, John i, 29. 2. It was to be a male of the first year; in its prime. Christ offered up himself in the midst of his days. It notes the strength and sufficiency of the Lord Jesus, on whom our help was laid. 3. It was to be without blemish, noting the purity of the Lord Jesus, a lamb without spot, 1 Pet. i, 19. 4. It was to be set apart four days before, noting the designation of the Lord Jesus to be a saviour, both in the purpose and in the promise. It is observable, that as Christ was crucified at the passover, so he solemnly entered into Jerusalem four days before, the very day that the paschal lamb was set

apart. 5. It was to be slain and roasted with fire, noting the exquisite sufferings of the Lord Jesus, even unto death, the death of the cross. 6. It was to be killed by the whole congregation between the two evenings, that is, between three o'clock and six. Christ suffered in the latter end of the world, Heb. ix, 26, by the hand of the Jews, the whole multitude of them, Luke xxiii, 18. 7. Not a bone of it must be broken, ver. 46, which is expressly said to be fulfilled in Christ, John xix, 33, 36. (2.) The sprinkling of the blood was typical. 1st, It was not enough that the blood of the lamb was shed, but it must be sprinkled, noting the application of the merits of Christ's death to our souls; 2ndly, It was to be sprinkled upon the door-posts, noting the open profession we are to make of faith in Christ, and obedience to him. The mark of the beast may be received in the forehead, or in the right hand, but the seal of the lamb is always in the forehead, Rev. vii, 3. 3rdly, The blood thus sprinkled was a means of the preservation of the Israelites from the destroying angel. If the blood of Christ be sprinkled upon our consciences, it will be our protection from the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and the damnation of hell. (3.) The solemn eating of the lamb was typical of our gospel duty to Christ. 1st, The paschal lamb was killed not to be looked upon only, but to be fed upon; so we must by faith make Christ ours, as we do that which we eat, and we must receive spiritual strength and nourishment from him, as from our food, and have delight in him, as we have in eating and drinking when we are hungry or thirsty. 2ndly, It was to be all eaten: those that, by faith, feed upon Christ, must feed upon a whole Christ. They must take Christ and his yoke, Christ and his cross, as well as Christ and his crown. 3rdly, It was to be eaten with bitter herbs, in remembrance of the bitterness of their bondage in Egypt; we must feed upon Christ with brokenness of heart, in remembrance of sin. 4thly, It was to be eaten in a departing posture ver. 11, when we feed upon Christ by faith, we must sit loose to the world, and every thing in it. (4.) The feast of unleavened bread was typical of the Christian life, 1 Cor. v, 7, 8. Having received Christ Jesus the Lord, 1st. We must keep a feast, in holy joy, continually delighting ourselves in Christ Jesus; If true believers have not a continual feast, it is their own fault. 2ndly, It must be a feast of unleavened bread, kept in charity, without the leaven of malice, and in sincerity, without the leaven of hypocrisy. All the old leaven of sin must be put far from us, with the utmost caution, if we would keep the feast of a holy life to the honour of Christ. 3rdly, It was to be an ordinance forever. As long as we live we must continue feeding upon Christ, and rejoicing in him always, with thankful mention of the great things he has done for us.

9. Raw - Half roasted, but throughly drest.

10. Ye shall burn with fire - To prevent the profane abuse of it.

11. The Lord's passover - A sign of his passing over you, when he destroyed the Egyptians.

16. An holy convocation - A solemn day for the people to assemble together.

19. A stranger - A proselyte. Heathens were not concerned in the passover.

22. Out of the door of his house - Of that house, wherein he ate the passover: Until the morning - That is, till towards morning, when they would be called for to march out of Egypt. They went out very early in the morning.

23. The destroyer - The destroying angel, whether this was a good or an evil angel, we have not light to determine.

27. The people bowed the head and worshipped - They hereby signified their submission to this institution as a law, and their thankfulness for it as a favour and privilege.

31. Rise up, and get you forth - Pharaoh had told Moses he should see his face no more, but now he sent for him; those will seek God in their distress, who before had set him at defiance. Such

a fright he was now in that he gave orders by night for their discharge, fearing lest if he delay'd, he himself should fall next. And that he sent them out, not as men hated (as the Pagan historians have represented this matter) but as men feared, is plain by his request to them.

32. Bless me also - Let me have your prayers, that I may not be plagued for what is past when you are gone.

33. We be all dead men - When death comes unto our houses, it is seasonable for us to think of our own mortality.

34. Their kneading-troughs - Or rather, their lumps of paste unleavened.

37. About six hundred thousand men - The word means strong and able men fit for wars, beside women and children, which we cannot suppose to make less than twelve hundred thousand more. What a vast increase was this to arise from seventy souls, in little more than two hundred years.

38. And a mixed multitude went up with them - Some perhaps willing to leave their country, because it was laid waste by the plagues. But probably the greatest part was but a rude unthinking mob, that followed they knew not why: It is likely, when they understood that the children of Israel were to continue forty years in the wilderness, they quitted them, and returned to Egypt again. And flocks and herds, even very much cattle - This is taken notice of, because it was long ere Pharaoh would give them leave to remove their effects, which were chiefly cattle.

39. Thrust out - By importunate entreaties.

40. It was just four hundred and thirty years from the promise made to Abraham (as the Apostle explains it, Gal. iii, 17,) at his first coming into Canaan, during all which time the Hebrews, were sojourners in a land that was not theirs, either Canaan or Egypt. So long the promise God made to Abraham lay dormant and unfulfilled, but now, it revived, and things began to work towards the accomplishment of it. The first day of the march of Abraham's seed towards Canaan was four hundred and thirty years (it should seem, to a day) from the promise made to Abraham, Gen. xii, 2. I will make of thee a great nation.

42. This first passover night was a night of the Lord, much to be observed; but the last passover night, in which Christ was betrayed, was a night of the Lord, much more to be observed, when a yoke heavier than that of Egypt was broke from off our necks, and a land better than that of Canaan set before us. That was a temporal deliverance, to be celebrated in their generations; this an eternal redemption to be celebrated world without end.

45. An hired servant - Unless he submit to be circumcised.

47. All the congregation of Israel must keep it - Though it was observed in families apart, yet it is looked upon as the act of the whole congregation. And so the new testament passover, the Lord's supper, ought not to be neglected by any that are capable of celebrating it.

48. No stranger that was uncircumcised might eat of it. Neither may any now approach the Lord's supper who have not first submitted to baptism; nor shall any partake of the benefit of Christ's sacrifice, who are not first circumcised in heart. Any stranger that was circumcised might eat of the passover, even servants. Here is an indication of favour to the poor Gentiles, that the stranger, if circumcised, stands upon the same level with the home-born Israelite; one law for both. This was a mortification to the Jews, and taught them that it was their dedication to God, not their descent from Abraham, that entitled them to their privileges.

## XIII

In this chapter we have,

I. The commands God gave to Israel,

1. To sanctify all their first-born to him, ver. 1, 2.
2. To remember their deliverance out of Egypt, ver. 3, 4. and in remembrance of it to keep the feast of unleavened bread, ver. 5-8.
3. To transmit the knowledge of it to their children, ver. 8-10.
4. To set apart to God the firstlings of their cattle, ver. 11-13. and to explain that also to their children, ver. 14-16.

II. The care God took of Israel when he had brought them out of Egypt.

1. Chusing their way for them, ver. 17, 18
2. Guiding them in the way, ver. 20-22. And their care of Joseph's bones, ver. 19.

2. Sanctify to me all the first-born - The parents were not to look upon themselves as interested in their first-born, till they had first solemnly presented them to God, and received them back from him again. It is mine - By a special right, being by my singular favour preserved from the common destruction.

5. When the Lord shall bring you into the land, thou shalt keep this service - 'Till then they were not obliged to keep the passover, without a particular command from God.

7. There shall no leavened bread be seen in all thy quarters - Accordingly the Jews usage was, before the feast of the passover, to cast all the leavened bread out of their houses; either they burnt it, or buried it, or broke it small, and threw it into the wind; they searched diligently with lighted candles in all the corners of their houses, lest any leaven should remain. The strictness enjoined in this matter was designed,

1. To make the feast the more solemn, and consequently the more taken notice of by the children, who would ask, why is so much ado made?
2. To teach us how solicitous we should be to put away from us all sin.

9. Upon thy hand, between thine eyes - Proverbial expressions; denoting things which are never out of our thoughts.

13. Thou shalt redeem - The price of the redemption was fixed by the law.

16. For frontlets between thine eyes - As conspicuous as any thing fixt to thy forehead, or between thine eyes.

18. There were many reasons why God led them through the way of the wilderness of the red sea. The Egyptians were to be drowned in the Red-sea, the Israelites were to be humbled, and proved in the wilderness. Deut. viii, 2. God had given it to Moses for a sign, chap. iii, 12, ye shall serve God in this mountain. They had again and again told Pharaoh that they must go three days journey into the wilderness to do sacrifice, and therefore it was requisite they should march that way, else they had justly been exclaimed against as dissemblers. Before they entered the lifts with their enemies, matters must be settled between them and their God; laws must be given, ordinances instituted, covenants sealed; and for the doing of this it was necessary they should retire into the solitudes of a wilderness, the only closet for such a crowd; the high road would be no proper place

for these transactions. The reason why God did not lead them the nearest way, which would have brought them in a few days to the land of the Philistines, was because they were not yet fit for war, much less for war with the Philistines. Their spirits were broke with slavery; the Philistines were formidable enemies; it was convenient they should begin with the Amalekites, and be prepared for the wars of Canaan, by experiencing the difficulties of the wilderness. God is said to bring Israel out of Egypt as the eagle brings up her young ones, Deut. xxxii, 11, teaching them by degrees to fly. They went up harnessed - They went up by five in a rank, so some; in five squadrons, so others. They marched like an army with banners, which added much to strength and honour.

21. And the Lord went before them in a pillar - In the two first stages, it was enough that God directed Moses whither to march; he knew the country, and the road; but now they are come to the edge of the wilderness, they would have occasion for a guide, and a very good guide they had, infinitely wise, kind, and faithful, the Lord went up before them; The Shechinah or appearance of the divine Majesty, which was a precious manifestation of the eternal Word, who in the fulness of time was to be made flesh, and dwell among us. Christ was with the church in the wilderness, 1 Cor. x, 9. What a satisfaction to Moses and the pious Israelites, to be sure that they were under a divine conduct? They need not fear missing their way who were thus led, nor being lost who were thus directed; they need not fear being benighted, who were thus illuminated, nor being robbed, who were thus protected. And they who make the glory of God their end, and the word of God their rule, the spirit of God the guide of their affections, and the providence of God the guide of their affairs, may be confident that the Lord goes before them, as truly is he went before Israel in the wilderness, though not so sensibly. They had sensible effects of God's going before them in this pillar. For, It led them the way in that vast howling wilderness, in which there was no road, no track, no way-marks through which they had no guides. When they marched, this pillar went before them, at the rate that they could follow, and appointed the place of their encampment, as infinite Wisdom saw fit; which eased them from care, and secured them from danger, both in moving, and in resting. It sheltered them from the heat by day, which at sometimes of the year was extreme: And it gave them light by night when they had occasion for it.

22. He took not away the pillar of the cloud, - No not when they seemed to have less occasion for it: it never left them 'till it brought them to the borders of Canaan. It was a cloud which the wind could not scatter. There was something spiritual in this pillar of cloud and fire.

1. The children of Israel were baptized unto Moses in this cloud, 1 Cor. x, 2. By coming under this cloud they signified their putting themselves under the conduct and command of Moses. Protection draws allegiance; this cloud was the badge of God's protection, and so became the bond of their allegiance. Thus they were initiated, and admitted under that government, now when they were entering upon the wilderness.
2. And it signifies the special conduct and protection which the church of Christ is under in this world.

## XIV

Here is,

I. The extreme distress that Israel was in at the Red-sea.
  1. Notice given of it to Moses before, ver. 1-4.
  2. The cause of it was Pharaoh's pursuit of them, ver. 5-9.
  3. Israel was in a consternation upon it, ver. 10-12.
  4. Moses endeavours to encourage them, ver. 13, 14.
II. The wonderful deliverance that God wrought for them.
  1. Moses is instructed concerning it, ver. 15-18.
  2. Lines that could not be forced are set between the camp of Israel and Pharaoh's camp, ver. 19, 20.
  3. By the divine power the Red-sea is divided, ver. 21. and is made,
    1. A lane to the Israelites, who marched safely through it, ver. 22- 29. But.
    2. To the Egyptians it was made,
      1. An ambush into which they were drawn, ver. 23-25. And,
      2. A grave in which they were all buried, ver. 26-28.
III. The impressions this made upon the Israelites, ver. 30, 31.

2. They were got to the edge of the wilderness, chap. xiii, 20, and one stage or two would have brought them to Horeb, the place appointed for their serving God, but instead of going forward, they are ordered to turn short off, on the right-hand from Canaan, and to march towards the Red-sea. When they were at Etham, there was no sea in their way to obstruct their passage; but God himself orders them into straits, which might give them an assurance, that when his purposes were served, he would bring them out of those straits. Before Pi-hahiroth - Or the straits of Hiroth, two great mountains, between which they marched. Migdol and Baal-zephon were cities of Egypt and probably garrison'd.

3. They are entangled - Inclosed with mountains, and garrisons, and deserts.

5. And it was told the king that the people fled - He either forgot, or would not own that they had departed with his consent; and therefore was willing it should be represented to him as a revolt from their allegiance.

7. Captains over every one of them - Or rather over all of them; distributing the command of them to his several Captains.

8. With an high hand - Boldly, resolutely.

9. Chariots and horsemen - It should seem he took no foot with him, because the king's business required haste.

10. They were sore afraid - They knew the strength of the enemy, and their own weakness; numerous indeed they were, but all foot, unarmed, undisciplined, dispirited, by long servitude, and now pent up, so that they could not escape. On one hand was Pi- hahiroth, a range of craggy rocks unpassable; on the other hand were Migdol and Baal-zephon, forts upon the frontiers of Egypt; before them was the sea, behind them were the Egyptians; so that there was no way open for them but upwards, and thence their deliverance came.

13. Moses answered not these fools according to their folly: Instead of chiding he comforts them, and with an admirable pretense of mind, not disheartened either by the threatenings of Egypt, or the tremblings of Israel, stills their murmuring, Fear ye not, It is our duty, when we cannot get

out of our troubles, yet to get above our fears, so that they may only serve to quicken our prayers and endeavours, but may not prevail to silence our faith and hope. Stand still, and think not to save yourselves either by fighting or flying; wait God's orders, and observe them; Compose yourselves, by an entire confidence in God, into a peaceful prospect of the great salvation God is now about to work for you. Hold your peace, you need not so much as give a shout against the enemy: the work shall be done without any concurrence of yours. In times of great difficulty, it is our wisdom to keep our spirits calm, quiet, and sedate, for then we are in the best frame both to do our own work, and to consider the work of God.

15. Wherefore criest thou unto me - Moses though he was assured of a good issue, yet did not neglect prayer. We read not of one word he said in prayer, but he lifted up his heart to God, and God well understood, and took notice of. Moses's silent prayer prevailed more with God, than Israel's loud out-cries. But is God displeased with Moses for praying? No, he asks this question, Wherefore criest thou unto me? Wherefore shouldst thou press thy petition any farther, when it is already granted? Moses has something else to do besides praying, he is to command the hosts of Israel. Speak to them that they go forward - Some think Moses had prayed not so much for their deliverance, he was assured of that; as for the pardon of their murmurings, and God's ordering them to go forward, was an intimation of the pardon. Moses bid them stand still and expect orders from God: and now orders are given. They thought they must have been directed either to the right hand, or to the left; no, saith God, speak to them to go forward, directly to the sea-side; as if there had lain a fleet of transport ships ready for them to embark in. Let the children of Israel go as far as they can upon dry ground, and then God will divide the sea. The same power could have congealed the waters for them to pass over, but infinite wisdom chose rather to divide the waters for them to pass through, for that way of salvation is always pitched upon which is most humbling.

19. The angel of God - Whose ministry was made use of in the pillar of cloud and fire, went from before the camp of Israel, where they did not now need a guide; there was no danger of missing their way through the sea, and came behind them, where now they needed a guard, the Egyptians being just ready to seize the hindmost of them. There it was of use to the Israelites, not only to protect them, but to light them through the sea; and at the same time it confounded the Egyptians, so that they lost sight of their prey, just when they were ready to lay hands on it. The word and providence of God have a black and dark side towards sin and sinners, but a bright and pleasant side towards those that are Israelites indeed.

21. We have here the history of that work of wonder which is so often mentioned both in the Old and New Testament. An instance of God's almighty power in dividing the sea, and opening a passage through the waters. It was a bay, or gulf, or arm of the sea, two or three leagues over. The God of nature has not tied himself to its laws, but when he pleases dispenseth with them, and then the fire doth not burn, nor the water flow. They went through the sea to the opposite shore; they walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the pillar of cloud being their rereward, the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left. Moses and Aaron it is likely ventured first, into this untrodden path, and then all Israel after them; and this march through the paths of the great waters would make their march afterwards through the wilderness less formidable. This march through the sea was in the night, and not a moon-shine night, for it was seven days after the full moon, so that they had no light but what they had from the pillar of fire. This made it the more awful, but where God leads us, he will light us; while we follow his conduct we shall not want his comforts.

23. And the Egyptians went in after them into the midst of the sea - They thought, why might they not venture where Israel did? They were more advantageously provided with chariots and horses, while the Israelites were on foot.

24. The Lord - Called the angel before, looked - With indignation, upon the Egyptians, and troubled the Egyptians - With terrible winds and lightnings and thunders, chap. xv, 10, Psalm lxxvii, 18, 19. Also with terror of mind.

25. They had driven furiously, but now they drove heavily, and found themselves embarrassed at every step; the way grew deep, their hearts grew sad, their wheels dropt off, and the axle-trees failed. They had been flying upon the back of Israel as the hawk upon the dove; but now they cried, Let us flee from the face of Israel.

26. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thy hand over the sea - And give a signal to the waters to close again, as before upon the word of command they had opened to the right and the left. He did so, and immediately the waters returned to their place, and overwhelmed all the host of the Egyptians. Pharaoh and his servants, that had hardened one another in sin, now fell together, and not one escaped. An ancient tradition saith, That Pharaoh's magicians Jannes and Jambres perished with the rest. Now God got him honour upon Pharaoh, a rebel to God, and a slave to his own barbarous passions; perfectly lost to humanity, virtue, and all true honour; here be lies buried in the deep, a perpetual monument of divine justice: here he went down to the pit, though he was the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.

28. After them - That is, after the Israelites.

30. And Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the shore - The Egyptians were very curious in preserving the bodies of their great men, but here the utmost contempt is poured upon all the grandees of Egypt; see how they lie heaps upon heaps, as dung upon the face of the earth.

31. And Israel feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses - Now they were ashamed of their distrusts and murmurings; and in the mind they were in, they would never again despair of help from heaven; no not in the greatest straits! They would never again quarrel with Moses; nor talk of returning to Egypt. How well were it for us, if we were, always in as good a frame, as we are in sometimes!

## XV

In this chapter,

I. Israel looks back upon Egypt with a song of praise for their deliverance. Here is,
   1. The song itself, ver. 1-19.
   2. The solemn singing of it, ver. 20, 21.

II. Israel marches forward in the wilderness, ver. 22. Their discontent at the waters of Marah, ver. 23, 24. and the relief granted them, ver. 25, 26. Their satisfaction in the waters of Elim, ver. 27.

1. Then sang Moses - Moses composed this song, and sang it with the children of Israel. Doubtless he wrote it by inspiration, and sang it on the spot. By this instance it appears that the

singing of psalms, as an act of religious worship, was used in the church of Christ before the giving of the ceremonial law, therefore it is no part of it, nor abolished with it: singing is as much the language of holy joy, as praying is of holy desire. I will sing unto the Lord - All our joy must terminate in God, and all our praises be offered up to him, for he hath triumphed - All that love God triumph in his triumphs.

2. Israel rejoiceth in God, as their strength, song, and salvation - Happy therefore the people whole God is the Lord: They are weak themselves, but he strengthens them, his grace is their strength: they are oft in sorrow, but in him they have comfort, he is their song: sin and death threaten them, but he is, and will be, their salvation. He is their fathers God - This they take notice of, because being conscious of their own unworthiness, they had reason to think that what God had now done for them was for their fathers sake, Deut. iv, 37.

3. The Lord is a man of war - Able to deal with all those that strive with their maker.

4. He hath cast - With great force, as an arrow out of a bow, so the Hebrew word signifies.

7. In the greatness of thine excellency - By thy great and excellent power.

8. With the blast of thy nostrils - By thine anger: The depths were congealed - Stood still, as if they had been frozen: In the heart of the sea - The midst of it.

9. My lust - My desire both of revenge and gain.

11. The gods - So called: Idols, or Princes: Glorious in holiness - In justice, mercy and truth: Fearful in praises - To be praised with reverence.

12. The earth swallowed them - Their dead bodies sunk into the sands on which they were thrown, which sucked them in.

13. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the People - Out of the bondage of Egypt, and out of the perils of the Red-sea. Thou hast guided them to thy holy habitation - Thou hast put them into the way to it, and wilt in due time bring them to the end of that way.

17. Thou shalt bring them in - If he thus bring them out of Egypt, he will bring them into Canaan; for has he begun, and will he not make an end? Thou wilt plant them in the place which thou hast made for thee to dwell in - It is good dwelling where God dwells, in his church on earth, and in his church in heaven. In the mountains - In the mountainous country of Canaan: The sanctuary which thy hands have established - Will as surely establish as if it was done already.

18. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever - They had now seen an end of Pharaoh's reign, but time itself shall not put a period to Jehovah's reign, which like himself is eternal.

20. Miriam (or Mary, it is the same name) presided in an assembly of the women, who (according to the common usage of those times) with timbrels and dances, sung this song. Moses led the psalm, and gave it out for the men, and then Miriam for the women. Famous victories were wont to be applauded by the daughters of Israel, 1 Sam. xviii, 6, 7, so was this. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, it is said, Micah vi, 4, he sent before them Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; though we read not of any thing remarkable that Miriam did but this. But those are to be reckoned great blessings to a people, that go before them in praising God.

21. And Miriam answered them - The men: They sung by turns, or in parts.

23. The name of it was called Marah - That is, Bitterness.

25. And he cried unto the Lord - It is the greatest relief of the cares of magistrates and ministers, when those under their charge make them uneasy, that they may have recourse to God by prayer; he is the guide of the church's guides, and to the chief shepherd, the under shepherds must on all occasions apply themselves: And the Lord directed Moses to a tree, which he cast into the waters,

and they were made sweet - Some think this wood had a peculiar virtue in it for this purpose, because it is said, God shewed him the tree. God is to be acknowledged, not only in the creating things useful for man, but in discovering their usefulness. But perhaps this was only a sign, and not a means of the cure, no more than the brazen serpent. There he made a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them - That is, there he put them upon trial, admitted them as probationers for his favour. In short he tells them, ver. 26, what he expected from them, and that was, in one word, obedience. They must diligently hearken to his voice, and give ear to his commandments, and must take care, in every thing, to do that which was right in God's sight, and to keep all his statutes. Then I will put none of these diseases upon thee - That is, I will not bring upon thee any of the plagues of Egypt. This intimates, that if they were disobedient, the plagues which they had seen inflicted on their enemies should be brought on them. But if thou wilt be obedient, thou shalt be safe, the threatening is implied, but the promise is expressed, I am the Lord that healeth thee - And will take care of thee wherever thou goest.

## XVI

This chapter gives us an account of the victualling of the camp of Israel.

I. Their complaint for want of bread, ver. 1-3.

II. The notice God gave them of the provision he intended to make for them, ver. 4-12.

III. The sending of the manna, ver. 13-15.

IV. The laws and orders concerning it.

1. That they should gather it daily, ver. 16-21.
2. That they should gather a double portion on the sixth day, ver. 22-26.
3. That they should expect none on the seventh day, ver. 27-31,
4. That they should preserve a pot of it for a memorial, ver 32.

1. A month's provision, it seems, the host of Israel took with them out of Egypt, when they came thence on the 15th day of the first month, which, by the 15th day of the second month, was all spent.

2. Then the whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron - God's viceregents among them.

3. They so undervalue their deliverance, that they wish, they had died in Egypt, nay, and died by the hand of the Lord too. That is, by some of the plagues which cut off the Egyptians; as if it were not the hand of the Lord, but of Moses only, that brought them into this wilderness. 'Tis common for people to say of that pain, or sickness, which they see not second causes of, It is what pleaseth God, as if that were not so likewise which comes by the hand of man, or some visible accident. We cannot suppose they had any great plenty in Egypt, how largely soever they now talk of the flesh-pots, nor could they fear dying for want in the wilderness while they had their flocks and herds with them; but discontent magnifies what is past, and vilifies what is present, without regard to truth or reason. None talk more absurdly than murmurers.

4. Man being made out of the earth, his Maker has wisely ordered him food out of the earth, Psalm civ, 14. But the people of Israel typifying the church of the first-born that are written in heaven, receiving their charters, laws and commissions from heaven, from heaven also they received their food. See what God designed in making this provision for them, that I may prove them whether they will walk in my law or no - Whether they will trust me, and whether they would serve him, and be ever faithful to so good a master.

5. They shall prepare - Lay up, grind, bake or boil.

6. The Lord - And not we, (as you suggest) by our own counsel.

10. The glory of the Lord - An extra-ordinary and sudden brightness.

12. And ye shall know that I am the Lord your God - This gave proof of his power as the Lord, and his particular favour to them as their God; when God plagued the Egyptians, it was to make them know that he is the Lord; when he provided for the Israelites, it was to make them know that he was their God.

13. The quails came up, and covered the camp - So tame that they might take up as many of them as they pleased. Next morning he rained manna upon them, which was to be continued to them for their daily bread.

15. What is this? Manna descended from the clouds. It came down in dew melted, and yet was itself of such a consistency as to serve for nourishing strengthening food, without any thing else: It was pleasant food; the Jews say it was palatable to all, according as their tastes were. It was wholesome food, light of digestion. By this spare and plain diet we are all taught a lesson of temperance, and forbidden to desire dainties and varieties.

16. An omer - The tenth part of an ephah: Near six pints, wine- measure.

19. Let no man leave 'till morning - But let them learn to go to bed and sleep quietly, though they had not a bit of bread in their tent, nor in all their camp, trusting God with the following day to bring them their daily bread. Never was there such a market of provisions as this, where so many hundred thousand men were daily furnished without money, and without price: never was there such an open house kept as God kept in the wilderness for 40 years together, nor such free and plentiful entertainment given. And the same wisdom, power and goodness that now brought food daily out of the clouds, doth in the constant course of nature bring food yearly out of the earth, and gives us all things richly to enjoy.

23. Here is a plain intimation of the observing a seventh day sabbath, not only before the giving of the law upon mount Sinai, but before the bringing of Israel out of Egypt and therefore from the beginning. If the sabbath had now been first instituted, how could Moses have understood what God said to him, ver. 4, concerning a double portion to be gathered on the sixth day, without making any express mention of the sabbath? And how could the people so readily take the hint, ver. 22, even to the surprize of the rulers, before Moses had declared that it was done with regard to the sabbath, if they had not had some knowledge of the sabbath before? The setting apart of one day in seven for holy work, and in order to that for holy rest, was a divine appointment ever since God created man upon the earth.

34. An omer of this manna was laid up in a golden pot as we are told, Heb. ix, 4, and kept before the testimony, or the ark, when it was afterwards made, The preservation of this manna from waste and corruption, was a standing miracle; and therefore the more proper memorial of this miraculous food. The manna is called spiritual meat, 1 Cor. x, 3, because it was typical of spiritual blessings. Christ himself is the true manna, the bread of life, of which that was a figure, John vi, 49-51. The

word of God is the manna by which our souls are nourished, Matt. iv, 4. The comforts of the Spirit are hidden manna, Rev. ii, 17. These comforts from heaven as the manna did, are the support of the divine life in the soul while we are in the wilderness of this world: it is food for Israelites, for those only that follow the pillar of cloud and fire: it is to be gathered; Christ in the word is to be applied to the soul, and the means of grace used: we must every one of us gather for ourselves. There was manna enough for all, enough for each, and none had too much; so in Christ there is a compleat sufficiency, and no superfluity. But they that did eat manna hungered again, died at last, and with many of them God was not well pleased: whereas they that feed on Christ by faith shall never hunger, and shall die no more, and with them God will be for ever well pleased. The Lord evermore give us this bread!

## XVII

In this chapter are recorded,

I. The watering of the host of Israel. (1.) In the wilderness they wanted water, ver. 1. (2.) In their want they chide with Moses, ver. 2, 3. (3.) Moses cried to God, ver. 4. (4.) God ordered him to smite the rock, and fetch water out of it; and he did so, ver. 5, 6. (5.) The place named from it, ver. 7.

II. The defeating of the host of Amalek. (1.) The victory obtained by the prayer of Moses, ver. 8-12. (2.) By the sword of Joshua, ver. 13 (3.) A record kept of it, ver.14-16.

1. They journeyed according to the commandment of the Lord, led by the pillar of cloud and fire, and yet they came to a place where there was no water for them to drink - We may be in the way of our duty, and yet meet with troubles, which Providence brings us into for the trial of our faith.

5. Go on before the people - Though they spake of stoning him. He must take his rod with him, not to summon some plague to chastise them, but to fetch water for their supply. O the wonderful patience and forbearance of God towards provoking sinners! He maintains those that are at war with him, and reaches out the hand of his bounty to those that lift up the heel against him. If God had only shewed Moses a fountain of water in the wilderness, as he did to Hagar, not far from hence, Gen. xxi, 19, that had been a great favour; but that he might shew his power as well as his pity, and make it a miracle of mercy, he gave them water out of a rock. He directed Moses whither to go, appointed him to take of the elders of Israel with him, to be witnesses of what was done, ordered him to smite the rock, which he did, and immediately water came out of it in great abundance, which ran throughout the camp in streams and rivers, Psalm lxxviii, 15, 16, and followed them wherever they went in that wilderness: God shewed his care of his people in giving them water when they wanted it; his own power in fetching it out of a rock, and put an honour upon Moses in appointing the water to flow out upon his smiting of the rock. This fair water that came out of the rock is called honey and oil, Deut. xxxii, 13, because the people's thirst made it doubly pleasant; coming when they were in extreme want. It is probable that the people digged canals for the conveyance of it, and pools for the reception of it. Let this direct us to live in a dependance,

1. Upon God's providence even in the greatest straits and difficulties;
2. And upon Christ's grace; that rock was Christ, 1 Cor. x, 4. The graces and comforts of the Spirit are compared to rivers of living waters, John vii, 38, 39; iv, 14. These flow from Christ. And nothing will supply the needs and satisfy the desires of a soul but water out of this rock. A new name was upon this occasion given to the place, preserving the remembrance of their murmuring, Massah - Temptation, because they tempted God, Meribah - Strife, because they chide with Moses.

8. Then Amalek came and fought with Israel - The Amalekites were the posterity of Esau, who hated Jacob because of the birth- right and blessing. They did not boldly front them as a generous enemy, but without any provocation given, basely fell upon their rear, and smote them that were faint and feeble.

9. I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my land - See how God qualifies his people for, and calls them to various services for the good of his church; Joshua fights, Moses prays, and both minister to Israel. This rod Moses held up, not so much to Israel as to animate them; as to God by way of appeal to him; Is not the battle the Lord's? Is not he able to help, and engaged to help? Witness this rod! Moses was not only a standard-bearer, but an intercessor, pleading with God for success and victory.

10. Hur is supposed to have been the husband of Miriam.

11. And when Moses held vp his hand in prayer (so the Chaldee explains it) Israel prevailed, but when he let down his hand from prayer, Amalek prevailed - To convince Israel that the hand of Moses (with whom they had just now been chiding) contributed more to their safety than their own hands; the success rises and falls, as Moses lifts up or lets down his hand. The church's cause is ordinarily more or less successful, according as the church's friends are more or less fervent in prayer.

13. Though God gave the victory, yet it is said Joshua discomfited Amalek, because Joshua was a type of Christ, and of the same name, and in him it is that we are more than conquerors.

15. And Moses built an altar, and called it Jehovah-niffi - The Lord is my banner. The presence and power of Jehovah was the banner under which they were lifted, by which they were animated, and kept together, and therefore which they erected in the day of their triumph. In the name of our God we must always lift up our banners: He that doth all the work should have all the praise. Write this for a memorial - This is the first mention of writing we find in scripture; and perhaps the command was not given till after the writing of the law on tables of stone.

## XVIII

This chapter is concerning Moses himself, and the affairs of his own family.

I. Jethro his father-in-law brings him his wife and children, ver. 1- 6.

II. Moses entertains his father-in-law with great respect, ver. 7. with good discourse, ver. 8-11. with a sacrifice and a feast, ver. 12.

III. Jethro adviseth him about the management of his business as a judge in Israel, to take other Judg. in to his assistance, ver. 13-23. and Moses after some time takes his counsel, ver. 24-26. They part, ver. 27.

1. Jethro to congratulate the happiness of Israel, and particularly the honour of Moses his son-in-law; comes to rejoice with them, as one that had a true respect both for them and for their God. And also to bring Moses's wife and children to him. It seems he had sent them back, probably from the inn where his wife's lothness to have her son circumcised had like to have cost him his life, chap. iv, 25.

3. The name of one was Gershom - A stranger, designing thereby not only a memorial of his own condition, but a memorandum to this son of his, for we are all strangers upon earth.

4. The name of the other was Eliezer - My God a help: it looks back to his deliverance from Pharaoh, when he made his escape after the slaying of the Egyptian; but if this were the son that was circumcised in the inn, I would rather translate it, The Lord is mine help, and will deliver me from the sword of Pharaoh, which he had reason to expect would be drawn against him, when he was going to fetch Israel out of bondage.

11. Now know I that JEHOVAH is greater than all gods - That the God of Israel is greater than all pretenders; all deities, that usurp divine honours: he silenceth them, subdues them all, and is himself the only living and true God. He is also higher than all princes and potentates, who also are called gods, and has both an incontestable authority over them, and an irresistible power to control them; he manages them all as he pleaseth, and gets honour upon them how great soever they are. Now know I: he knew it before, but now he knew it better; his faith grew up to a full assurance, upon this fresh evidence; for wherein they dealt proudly - The magicians or idols of Egypt, or Pharaoh and his grandees, opposing God, and setting up in competition with him, he was above them. The magicians were baffled, Pharaoh humbled, his powers broken, and Israel rescued out of their hands.

12. And Jethro took a burnt offering for God - And probably offered it himself, for he was a priest in Midian, and a worshipper of the true God, and the priesthood was not yet settled in Israel. And they did eat bread before God - Soberly, thankfully, in the fear of God; and their talk such as became saints. Thus we must eat and drink to the glory of God; as those that believe God's eye is upon us.

13. Moses sat to judge the people - To answer enquiries; to acquaint them with the will of God in doubtful cases, and to explain the laws of God that were already given.

15. The people came to inquire of God - And happy was it for them that they had such an oracle to consult. Moses was faithful both to him that appointed him, and to them that consulted him, and made them know the statutes of God, and his laws - His business was not to make laws, but to make known God's laws: his place was but that of a servant.

16. I judge between one and another - And if the people were as quarrelsome one with another as they were with God, he had many causes brought before him, and the more because their trials put them to no expence.

17. Not good - Not convenient either for thee or them.

19. Be thou for them to God-ward - That was an honour which it was not fit any other should share with him in. Also whatever concerned the whole congregation must pass through his hand, ver. 20. But, he appointed Judg. in the several tribes and families, which should try causes between man and man, and determine them, which would be done with less noise, and more dispatch than in the general assembly. Those whose gifts and stations are most eminent may yet be greatly furthered in their work by the assistance of those that are every way their inferiors. This is Jethro's advice; but he adds two qualifications to his counsel. (1.)That great care should be taken in the choice of the persons who should be admitted into this trust; it was requisite that they should be men of the best character.

1. For judgment and resolution, able men: men of good sense, that understood business; and bold men, that would not be daunted by frowns or clamours. Clear heads and stout hearts make good Judges.
2. For piety, such as fear God, who believe there is a God above them, whose eye is upon them, to whom they are accountable, and whose judgment they stand in awe of. Conscientious men, that dare not do an ill thing, though they could do it never so secretly and securely.
3. For honesty, men of truth, whose word one may take, and whose fidelity one may rely upon.
4. For a generous contempt of worldly wealth, hating covetousness, not only not seeking bribes, or aiming to enrich themselves, but abhorring the thought of it. (2.) That he should attend God's direction in the case, ver. 23. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so - Jethro knew that Moses had a better counsellor than he was, and to his counsel he refers him.

24. So Moses hearkened unto the voice of his father-in-law. When he came to consider the thing, he saw the reasonableness of it, and resolved to put it in practice, which he did soon after, when he had received directions from God. Those are not so wise as they would be thought to be, who think themselves too wise to be counselled; for a wise man will hear, and will increase learning, and not slight good counsel, though given by an inferior.

27. He went into his own land - It is supposed the Kenites mentioned 1 Sam. xv, 6, were the posterity of Jethro, (compare Jude i, 16,) and they are taken under special protection, for the kindness their ancestor shewed to Israel.

## XIX

This chapter introduces the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai, which was one of the most sensible appearances of the divine glory that ever was in this lower world. Here are,

I. The circumstances of time and place, ver. 1, 2.

II. The covenant between God and Israel settled in general. The gracious proposal God made to them, ver. 3-6. And their consent to the proposal, ver. 7, 8.

III. Notice given three days before of God's design to give the law out of a thick cloud, ver. 9. Orders given to prepare the people to receive the law, ver. 10-13. and care taken to execute those orders, ver. 14, 15.

IV. A terrible appearance of God's glory, ver. 16-20.
V. Silence proclaimed, and strict charge given to the people to observe a decorum while God spake to them, ver. 20-25.

1. In the third month after they came out of Egypt. It is computed that the law was given just fifty days after their coming out of Egypt, in remembrance of which the feast of Pentecost was observed the fiftieth day after the passover, and in compliance with which the spirit was poured out upon the apostles, at the feast of Pentecost, fifty days after the death of Christ. Mount Sinai was a place which nature, not art, had made conspicuous, for it was the highest in all that range of mountains. Thus God put contempt upon cities and palaces, setting up his pavilion on the top of a mountain, in a barren desert. It is called Sinai, from the multitude of thorny bushes that over-spread it.

3. Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and the children of Israel - The people are called by the names both of Jacob and Israel, to mind them that they who had lately been as low as Jacob when he went to Padan-aram, were now grown as great as God made him when he came from thence, and was called Israel.

4. Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on Eagle's wings - An high expression of the wonderful tenderness God shewed for them. It notes great speed; God not only came upon the wing for their deliverance, but he hastened them out, as it were upon the wing. Also that he did it with great ease, with the strength as well as with the swiftness of an eagle. They that faint not, nor are weary, are said to mount up with wings as eagles, Isaiah xl, 31. Especially it notes God's particular care of them, and affection to them. Even Egypt was the nest in which these young ones were first formed as the embryo of a nation: when by the increase of their numbers they grew to some maturity, they were carried out of that nest. I brought you unto myself - They were brought not only into a state of liberty, but into covenant and communion with God. This, God aims at in all the gracious methods of his providence and grace, to bring us back to himself, from whom we have revolted, and to bring us home to himself, in whom alone we can be happy.

5. Then ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me - He doth not instance in any one particular favour, but expresseth it in that which was inclusive of all happiness, that he would be to them a God in covenant, and they should be to him a people. Nay you shall be a peculiar treasure: not that God was enriched by them, as a man is by his treasure, but he was pleased to value and esteem them as a man doth his treasure; they were precious in his sight. He took them under his special care and protection, as a treasure that is kept under lock and key. He distinguished them from, and dignified them above all people, as a people devoted to him, and to his service.

6. A kingdom of priests, a holy nation - All the Israelites, if compared with other people, were priests unto God, so near were they to him, so much employed in his immediate service, and such intimate communion they had with him. The tendency of the laws given them was to distinguish them from others, and engage them for God as a holy nation. Thus all believers are, through Christ, made to our God kings and priests, Rev. i, 6, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, 1 Pet. ii, 9.

7. And Moses laid before their faces all these words - He not only explained to them what God had given him in charge, but put it to their choice, whether they would accept these promises upon these terms or no. His laying it to their faces speaks his laying it to their consciences.

8. And they answered together; all that the Lord hath spoken we will do - Thus accepting the Lord to be to them a God, and giving up themselves to be to him a people.

10. Sanctify the people - As Job before sent and sanctified his sons, Job i, 5. Sanctify them, that is, call them off from their worldly business, and call them to religious exercises, meditation and prayer, that they may receive the law from God's mouth with reverence and devotion. Two things particularly were prescribed as instances of their preparation. 1st, In token of cleansing of themselves from all sinful pollutions, they must wash their clothes. Not that God regards our clothes, but while they were washing their clothes, he would have them think of washing their souls by repentance. It becomes us to appear in clean clothes when we wait upon great men; so clean hearts are required in our attendance on the great God. 2ndly, In token of their devoting themselves entirely to religious exercises upon this occasion they must abstain even from lawful enjoyments during these three days, and not come at their wives.

11. In the sight of all the people - Though they should see no manner of similitude, yet they should see so much as would convince them, that God was among them of a truth. And so high was the top of Mount Sinai, that it is supposed not only the camp of Israel, but even the countries about might discern some extraordinary appearance of glory upon it.

12. Set bounds - Probably he drew a ditch round at the foot of the hill, which none were to pass upon pain of death. This was to intimate, 1st, That awful reverence which ought to possess the minds of all that worship God. 2ndly, The distance which worshippers were kept at under that dispensation, which we ought to take notice of, that we may the more value our privilege under the gospel, having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, Heb. x, 19.

13. When the trumpet soundeth long - Then let them take their places at the foot of the mount. Never was so great a congregation called together and preached to at once as this was here. No one man's voice could have reached so many, but the voice of God did.

16. Now at length is come that memorable day, in which Israel heard the voice of the Lord God speaking to them out of the midst of the fire and lived, Deut. iv, 33. Never was there such a sermon preached before or since, as this, which was here preached to the church in the wilderness. For, the preacher was God himself, ver. 17, The Lord descended in fire; and ver. 18. The Lord came down upon mount Sinai. The Shechinah, or glory of the Lord, appeared in the sight of all the people; he shined forth from mount Paran with ten thousand of his saints, attended with a multitude of the holy angels. Hence the law is said to be given by the disposition of angels, Acts vii, 53. He spake from mount Sinai, hung with a thick cloud, ver. 16, covered with smoke, ver. 18, and made to quake greatly. Now it was that the earth trembled at the presence of the Lord, and the mountains skipped like rams, Psalm cxiv, 4, 7, that Sinai itself, though rough and rocky, melted from before the Lord God of Israel, Jude v, 5. The congregation was called together by the sound of a trumpet exceeding loud, ver. 16, and waxing louder and louder, ver. 19. This was done by the ministry of the angels, and made all the people tremble. The introductions to the service were thunders and lightnings, ver. 16. These have natural causes; but the scripture directs us in a particular manner to take notice of the power of God, and his terror in them. Thunder is the voice of God, and lightning the fire of God, proper to engage both the learning senses of seeing and hearing.

## XX

All things being prepared for the solemn promulgation of the divine law, we have in this chapter,

I. The ten commandments as God himself spake them upon Mount Sinai, ver. 1-17.

II. The impressions made upon the people, thereby, ver. 18-21.

III. Some particular instructions which God gave to Moses, relating to his worship, ver. 22-26.

1. God spake all these words - The law of the ten commandments is a law of God's making; a law of his own speaking. God has many ways of speaking to the children of men by his spirit, conscience, providences; his voice in all which we ought carefully to attend to: but he never spake at any time upon any occasion so as he spake the ten commandments, which therefore we ought to hear with the more earnest heed. This law God had given to man before, it was written in his heart by nature; but sin had so defaced that writing, that it was necessary to revive the knowledge of it.

2. I am the Lord thy God - Herein, God asserts his own authority to enact this law; and proposeth himself as the sole object of that religious worship which is enjoined in the four first commandments. They are here bound to obedience.

1. Because God is the Lord, Jehovah, self-existent, independent, eternal, and the fountain of all being and power; therefore he has an incontestable right to command us.
2. He was their God; a God in covenant with them; their God by their own consent.
3. He had brought them out of the land of Egypt - Therefore they were bound in gratitude to obey him, because he had brought them out of a grievous slavery into a glorious liberty. By redeeming them, he acquired a farther right to rule them; they owed their service to him, to whom they owed their freedom. And thus, Christ, having rescued us out of the bondage of sin, is entitled to the best service we can do him. The four first commandments, concern our duty to God (commonly called the first-table.) It was fit those should be put first, because man had a Maker to love before he had a neighbour to love, and justice and charity are then only acceptable to God when they flow from the principles of piety.

3. The first commandment is concerning the object of our worship, Jehovah, and him only, Thou shalt have no other gods before me - The Egyptians, and other neighbouring nations, had many gods, creatures of their own fancy. This law was pre-fixed because of that transgression; and Jehovah being the God of Israel, they must entirely cleave to him, and no other, either of their own invention, or borrowed from their neighbours. The sin against this commandment, which we are most in danger of, is giving that glory to any creature which is due to God only. Pride makes a God of ourselves, covetousness makes a God of money, sensuality makes a God of the belly. Whatever is loved, feared, delighted in, or depended on, more than God, that we make a God of. This prohibition includes a precept which is the foundation of the whole law, that we take the Lord for our God, accept him for ours, adore him with humble reverence, and set our affections entirely upon him. There is a reason intimated in the last words before me. It intimates,

1. That we cannot have any other God but he will know it.
2. That it is a sin that dares him to his face, which he cannot, will not, overlook. The second commandment is concerning the ordinances of worship, or the way in which God will be worshipped, which it is fit himself should appoint. Here is,
    1. The prohibition; we are forbidden to worship even the true God by images, ver. 4, 5. First, The Jews (at least after the captivity) thought themselves forbidden by this to make any image or picture whatsoever. It is certain it forbids making any image of God, for to whom can we liken him? Isaiah xl, 18, 25. It also forbids us to make images of God in our fancies, as if he were a man as we are. Our religious worship must be governed by the power of faith, not by the power of imagination. Secondly, They must not bow down to them - Shew any sign of honour to them, much less serve them by sacrifice, or any other act of religious worship. When they paid their devotion to the true God, they must not have any image before them for the directing, exciting, or assisting their devotion. Though the worship was designed to terminate in God, it would not please him if it came to him through an image. The best and most ancient lawgivers among the Heathen forbad the setting up of images in their temples. It was forbidden in Rome by Numa a Pagan prince, yet commanded in Rome by the Pope, a Christian bishop. The use of images in the church of Rome, at this day, is so plainly contrary to the letter of this command, that in all their catechisms, which they put into the hand of the people, they leave out this commandment, joining the reason of it to the first, and so the third commandment they call the second, the fourth the third, &c. only to make up the number ten, they divide the tenth into two. For I the Lord Jehovah, thy God, am a jealous God, especially in things of this nature. It intimates the care he has of his own institutions, his displeasure against idolaters, and that he resents every thing in his worship that looks like, or leads to, idolatry: visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation - Severely punishing. Nor is it an unrighteous thing with God if the parents died in their iniquity, and the children tread in their steps, when God comes, by his judgments, to reckon with them, to bring into the account the idolatries their fathers were guilty of. Keeping mercy for thousands of persons, thousands of generations, of them that love me and keep my commandments - This intimates, that the second commandment, though in the letter of it is only a prohibition of false worship, yet includes a precept of worshipping God in all those ordinances which he hath instituted. As the first commandment requires the inward worship of love, desire, joy, hope, so this the outward worship of prayer and praise, and solemn attendance on his word. This mercy shall extend to thousands, much further than the wrath threatened to those that hate him, for that reaches but to the third or fourth generation.

7. The third commandment is concerning the manner of our worship; Where we have,
    1. A strict prohibition. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain - Supposing that, having taken Jehovah for their God, they would make mention

of his name, this command gives a caution not to mention it in vain, and it is still as needful as ever. We take God's name in vain, First, By hypocrisy, making profession of God's name, but not living up to that profession. Secondly, By covenant breaking. If we make promises to God, and perform not to the Lord our vows, we take his name in vain. Thirdly, By rash swearing, mentioning the name of God, or any of his attributes, in the form of an oath, without any just occasion for it, but to no purpose, or to no good purpose. Fourthly, By false-swearing, which some think is chiefly intended in the letter of the commandment. Fifthly, By using the name of God lightly and carelessly. The profanation of the form of devotion is forbidden, as well as the profanation of the forms of swearing; as also, the profanation of any of those things whereby God makes himself known. For the Lord will not hold him guiltless - Magistrates that punish other offenses, may not think themselves concerned to take notice of this; but God, who is jealous for his honour, will not connive at it. The sinner may perhaps hold himself guiltless, and think there is no harm in it; to obviate which suggestion, the threatening is thus expressed, God will not hold him guiltless - But more is implied, that God will himself be the avenger of those that take his name in vain; and they will find it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

8. The fourth commandment concerns the time of worship; God is to be served and honoured daily; but one day in seven is to be particularly dedicated to his honour, and spent in his service. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy; in it thou shalt do no manner of work - It is taken for granted that the sabbath was instituted before. We read of God's blessing and sanctifying a seventh day from the beginning, Gen. ii, 3, so that this was not the enacting of a new law, but the reviving of an old law. 1st. They are told what is the day, they must observe, a seventh after six days labour, whether this was the seventh by computation from the first seventh, or from the day of their coming out of Egypt, or both, is not certain. A late pious Writer seems to prove, That the sabbath was changed, when Israel came out of Egypt; which change continued till our Lord rose again: But that then the Original Sabbath was restored. And he makes it highly probable, at least, That the sabbath we observe, is the seventh day from the creation. 2ndly, How it must be observed;

1. As a day of rest; they were to do no manner of work on this day, in their worldly business.
2. As a holy day, set apart to the honour of the holy God, and to be spent in holy exercises. God, by his blessing it, had made it holy; they, by solemn blessing him, must keep it holy, and not alienate it to any other purpose than that for which the difference between it and other days was instituted. 3rdly, Who must observe it? Thou and thy son and thy daughter - The wife is not mentioned, because she is supposed to be one with the husband, and present with him, and if he sanctify the sabbath, it is taken for granted she will join with him; but the rest of the family is instanced in it, children and servants must keep it according to their age and capacity. In this, as in other instances of religion, it is expected that masters of families should take care, not only to serve the Lord themselves, but that their houses also should serve him. Even the proselyted strangers must observe a difference between this day and other days, which, if it laid some

restraint upon them then, yet proved a happy indication of God's gracious design, to bring the Gentiles into the church. By the sanctification of the sabbath, the Jews declared that they worshipped the God that made the world, and so distinguished themselves from all other nations, who worshipped gods which they themselves made. God has given us an example of rest after six days work; he rested the seventh day - Took a complacency in himself, and rejoiced in the work of his hand, to teach us on that day, to take a complacency in him, and to give him the glory of his works. The sabbath begun in the finishing of the work of creation; so will the everlasting sabbath in the finishing of the work of providence and redemption; and we observe the weekly sabbath in expectation of that, as well as in remembrance of the former, in both conforming ourselves to him we worship. He hath himself blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it. He hath put an honour upon it; it is holy to the Lord, and honourable; and he hath put blessings into it which he hath encouraged us to expect from him in the religious observation of that day. Let us not profane, dishonour, and level that with common time, which God's blessing hath thus dignified and distinguished.

12. We have here the laws of the second table, as they are commonly called; the six last commandments which concern our duty to ourselves, and one another, and are a comment upon the second great commandment, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. As religion towards God is, an essential branch of universal righteousness, so righteousness towards men is an essential branch of true religion: godliness and honesty must go together. The fifth commandment is concerning the duties we owe to our relations; that of children to their parents is only instanced in, honour thy father and thy mother, which includes,

1. an inward esteem of them, outwardly expressed upon all occasions in our carriage towards them; fear them, Lev. xix, 3, give them reverence, Heb. xii, 9. The contrary to this is mocking at them or despising them,
2. Obedience to their lawful commands; so it is expounded, Eph. vi, 1-3. Children obey your parents; come when they call you, go where they send you, do what they bid you, do not what they forbid you; and this chearfully, and from a principle of love. Though you have said you will not, yet afterwards repent and obey.
3. Submission to their rebukes, instructions and corrections, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.
4. Disposing of themselves with the advice, direction and consent of parents, not alienating their property, but with their approbation.
5. endeavouring in every thing to be the comfort of their parents, and to make their old age easy to them; maintaining them if they stand in need of support. That thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee - This promise, (which is often literally fulfilled) is expounded in a more general sense Eph. vi, 3. That it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth - Those that in conscience towards God keep this and other of God's commandments, may be sure it shall be well with them, and they shall live as long on the earth as infinite wisdom sees good for, them, and what they may

seem to be cut short of on earth, shall be abundantly made up in eternal life, the heavenly Canaan which God will give them.

13. Thou shalt not kill - Thou shalt not do any thing hurtful to the health, or life of thy own body, or any other's. This doth not forbid our own necessary defense, or the magistrates putting offenders to death; but it forbids all malice and hatred to any, for he that hateth his brother is a murderer, and all revenge arising therefrom; likewise anger and hurt said or done, or aimed to be done in a passion; of this our saviour expounds this commandment, Matt. v, 22.

14. Thou shalt not commit adultery - This commandment forbids all acts of uncleanness, with all those desires, which produce those acts and war against the soul.

15. Thou shalt not steal - This command forbids us to rob ourselves of what we have, by sinful spending, or of the use and comfort of it by sinful sparing; and to rob others by invading our neighbour's rights, taking his goods, or house, or field, forcibly or clandestinely, over-reaching in bargains, not restoring what is borrowed or found, with-holding just debts, rents or wages; and, which is worst of all, to rob the public in the coin or revenue, or that which is dedicated to the service of religion.

16. Thou shalt not bear false witness - This forbids,

1. Speaking falsely in any matter, lying, equivocating, and any way devising and designing to deceive our neighbour.
2. Speaking unjustly against our neighbour, to the prejudice of his reputation; And
3. (which is the highest offense of both these kinds put together) Bearing false witness against him, laying to his charge things that he knows not, either upon oath, by which the third commandment, the sixth or eighth, as well as this, are broken, or in common converse, slandering, backbiting, tale-bearing, aggravating what is done amiss, and any way endeavouring to raise our own reputation upon the ruin of our neighbour's.

17. Thou shalt not covet - The foregoing commands implicitly forbid all desire of doing that which will be an injury to our neighbour, this forbids all inordinate desire of having that which will be a gratification to ourselves. O that such a man's house were mine! such a man's wife mine! such a man's estate mine! This is certainly the language of discontent at our own lot, and envy at our neighbour's, and these are the sins principally forbidden here. God give us all to see our face in the glass of this law, and to lay our hearts under the government of it!

18. They removed and stood afar off - Before God began to speak, they were thrusting forward to gaze, but now they were effectually cured of their presumption, and taught to keep their distance.

19. Speak thou with us - Hereby they obliged themselves to acquiesce in the mediation of Moses, they themselves nominating him as a fit person to deal between them and God, and promising to hearken to him as to God's messenger.

20. Fear not - That is, Think not that this thunder and fire is, designed to consume you. No; it was intended, (1.) To prove them, to try how they could like dealing with God immediately, without a mediator, and so to convince them how admirably well God had chosen for them in putting Moses into that office. Ever since Adam fled upon hearing God's voice in the garden, sinful man could not bear either to speak to God, or hear from him immediately. (2.) To keep them to their duty, and prevent their sinning against God. We must not fear with amazement; but we must always have in our minds a reverence of God's majesty, a dread of his displeasure, and an obedient regard to his sovereign authority.

21. While the people continued to stand afar off - Afraid of God's wrath, Moses drew near unto the thick darkness; he was made to draw near, so the word is: Moses of himself durst not have ventured into the thick darkness if God had not called him, and encouraged him, and, as some of the Rabbins suppose, sent an angel to take him by the hand, and lead him up.

22. Moses being gone into the thick darkness where God was, God there spoke in his hearing only, all that follows from hence to the end of chap.

23, which is mostly an exposition of the ten commandments; and he was to transmit it to the people. The laws in these verses relate to God's worship. Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven - Such was his wonderful condescension; ye shall not make gods of silver - This repetition of the second commandment comes in here, because they were more addicted to idolatry than to any other sin.

24. An altar of earth - It is meant of occasional altars, such as they reared in the wilderness before the tabernacle was erected, and afterwards upon special emergencies, for present use. They are appointed to make these very plain, either of earth or of unhewn stones. That they might not be tempted to think of a graven image, they must not so much as hew the stones into shape, that they made their altars of, but pile them up as they were in the rough. In all places where I record my name - Or where my name is recorded, that is, where I am worshipped in sincerity, I will come unto thee, and will bless thee.

26. Neither shall thou go at by steps unto mine altar - Indeed afterwards God appointed an altar ten cubits high. But it is probable, they went not up to that by steps, but by a sloping ascent.

## XXI

The laws recorded in this chapter relate to the fifth and sixth commandments; and though not accommodated to our constitution, especially in point of servitude yet are of great use for the explanation of the moral law, and the rules of natural justice.

I. Here are several enlargements upon the fifth commandment, which concerns particular relations. (1.) The duty of masters towards their servants, their men servants ver. 2-6. and maid-servants, ver. 7-11. (2.) The punishment of disobedient children that strike their parents, ver. 15. or curse them, ver. 17.

II. Upon the sixth commandment, which forbids all violence offered to the person of man. Here is, (1.) Concerning murder, ver. 12-14. (2.) Man-stealing, ver, 16. (3.) Assault and battery, ver. 18, 19. (4.) Correcting a servant, ver. 20, 21 (5.) Hurting a woman with child, ver. 22, 23. (6.) The law of retaliation, ver. 24, 25. (7.) Maiming a servant, ver. 26, 27. (8.) An ox goring, ver. 26-32. (9.) Damage by opening a pit, ver. 33, 34. (10.) Cattle fighting, ver 35, 36.

1. The first verse is the general title of the laws contained in this and the two following chapters. Their government being purely a theocracy; that which in other states is to be settled by human prudence, was directed among them by a divine appointment. These laws are called judgments; because their magistrates were to give judgment according to them. In the doubtful cases that had

hitherto occurred, Moses had particularly inquired of God, but now God gave him statutes in general, by which to determine particular cases. He begins with the laws concerning servants, commanding mercy and moderation towards them. The Israelites had lately been servants themselves, and now they were become not only their own matters, but masters of servants too; lest they should abuse their servants as they themselves had been abused, provision was made for the mild and gentle usage of servants.

2. If thou buy an Hebrew servant - Either sold by him or his parents through poverty, or by the Judges for his crimes, yet even such a one was to continue in slavery but seven years at the most.

6. For ever - As long as he lives, or till the year of Jubilee.

8. Who hath betrothed her to himself - For a concubine, or secondary Wife. Not that Masters always took Maid-servants on these terms.

9. After the manner of daughters - He shall give her a portion, as to a daughter.

20. Direction is given what should be done, if a servant died by his master's correction. This servant must not be an Israelite, but a Gentile slave, as the Negroes to our planters; and it is supposed that he smite him with a rod, and not with any thing that was likely to give a mortal wound, yet if he died under his hand, he should be punished for his cruelty, at the discretion of the Judges, upon consideration of circumstances.

24. Eye for eye - The execution of this law is not put into the hands of private persons, as if every man might avenge himself, which would introduce universal confusion. The tradition of the elders seems to have put this corrupt gloss upon it. But magistrates had an eye to this rule in punishing offenders, and doing right to those that are injured.

## XXII

The laws of this chapter relate,

I. To the eighth commandment, concerning theft, ver. 1-4 Trespass by cattle, ver. 5. Damage by fire, ver. 6. Trusts, ver. 7- 13. Borrowing cattle, ver. 14, 15. Or money, ver. 25-27.

II. To the seventh commandment. Against fornication, ver. 16, 17. Bestiality, ver. 19.

III. To the first table. Forbidding witchcraft, ver. 18. Idolatry, ver. 20. Commanding to offer the first-fruits, ver. 29. 30.

IV. To the poor, ver. 21-24.

V. To the civil government, ver. 28.

VI. To the Jewish nation, ver. 13.

1. Five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep - More for an ox than for a sheep, because the owner, besides all the other profit, lost the daily labour of his ox. If we were not able to make restitution, he must be sold for a slave: the court of judgment was to do it, and it is likely the person robbed received the money. Thus with us in some cases, felons are transported to the Plantations, where only, Englishmen know what slavery is. But let it be observed, the sentence is not slavery, but banishment: nor can any Englishman be sold, unless he first indent himself to the captain that carries him over. 2. If a thief broke a house in the night, and was killed in the doing it, his blood

was upon his own head. But if it were in the day-time that the thief was killed, he that killed him was accountable for it, unless it were in the necessary defense of his own life.

3. For he should make full restitution - This the law determined: not that he should die.

4. In his hand alive - Not killed, nor sold, as ver. 1, so that the owner recover it with less charge and trouble.

5. He that wilfully put his cattle into his neighbour's field, must make restitution of the best of his own. The Jews hence observed it as a general rule, that restitution must always be made of the best; and that no man should keep any cattle that were likely to trespass upon his neighbour, or do him any damage.

6. He that designed only the burning of thorns might become accessary to the burning of corn, and should not be held guiltless. If the fire did mischief, he that kindled it must answer for it, though it could not be proved that he designed the mischief. Men must suffer for their carelessness, as well as for their malice. It will make us very careful of ourselves, if we consider that we are accountable not only for the hurt we do, but for the hurt we occasion through inadvertency.

7. If a man deliver goods, suppose to a carrier to be conveyed, or to a warehouse-keeper to be preserved, or cattle to a farmer to be fed upon a valuable consideration, and a special confidence reposed in the person they are lodged with; in case these goods be stolen or lost, perish or be damaged, if it appear that it was not by any fault of the trustee, the owner must stand to the loss, otherwise he that has been false to his trust must be compelled to make satisfaction.

14. If a man (suppose) lent his team to his neighbour, if the owner were with it, or were to receive profit for the loan of it, whatever harm befel the cattle the owner must stand to the loss of it: but if the owner were so kind to the borrower as to lend it him gratis, and put such a confidence in him as to trust it from under his own eye, then, if any harm happened, the borrower must make it good. Learn hence to be very careful not to abuse any thing that is lent to us; it is not only unjust but base and disingenuous, we should much rather chuse to lose ourselves, than that any should sustain loss by their kindness to us.

17. If the father refused, he shall pay money - This shews how ill a thing it is, and by no means to be allowed, that children should marry without their parents consent: even here where the divine law appointed the marriage, both as a punishment to him that had done wrong, and a recompence to her that had suffered wrong, yet there was an express reservation for the father's power; if he denied his consent, it must be no marriage.

18. Witchcraft not only gives that honour to the devil which is due to God alone, but bids defiance to the divine providence, wages war with God's government, puts his work into the devil's hand expecting him to do good and evil. By our law, consulting, covenanting with, invocating or employing any evil spirit to any intent whatever, and exercising any enchantment, charm, or sorcery, whereby hurt shall be done to any person, is made felony, without benefit of clergy; also pretending to tell where goods lost or stolen may be found, is an iniquity punishable by the judge, and the second offense with death. This was the case in former times. But we are wiser than our fore-fathers. We believe, no witch ever did live! At least, not for these thousand years.

21. A stranger must not be abused, not wronged in judgment by the magistrates, not imposed upon in contracts, nor any advantage taken of his ignorance or necessity, no, nor must he be taunted, or upbraided with his being a stranger; for all these were vexations. For ye were strangers in Egypt - And knew what it was to be vexed and oppressed there. Those that have themselves been in poverty and distress, if Providence enrich and enlarge them, ought to shew a particular tenderness

towards those that are now in such circumstances as they were in formerly, now doing to them as they then wished to be done by.

22. Ye shall not afflict the widow or fatherless child - That is, ye shall comfort and assist them, and be ready upon all occasions to shew them kindness. In making just demands from them, their condition must be considered who have lost those that should protect them: they are supposed to be unversed in business, destitute of advice, timorous, and of a tender spirit; and therefore must be treated with kindness and compassion, and no advantage taken against them, nor any hardship put upon them, which a husband or a father would have sheltered them from.

25. If thou lend - (1.) They must not receive use for money from any that borrowed for necessity. And such provision the law made for the preserving estates to their families by the year of Jubilee, that a people who had little concern in trade could not be supposed to borrow money but for necessity; therefore it was generally forbidden among themselves; but to a stranger they were allowed to lend upon usury. This law therefore in the strictness of it seems to have been peculiar to the Jewish state; but in the equity of it, it obligeth us to shew mercy to those we have advantage against, and to be content to share with those we lend to in loss as well as profit, if Providence cross them: and upon this condition it seems as lawful to receive interest for my money, which another takes pains with, and improves, as it is to receive rent for my land, which another takes pains with, and improves, for his own use. (2.) They must not take a poor man's bed-clothes in pawn; but if they did, must restore them by bed-time.

28. Thou shalt not revile the gods - That is, the Judges and magistrates. Princes and magistrates are our fathers, whom the fifth commandment obligeth us to honour, and forbids us to revile. St. Paul applies this law to himself, and owns that he ought not to speak evil of the ruler of his people, no, not though he was then his most unrighteous persecutor, Acts xxiii, 5.

29. The first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me - And much more reason have we to give ourselves and all we have to God, who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. The first ripe of their corn they must not delay to offer; there is danger if we delay our duty, lest we wholly omit it; and by slipping the first opportunity in expectation of another, we suffer Satan to cheat us of all our time.

31. Ye shall be holy unto me - And one mark of that honourable distinction is appointed in their diet, which was, that they should not eat any flesh that was torn of beasts - Both because the blood was not duly taken out of it, and because the clean beast was ceremonially defiled, by the touch of the unclean.

## XXIII

This chapter concludes the acts that passed in the first session (if I may so call it) upon Mount Sinai. Here are,

I. Some laws of universal obligation, relating especially to the ninth commandment, against bearing false witness, ver. 1. and giving false judgement, ver. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8. Also a law of doing good to our enemies, ver. 4, 5. and not oppressing strangers, ver. 9.

II. Some laws peculiar to the Jews: the sabbatical years, ver. 10, 11. the three annual feasts, ver. 14-17. with laws pertaining thereto.

III. Gracious promises of completing the mercy God had begun for them, upon condition of their obedience, that God would conduct them through the wilderness, ver 20-24. that he would prosper all they had, ver. 25, 26, that he would put them in possession of Canaan, ver. 27-31. But they must not mingle themselves with the nations, ver. 32, 33.

1. Thou shalt not raise, the margin reads, Thou shalt not receive a false report, for sometimes the receiver in this case is as bad as the thief; and a backbiting tongue would not do so much mischief, if it were not countenanced. Sometimes we cannot avoid hearing a false report, but we must not receive it, we must not hear it with pleasure, nor easily give credit to it.

2. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil - General usage will never excuse us in any ill practice; nor is the broad way ever the safer for its being crowded. We must inquire what we ought to do, not what the most do; because we must be judged by our master, not our fellow servants; and it is too great a compliment, to be willing to go to hell for company.

7. Keep thee far from a false matter - From assisting or abetting an ill thing. Yea, keep thee far from it, dread it as a dangerous snare. I will not justify the wicked - That is, I will condemn him that unjustly condemns others.

9. Thou shalt not oppress the stranger - Though aliens might not inherit lands among them; yet they must have justice done them. It was an instance of the equity of our law, that if an alien be tried for any crime except treason, the one half of his jury, if he desire it, shall be foreigners; a kind provision that strangers may not be oppressed. For ye know the heart of a stranger - You know something of the griefs and fears of a stranger by sad experience.

10. The institution of the sabbatical year was designed,

1. To shew what a plentiful land that was, into which God was bringing them, that so numerous a people could have rich maintenance out of the products of so small a country, without foreign trade, and yet could spare the increase of every seventh year.
2. To teach them a confidence in the Divine Providence, while they did their duty, That as the sixth day's manna served for two days meat, so the sixth year's increase should serve for two years subsistence.

13. In all things that I have said unto you be circumspect - We are in danger of missing our way on the right hand and on the left, and it is at our peril if we do, therefore we have need to look about us. A man may ruin himself through mere carelessness, but he cannot save himself without great care and circumspection; particularly since idolatry was a sin they were much addicted to, and would be greatly tempted to, they must endeavour to blot out the remembrance of the gods of the heathen, and must disuse all their superstitious forms of speech, and never mention them but with detestation. In Christian schools and academies (for it is in vain to think of re-forming the play-houses) it were to be wished that the names and stories of the heathen deities or demons rather were not so commonly and familiarly used.

14. The Passover, Pentecost, and feast of Tabernacles, in spring, summer, and autumn, were the three times appointed for their attendance; not in winter, because travelling was then uncomfortable; nor in the midst of their harvest.

17. All thy males - All that were of competent years, and health and strength, and at their own disposal. 'Tis probable, servants were exempt: for none was to appear without an offering: but most of these had nothing to offer.

19. Some of the Gentiles, at the end of their harvest, seethed a kid in it's dam's milk, and sprinkled that milk-pottage in a magical way upon their gardens and fields, to make them fruitful. But Israel must abhor such foolish customs. Is not this rather forbidden, as having some appearance of cruelty?

20. Behold, I send an angel before thee - The angel of the covenant: Accordingly the Israelites in the wilderness are said to tempt Christ. It is promised that this blessed anger should keep them in the way, though it lay through a wilderness first, and afterwards through their enemies country; and thus Christ has prepared a place for his followers.

21. Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not - It is at your peril if you do; for my name - My nature, my authority is in him.

25. He shall bless thy bread and thy water - And God's blessing will make bread and water more refreshing and nourishing, than a feast of fat things, and wines on the lees, without that blessing. And I will take sickness away - Either prevent it or remove it. Thy land shall not be visited with epidemical diseases, which are very dreadful, and sometimes have laid countries waste.

26. The number of thy days I will fulfill - And they shall not be cut off in the midst by untimely deaths. Thus hath godliness the promise of the life that now is.

27. I will send my fear before thee - And they that fear will soon flee. Hoseats of hornets also made way for the hosts of Israel; such mean creatures can God make use of for the chastising of his people's enemies.

## XXIV

Moses as mediator between God and Israel, having received divers laws and ordinances from God in the foregoing chapters, in this chapter,

I. Comes down to the people, acquaints them with the laws he had received, and takes their consent to those laws, ver. 3. writes the laws, and reads them to the people, who repeat their consent, ver. 4, 7. and then by sacrifice, and the sprinkling of blood ratifies the covenant between them and God, ver. 5, 6, 8.

II. He returns to God again, to receive farther directions. When he was dismissed from his former attendance, he was ordered to attend again, ver. 1, 2. He did so with seventy of the elders, to whom God made a discovery of his glory, ver. 9-11. Moses is ordered up into the mount, ver. 12, 13. the rest are ordered down to the people, ver. 14. The cloud of glory is seen by all the people on the top of mount Sinai, ver. 15-17. and Moses is there with God forty days and forty nights, ver. 18.

1. Worship ye afar off - Before they came near, they must worship. Thus we must enter into God's gates with humble and solemn adorations.

2. And Moses alone shall come near - Being therein a type of Christ, who as the high priest entered alone into the most holy place. In the following verses we have the solemn covenant made

between God and Israel and the exchanging of the ratifications: typifying the covenant of grace between God and believers through Christ.

3. Moses told the people all the words of the Lord - He laid before them all the precepts, in the foregoing chapters, and put it to them, whether they were willing to submit to these laws or no? And all the people answered, All the words which the Lord hath said we will do - They had before consented in general to be under God's government; here they consent in particular to these laws now given.

4. And Moses wrote the words of the Lord - That there might be no mistake; as God dictated them on the mount, where, it is highly probable, God taught him the use of letters. These Moses taught the Israelites, from whom they afterwards travelled to Greece and other nations. As soon as God had separated to himself a peculiar people, he governed them by a written word, as he has done ever since, and will do while the world stands. Pillars according to the number of the tribes - These were to represent the people, the other party to the covenant; and we may suppose they were set up over against the altar, and that Moses as mediator passed to and fro between them. Probably each tribe set up and knew its own pillar, and their elders stood by it. He then appointed sacrifices to be offered upon the altar.

6.

1. The blood of the sacrifice which the people offered was (part of it) sprinkled upon the altar, which signified the people's dedicating themselves to God, and his honour. In the blood of the sacrifices, all the Israelites were presented unto God as living sacrifices, Rom. xii, 1.
2. The blood of the sacrifice which God had owned and accepted was (the remainder of it) sprinkled, either upon the people themselves, or upon the pillars that represented them, which signified God's conferring his favour upon them, and all the fruits of that favour, and his giving them all the gifts they could desire from a God reconciled to them, and in covenant with them. This part of the ceremony was thus explained, Behold the blood of the covenant; see here how God sealed to you to be a God, and you seal to be to him a people; his promises to you, and yours to him, are yea and amen. Thus our Lord Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant (of whom Moses was a type) having offered up himself a sacrifice upon the cross, that his blood might be indeed the blood of the covenant, sprinkled it upon the altar in his intercession (Heb. ix, 12,) and sprinkles it upon his church by his word and ordinances, and the influences and operations of the Spirit of promise by whom we are sealed.

10. They saw the God of Israel - That is, they had some glimpse of his glory, in light and fire, though they saw no manner of similitude. They saw the place where the God of Israel stood, so the seventy, something that came near a similitude, but was not; whatever they saw it was certainly something of which no image or picture could be made, and yet enough to satisfy them that God was with them of a truth. Nothing is described but that which was under his feet, for our conceptions of God are all below him. They saw not so much as God's feet, but at the bottom of the brightness they saw (such as they never saw before or after, and as the foot- stool or pedestal of it) a most rich and splendid pavement, as it had been of sapphires, azure, or sky-coloured. The heavens themselves are the pavement of God's palace, and his throne is above the firmament.

11. Upon the nobles or elders of Israel he laid not his hand - Though they were men, the splendour of his glory did not overwhelm them, but it was so moderated (Job xxxvi, 9,) and they were so strengthened (Dan. x, 19,) that they were able to bear it: nay, though they were sinful men, and obnoxious to God's justice, yet he did not lay his avenging hand upon them, as they feared he would. When we consider what a consuming fire God is, and what stubble we are before him, we shall have reason to say, in all our approaches to him, It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed. They saw God, and did eat and drink; They had not only their lives preserved, but their vigour, courage, and comfort; it cast no damp upon their joy, but rather increased it. They feasted upon the sacrifice before God, in token of their chearful consent to the covenant, their grateful acceptance of the benefits of it, and their communion with God in pursuance of that covenant.

12. Come up to the mount and be there - Expect to continue there for some time.

13. Joshua was his minister or servant, and it would be a satisfaction to him to have him with him as a companion during the six days that he tarried in the mount before God called to him. Joshua was to be his successor, and therefore thus he was honoured before the people, and thus he was prepared by being trained up in communion with God. Joshua was a type of Christ, and (as the learned Bishop Peirson well observes Moses takes him with him into the mount, because without Jesus, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, there is no looking into the secrets of heaven, nor approaching the presence of God.

16. A cloud covered the mount six days - A visible token of God's special presence there, for he so shews himself to us, as at the same time to conceal himself from us, he lets us know so much as to assure us of his power and grace, but intimates to us that we cannot find him out to perfection. During these six days Moses staid waiting upon the mountain, for a call into the presence- chamber. And on the seventh day - Probably the sabbath-day, he called unto Moses. Now the thick cloud opened in the sight of all Israel, and the glory of the Lord broke forth like devouring fire.

18. Moses went into the midst of the cloud - It was an extraordinary presence of mind, which the grace of God furnished him with, else he durst not have ventured into the cloud, especially when it broke out in devouring fire. And Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights - It should seem the six days, were not part of the forty; for during those six days, Joshua was with Moses, who did eat of the manna, and drink of the brook mentioned, Deut. ix, 21, and while they were together, it is probable Moses did eat and drink with him; but when Moses was called into the midst of the cloud, he left Joshua without, who continued to eat and drink daily while he waited for Moses's return, but from thenceforward Moses fasted.

## XXV

At this chapter begins an account of the instructions God gave Moses for erecting and furnishing the tabernacle. Here are,

I. Orders given for a collection to be made among the people, ver. 1-9.

II. Particular instructions,

1. Concerning the ark of the covenant, ver. 10-22.
2. The table of shew-bread, ver. 23-30.
3. The golden candlestick, ver. 31-40.

1. Doubtless when Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and abode there so long, he saw and heard glorious things, but they were things which were not lawful or possible to utter; and therefore, in the records he kept of the transactions there, he saith nothing to satisfy curiosity, but writes that only which he was to speak to the children of Israel. Probably there never was any house or temple built for sacred uses, before this tabernacle was erected by Moses. In this God kept his court, as Israel's king, and it was intended for a sign or token of his presence, that while they had that in the midst of them they might never again ask, Is the Lord among us or not? And because in the wilderness they dwelt in tents, even this royal palace was ordered to be a tabernacle too, that it might move with them. And these holy places made with hands were the figures of the true, Heb. ix, 24. The gospel-church is the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man, Heb. viii, 2. The body of Christ, in and by which he made atonement, was the greater and more perfect tabernacle, Heb. ix, 11. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, as in a tabernacle.

2. Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering - This offering was to be given willingly, and with the heart. It was not prescribed to them what or how much they must give, but it was left to their generosity, that they might shew their goodwill to the house of God, and the offices thereof.

4. Blue, and purple, and scarlet - Materials of those colours.

5. Shittim-wood - A kind of wood growing in Egypt and the deserts of Arabia, very durable and precious.

8. A sanctuary - A place of public and solemn worship; that I may dwell among them. Not by my essence, which is everywhere; but by my grace and glorious operations.

9. According to all that I shew thee - God shewed him an exact plan of it in little, which he must conform to in all points. And God did not only shew him the model, but gave him also particular directions how to frame the tabernacle, according to that model, in all the parts of it. When Moses was to describe the creation of the world, tho' it be such a stately and curious fabrick, yet he gave a very short and general account of it; but when he comes to describe the tabernacle, he doth it with the greatest niceness and accuracy imaginable: for God's church and instituted religion is more precious to him than all the rest of the world. And the scriptures were written not to describe to us the works of nature, (a general view of which is sufficient to lead us to the knowledge of the Creator,) but to acquaint us with the methods of grace, and those things which are purely matters of Revelation.

10. The ark was a chest or coffer, in which the two tables of the law, written with the finger of God, were to be deposited. If the Jewish cubit was, as some learned men compute three inches longer than our half-yard, (twenty one inches in all) this chest or cabinet was about fifty-two inches long, thirty-one broad and thirty one deep; it was overlaid within and without with thin plates of gold; it had a crown, or cornish of gold round it; rings and staves to carry it with; and in it he must put the testimony. The tables of the law are called the testimony, because God did in them testify his will; his giving them that law was in token of his favour to them, and their acceptance of it was in token of their subjection to him. This law was a testimony to them to direct them in their duty, and would be a testimony against them if they transgressed. The ark is called the ark of the testimony, chap. xxx, 6, and the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the testimony, Num. x, 11. The tables of the law were carefully preserved in the ark, to teach us to make much of the word of God, and to hide it in our inmost thoughts, as the ark was placed in the holy of holies. It intimates likewise the care which divine providence ever did, and ever will take to preserve the records of divine Rev. in the church,

so that even in the latter days there shall be seen in his temple the ark of his testament. See Rev. xi, 19.

17. The mercy-seat was the covering of the ark, made exactly to fit the dimensions of it. This propitiatory covering, as it might well be translated, was a type of Christ the great propitiation, whose satisfaction covers our transgressions, and comes between us and the curse we deserve.

18. The cherubim (Cherubim is the plural of Cherub, not Cherubims) were fixed to the mercy-seat, and of a piece with it, and spread their wings over it. It is supposed these were designed to represent the holy angels, (who always attend the Shechinah, or divine majesty,) not by any effigies of an angel, but some emblem of the angelical nature, probably one or more of those four faces spoken of Ezek. i, 10. Whatever the faces were, they looked one towards another, and both downwards towards the ark, while their wings were stretched out so as to touch one another. It notes their attendance upon the Redeemer, their readiness to do his will, their presence in the assemblies of saints, Psalm lxviii, 17; 1 Cor. xi, 10, and their desire to look into the mysteries of the gospel, which they diligently contemplate, 1 Pet. i, 12. God is said to dwell or sit between the cherubim, on the mercy-seat, Psalm lxxx, 1, and from thence he here promiseth for the future to meet with Moses, and to commune with him. Thus he manifests himself, willing to keep up communion with us, by the mediation of Christ.

23. This table was to stand not in the holy of holies, (nothing was in that but the ark with its appurtenances) but in the outer part of the tabernacle, called the sanctuary or holy place. This table was to be always furnished with the shew-bread, or bread of faces, twelve loaves, one for each tribe, set in two rows, six in a row. As the ark signified God's being present with them, so the twelve loaves signified their being presented to God. This bread was designed to be, a thankful acknowledgment of God's goodness to them in giving them their daily bread, a token of their communion with God; this bread on God's table being made of the same corn as the bread on their own tables. And a type of the spiritual provision which is made in the church, by the gospel of Christ, for all that are made priests to our God.

31. This candlestick had many branches drawn from the main shaft, which had not only bowls to put the oil and the kindled wick in for necessity, but knops made in the form of a pomegranate and flowers for ornament. The tabernacle had no windows, all its light was candle-light, which notes the comparative darkness of that dispensation, while the sun of righteousness was not as yet risen, nor had the day-star from on high visited his church. Yet God left not himself without witness, nor them without instruction; the commandment was a lamp, and the law a light, and the prophets were branches from that lamp, which gave light in their several ages. The church is still dark, as the tabernacle was, in comparison with what it will be in heaven: but the word of God is the candlestick, a light burning in a dark place.

## XXVI

Moses here receives instructions,

I. Concerning the inner curtains of the tabernacle, ver. 1-6.

II. Concerning the outer curtains, ver. 7-13.

III. Concerning the cover which was to secure it from the weather, ver. 14.

IV. Concerning the boards which were to support the curtains, ver. 15-30.
V. The partition between the holy place and the most holy, ver. 31-35.
VI. The veil for the door, ver. 36-37. These particulars seem of little use to us now, yet having been of great use to Moses and Israel, and God having thought fit to preserve to us the remembrance of them, we ought not to overlook them.

1. The curtains were to be embroidered with cherubim, to intimate that the angels of God pitched their tents round about the church, Psalm xxxiv, 7. As there were cherubim over the mercy-seat, so there were round the tabernacle. There were to be two hangings, five breadths to each, sewed together, and the two hangings coupled together with golden clasps or tacks, so that it might be all one tabernacle, ver. 6. Thus the churches of Christ, though they are many, yet are one, being fitly joined together in holy love and by the unity of the Spirit, so growing into one holy temple in the Lord. This tabernacle was very strait and narrow, but at the preaching of the gospel, the church is bid to enlarge the place of her tent, and to stretch forth her curtains, Isaiah liv, 2.

14. Badger skins - So we translate it, but it should rather seem to have been some strong sort of leather, (but very fine) for we read of the best sort of shoes made of it. Ezek. xvi, 10.

15. Very particular directions are here given about the boards of the tabernacle, which were to bear up the curtains. These had tenons which fell into the mortaises that were made for them in silver bases. The boards were coupled together with gold rings at top and bottom, and kept firm with bars that run through golden staples in every board. Thus every thing in the tabernacle was very splendid, agreeable to that infant state of the church, when such things were proper to possess the minds of the worshippers with a reverence of the divine glory. In allusion to this, the new Jerusalem is said to be of pure gold, Rev. xxi, 18. But the builders of the gospel church said, Silver and gold have we none; and yet the glory of their building far exceeded that of the tabernacle.

31. The veils are here ordered to be made, one for a partition between the holy place and the most holy, which not only forbad any to enter, but so much as to look into the holiest of all. Under that dispensation divine grace was veiled, but now we behold it with open face. The apostle tells us, this veil, intimated that the ceremonial law could not make the comers thereunto perfect. The way into the holiest was not made manifest while the first tabernacle was standing; life and immortality lay concealed till they were brought to light by the gospel, which was therefore signified by the rending of this veil at the death of Christ. We have now boldness to enter into the holiest in all acts of devotion by the blood of Jesus; yet such as obliges us to a holy reverence, and a humble sense of our distance. Another veil was for the outward door of the tabernacle. Through this the priests went in every day to minister in the holy-place, but not the people, Heb. ix, 6. This veil was all the defense the tabernacle had against thieves and robbers, which might easily be broken through, for it could be neither locked nor bared, and the abundance of wealth in it, one would think, might be a temptation. But by leaving it thus exposed,

1. The priests and Levites would be so much the more obliged to keep a strict watch upon it: and,
2. God would shew his care of his church on earth, though it be weak and defenseless, and continually exposed. A curtain shall be (if God please to make it so) as strong a defense, as gates of brass and bars of iron.

## XXVII

In this chapter directions are given,
I. Concerning the brazen altar, ver. 1-8.
II. Concerning the court of the tabernacle, ver. 9-19.
III. Concerning the oil for the lamp, ver. 20-21.

1. As God intended in the tabernacle to manifest his presence among his people, so there they were to pay their devotions to him; not in the tabernacle itself, into that only the priests entered as God's domestic servants, but in the court before the tabernacle, where, as common subjects they attended. There an altar was ordered so be set up, to which they must bring their sacrifices; and this altar was to sanctify their gifts; from hence they were to present their services to God, as from the mercy-seat he gave his oracles to them; and thus a communion was settled between God and Israel.

2. The horns of it, were for ornament and for use; the sacrifices were bound with cords to the horns of the altar, and to them malefactors fled for refuge.

4. The grate was set into the hollow of the altar, about the middle of it, in which the fire was kept, and the sacrifice burnt; it was made of net-work like a sieve, and hung hollow, that the fire might burn the better, and that the ashes might fall through. Now, this brazen altar was a type of Christ dying to make atonement for our sins. Christ sanctified himself for his church as their altar, John xvii, 19, and by his mediation sanctifies the daily services of his people. To the horns of this altar poor sinners fly for refuge, and are safe in virtue of the sacrifice there offered.

9. Before the tabernacle there was to be a court, enclosed with hangings of fine linen. This court, according to the common computation, was 50 yards long, and 25 broad. Pillars were set up at convenient distances, in sockets of brass, the pillars filleted with silver, and silver tenterhooks in them, on which the linen hangings were fastened: the hanging which served for the gate was finer than the rest. This court was a type of the church, enclosed, and distinguished from the rest of the world; the inclosure supported by pillars, noting the stability of the church hung with the clean linen, which is said to be the righteousness of saints, Rev. xix, 8. Yet this court would contain but a few worshippers; thanks be to God, now the inclosure is taken down; and there is room for all that in every place call on the name of Christ.

20. We read of the candlestick in the 25th chapter; here is order given for the keeping of the lamps constantly burning in it. The pure oil signified the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which are communicated to all believers from Christ the good olive, of whose fulness we receive, Zech. iv, 11, 12. The priests were to light the lamps, and to tend them; to cause the lamp to burn always, night and day. Thus it is the work of ministers to preach and expound the scriptures, which are as a lamp to enlighten the church. This is to be a statute for ever, that the lamps of the word be lighted as duly as the incense of prayer and praise is offered.

## XXVIII

In this and the following chapter care is taken about the priests that were to minister in this holy place. In this chapter,

I. He pitcheth upon the persons who should be his servants, ver. 1.

II. He appoints their livery; their work was holy, and so must their garments be, and answerable to the glory of the house which was now to be erected, ver. 2-5. (1.) He appoints the garments of his head-servant, the high-priest,

1. An ephod and girdle, ver. 6-14.
2. A breast-plate of judgement, ver. 16-29. in which must be put the Urim and Thummim, ver. 30.
3. The robe of the ephod, ver. 31-35.
4. The mitre, ver. 36-39. (2.) The garments of the inferior priests, ver. 40-43

1. Aaron and his sons - Hitherto every master of a family was priest to his own family. But now the families of Israel began to be incorporated into a nation, and a tabernacle of the congregation was to be erected, as a visible center of their unity, it was requisite there should be a publick priesthood instituted. Moses, who had hitherto officiated, and is therefore reckoned among the priests of the Lord, Psalm xcix, 6, had enough to do as their prophet, to consult the oracle for them, and as their prince, to judge among them. Nor was he desirous to ingross all the honours to himself, or to entail that of the priesthood, which alone was hereditary, upon his own family; but was very well pleased to see his brother Aaron invested with this office, and his sons after him; while (how great soever he was) his sons after him would be but common Levites. It is an instance of the humility of that great man, and an evidence of his sincere regard to the glory of God, that he had so little regard to the preferment of his own family. Aaron, that had humbly served as a prophet to his younger brother Moses, and did not decline the office, is now advanced to be a priest to God. God had said to Israel in general, that they should be to him a kingdom of priests; but because it was requisite that those who ministered at the altar should give themselves wholly to the service, God here chose from among them one to be a family of priests, the father and his four sons; and from Aaron's loins descended all the priests of the Jewish church, whom we read of both in the Old Testament and in the New.

2. The priests garments were made for glory and beauty - Some of the richest materials were to be provided, and the belt artists employed in making them, whose skill God, by a special gift, would improve to a very high degree. Eminency, even in common arts, is a gift of God; it comes from him, and, ought to be used for him. The garments appointed were, (1.) Four, which both the high-priest and the inferior priests wore, viz. The linen breeches, the linen coat, the linen girdle which fastened it to them, and the bonnet; that which the high-priest wore is called a mitre. (2.) Four more which were peculiar to the high-priest, the ephod, with the curious girdle of it, the breast-plate of judgment, the long robe, and the golden plate on his forehead. These glorious garments, were appointed,

1. That the priests themselves might be minded of the dignity of their office.

2. That the people might thereby be possessed with a holy reverence of that God whose ministers appeared in such grandeur.
3. That the priests might be types of Christ, and of all Christians who have the beauty of holiness put upon them.

6. The ephod, was the outmost garment of the high-priest; linen ephods were worn by the inferior priests, but this, which the high- priest wore, was called a golden ephod, because there was a great deal of gold woven into it. It was a short coat without sleeves, buttoned close to him with a curious girdle of the same stuff. The shoulder pieces were buttoned together with two precious stones set in gold, one on each shoulder. In allusion to this, Christ our high priest appeared to John, girt about the paps with a golden girdle, such as was the curious girdle of the ephod, Rev. i, 13. Righteousness is the girdle of his loins. He is girt with strength for the work of our salvation. And as Aaron had the names of all Israel upon his shoulders in precious stones, so He presents to himself and to his Father a glorious church, Eph. v, 27. He bears them before the Lord for a memorial, in token of his appearing before God as the representative of all Israel, and an advocate for them.

11. Ouches - Hollow places, such as are made in gold rings, to receive and hold the precious stones.

15. The most considerable of the ornaments of the high priest was this breast-plate, a rich piece of cloth curiously wrought with gold and purple, two spans long, and a span broad; so that, being doubled, it was a span square. In this breast-plate, the tribes of Israel were recommended to God's favour in twelve precious stones. Some question whether Levi had a precious stone with his name on or no; if not Ephraim and Manasseh were reckoned distinct, as Jacob had said they should be, and the high priest himself being head of the tribe of Levi, sufficiently represented that tribe. Aaron was to bear their names for a memorial before the Lord continually, being ordained for men, to represent them in things pertaining to God; herein typifying our great High Priest, who always appears in the presence of God for us. The name of each tribe was engraven in a precious stone, to signify how precious, in God's sight, believers are, and how honourable, Isaiah xliii, 4. The high priest had the names of the tribes both on his shoulders and on his breast, noting both the power and the love with which our Lord Jesus interceeds for us. How near should Christ's name lie to our hearts, since he is pleased to lay our names so near his? And what a comfort is it to us, in all our addresses to God, that the great High Priest of our profession has the names of all his Israel upon his breast, before the Lord, for a memorial, presenting them to God?

30. The Urim and Thummim - By which the will of God was made known in doubtful cases, was put in this breast-plate, which is therefore called the breast-plate of judgment. Urim and Thummim signify light and integrity: many conjectures there are among the learned what they were: we have no reason to think they were any thing that Moses was to make, more than what was before ordered; so that either God made them himself, and gave them to Moses, for him to put into the breast-plate when other things were prepared; or, no more is meant but a declaration of the farther use of what was already ordered to be made. The words may be read thus, And thou shalt give, or add, to the breast-plate of judgment, the illuminations and perfections, and they shall be upon the heart of Aaron - That is, he shall be endued with a power of knowing and making known the mind of God in all difficult cases relating either to the civil or ecclesiastical state. Their government was a theocracy; God was their king, the high priest was, under God, their ruler, this Urim and Thummim were his cabinet council: probably Moses wrote upon the breast-plate, or wove into it, these words, Urim and Thummim, to signify, that the high-priest, having on him this

breast-plate, and asking council of God in any emergency, should be directed to those measures, which God would own. If he were standing before the ark, probably he received instructions from off the mercy-seat, as Moses did, chap. xxv, 22. If he were at a distance from the ark, as Abiathar was when he inquired of the Lord for David, 1 Sam. xxiii, 6, then the answer was given either by a voice from heaven, or by an impulse upon the mind of the high priest, which last is perhaps intimated in that expression, he shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart. This oracle was of great use to Israel, Joshua consulted it. Num. xxvii, 21, and it is likely, the Judges after him. It was lost in the captivity, and never retrieved after. It was a shadow of good things to come, and the substance is Christ. He is our oracle; by him God in these last days, makes known himself and his mind to us. Divine Revelation centers in him, and comes to us through him; he is the light, the true light, the faithful witness; and from him we receive the Spirit of truth, who leads into all truth. The joining of the breast-plate to the ephod notes, that his prophetical office was founded on his priesthood; and it was by the merit of his death that he purchased this honour for himself, and this favour for us. It was the Lamb that had been slain that was worthy to take the book and to open the seals. Rev. v, 9. The judgment - The breast-plate of judgment: That breast-plate which declared the judgment or mind of God to the Israelites.

31. The robe of the ephod - This was next under the ephod, and reached down to the knees, without sleeves, and was put on over their head, having holes on the sides to put the arms through, or, as Maimonides describes it, was not sewn together on the sides at all. The hole on the top through which the head was put was carefully bound about, that it might not tear in the putting on. The bells gave notice to the people in the outer court, when he went into the holy place to burn incense, that they might then apply themselves to their devotions at the same time, Luke i, 10, in token of their concurrence with him, and their hopes of the ascent of their prayers to God in the virtue of the incense he offered. Aaron must come near to minister in the garments that were appointed him, that he die not. 'Tis at his peril if he attend otherwise than according to the institution.

32. An habergeon - A coat of armour.

33. Pomegranates - The figures of Pomegranates, but flat and embroidered.

36. On the golden plate fixed upon Aaron's forehead, like an half coronet, reaching, as the Jews say, from ear to ear, must be engraven, Holiness to the Lord - Aaron must hereby be minded, that God is holy, and that his priests must be holy. The high priest must be consecrated to God, and so must all his ministrations. All that attend in God's house must have holiness to the Lord engraven upon their foreheads, that is, they must be holy, devoted to the Lord, and designing his glory in all they do. This must appear in their forehead, in an open profession of their relation to God, as those that are not ashamed to own it, and in a conversation answerable to it. It must likewise be engraven like the engravings of a signet, so deep, so durable; not painted, so as it may he washed off, but sincere and lasting.

38. Aaron must have this upon his forehead, that he may bear the iniquity of the holy things, and that they may be accepted before the Lord - Herein he was a type of Christ, the great Mediator between God and man. Thro' him what is amiss in our services is pardoned: even this would be our ruin, if God should enter into judgment with us: but Christ our high priest bears this iniquity; bears it for us, so as to bear it from us. Thro' him likewise what is good is accepted; our persons, our performances are pleasing to God upon the account of Christ's intercession, and not otherwise. His being holiness to the Lord, recommends all those to the divine favour that believe in him. Having such a high priest, we come boldly to the throne of grace.

39. The embroidered coat of fine linen - Was the innermost of the priestly garments, it reached to the feet, and the sleeves to the wrists, and was bound to the body with a girdle or sash of needlework. The mitre or diadem was of linen, such as kings anciently wore in the east, typifying the kingly office of Christ.

43. It shall be a statute for ever - That is, It is to continue as long as the priesthood continues. And it is to have its perpetuity in the substance, of which these things were the shadows.

## XXIX

Orders are given in this chapter,

I. Concerning the consecration of the priests, and the sanctification of the altar, ver. 1-37.

II. Concerning the daily sacrifice, ver. 38-41. To which gracious promises are annexed, ver. 42-46.

4. They were to be consecrated at the door of the tabernacle - God was pleased to dwell in the tabernacle, the people attending in the courts, so that the door between the court and the tabernacle was the fittest place for them to be consecrated in, who were to mediate between God and man, and to stand between both, and lay their hands (as it were) upon both. Here they were to be washed, signifying that they must be clean who bear the vessels of the Lord, Isaiah lii, 11. And they were to be clothed with the holy garments, to signify that it was not sufficient for them to put away the pollutions of sin, but they must put on the graces of the Spirit, be clothed with righteousness, Psalm 1xxxii, 9. They must be girded, as men prepared and strengthened for their work; and they must be robed and crowned, as men that counted their work and office their true honour.

7. The high priest was to be anointed with the holy anointing oil - That the church might be filled with the sweet favour of his administrations, and in token of the pouring out of the Spirit upon him, to qualify him for his work.

10. There must be a sin-offering, to make atonement for them. The law made them priests that had infirmity; and therefore they must first offer for their own sin, before they could make atonement for the people, Heb. vii, 27, 28. They were to put their hand on the head of their sacrifice; confessing that they deserved to die for their own sin, and desiring that the killing of the beast might be accepted as a vicarious satisfaction. It was used as other sin-offerings were; only, whereas the flesh of other sin-offerings was eaten by the priests, in token of the priests taking away the sin of the people, this was appointed to be all burnt without the camp, to signify the imperfection of the legal dispensation, for the sins of the priests themselves could not be taken away by those sacrifices, but they must expect a better high priest, and a better sacrifice.

15. There must be a burnt-offering, a ram wholly burnt, in token of the dedication of themselves wholly to God, as living sacrifices, kindled with the fire, and ascending in the flame of holy love. This sin-offering must be offered, and then the burnt- offering, for till guilt be removed no acceptable service can be performed.

19. There must be a peace-offering; it is called the ram of consecration, because there was more in this, peculiar to the occasion, than in the other two. In the burnt-offering God had the glory of

their priesthood, in this they had the comfort of it. And in token of a mutual covenant between God and them, the blood of this sacrifice was divided between God and them, part of the blood was sprinkled upon the altar round about, and part upon them, upon their bodies, and upon their garments. Thus the benefit of the expiation made by the sacrifice was applied and assured to them, and their whole selves from head to foot sanctified to the service of God. The blood was put upon the extreme parts of the body, to signify, that it was all as it were enclosed and taken in for God, the tip of the ear, and the great toe not excepted. And the blood and oil signified the blood of Christ, and the graces of the Spirit, which constitute and compleat the beauty of holiness, and recommend us to God. The flesh of the sacrifice, with the meat- offering annexed to it, was likewise divided between God and them, that (to speak with reverence) God and they might feast together, in token of friendship and fellowship.

22. Part of it was to be first waved before the Lord, and then burnt upon the altar, these were first put into the hands of Aaron to be waved to and fro in token of their being offered to God, and then they were to be burnt upon the altar, for the altar was to devour God's part of the sacrifice. Thus God admitted Aaron and his sons to wait at his table, taking the meat of his altar from their hands. Here, in a parenthesis as it were, comes in the law concerning the priests part of the peace-offerings afterwards, the breast and shoulder, which were now divided; Moses had the breast, and the shoulder was burnt on the altar with God's part.

31. The other part of the flesh of the ram, and of the bread, Aaron and his sons were to eat at the door of the tabernacle, to signify that he not only called them servants but friends. He supped with them, and they with him. Their eating of the things wherewith the atonement was made, signified their receiving the atonement, their thankful acceptance of the benefit of it, and their joyful communion with God thereupon.

35. Seven days shalt thou consecrate them - Though all the ceremonies were performed on the first day, yet, they were not to look upon their consecration as compleated till the seven days end, which put a solemnity upon their admission, and a distance between this and their former state, and obliged them to enter upon their work with a pause, giving them time to consider the weight of it. This was to be observed in after ages: he that was to succeed Aaron in the high priesthood, must put on the holy garments seven days together, in token of a deliberate advance into his office, and that one sabbath might pass over him, in his consecration. Every day of the seven, in this first consecration, a bullock was to be offered for a sin-offering, which was to intimate, (1.) That though atonement was made, yet they must still keep up a penitent sense of sin, and often repeat the confession of it. (2.) That those sacrifices which were thus offered day by day, could not make the comers there unto perfect, for then they would have ceased to be offered; Heb. x, 1, 2. They must therefore expect the bringing in of a better hope. Now this consecration of the priests was a shadow of good things to come.

1. Our Lord Jesus is the great high priest of our profession, called of God to be so consecrated for evermore, anointed with the Spirit above his fellows, whence he is called Messiah, the Christ; clothed with the holy garments, even with glory and beauty; sanctified by his own blood, not that of bullocks and rams.
2. All believers are spiritual priests, to offer spiritual sacrifices, 1 Pet. ii, 5, washed in the blood of Christ, and so made to our God priests, Rev. i, 5, 6. They also are clothed with the beauty of holiness, and have received the anointing, 1 John ii, 27. His blood sprinkled upon the conscience, purgeth it from dead works, that

they may, as priests, serve the living God. The Spirit of God is called the finger of God (Luke xi, 20, compared with Matt. xii, 28,) and by him the merit of Christ is effectually applied to our souls, as here Moses with his finger was to put the blood upon Aaron. It is likewise intimated that gospel ministers are to be solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry with great deliberation and seriousness, both in the ordainers, and in the ordained, as those that are employed in a great work, and intrusted with a great charge.

36. The consecration of the altar, seems to have been coincident with that of the priests; and the sin-offerings, which were offered every day for seven days together, had reference to the altar, as well as the priests. And atonement was made for the altar. The altar was also sanctified, not only set apart itself to a sacred use, but made so holy as to sanctify the gifts that were offered upon it, Matt. xxiii, 19. Christ is our altar, for our sakes he sanctified himself, that we and our performances might be sanctified and recommended to God, John xvii, 19.

38. This daily service, a lamb offered upon the altar every morning, and every evening, typified the continual intercession which Christ ever lives to make in the virtue of his satisfaction for the continual sanctification of his church: though he offered himself once for all, yet that one offering thus becomes a continual offering. And this teaches us to offer up to God the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise every day, morning and evening, in humble acknowledgment of our dependence upon him, and our obligations to him.

40. A tenth deal, or tenth part of an ephah, is about three quarts. A hin is five quarts.

## XXX

Moses in this chapter farther instructed, (1.) Concerning the altar of incense, ver. 1-10. (2.) Concerning the ransom money, which the Israelites were to pay when they were numbered, ver. 11-16. (3.) Concerning the laver of brass, ver. 17-21. (4.) Concerning the anointing oil, ver. 22-33. (5.) Concerning the incense and perfume, which was to be burned on the golden altar, ver. 34-38.

1. The altar of incense was to be about a yard high, and half a yard square, with horns at the corners, a golden cornish round it, with rings and staves of gold for the convenience of carrying it, ver. 1- 5. It doth not appear that there was any grate to this altar for the ashes to fall into, that they might be taken away; but when they burn incense, a golden censer was brought, with coals in it, and placed upon the altar, and in that censer the incense was burnt, and with it all the coals were taken away, so that no coals or ashes fell upon the altar. The altar of incense in Ezekiel's temple is double to what it is here, Ezek. xli, 22, and it is there called an altar of wood, and there is no mention of gold, to signify that the incense in gospel times should be spiritual, the worship plain, and the service of God enlarged. It was placed before the veil, on the outside of that partition, but before the mercy-seat, which was within the veil. For though he that ministered at that altar could not see the mercy-seat, the veil interposing, yet he must look towards it, and direct his incense that way, to teach us, that though we cannot with our bodily eyes see the throne of grace, that blessed mercy-seat, yet we must in prayer by faith set ourselves before it, direct our prayer and look up.

7. Aaron was to burn sweet incense upon this altar every morning and every evening, which was intended not only to take away the ill smell of the flesh that was burnt daily on the brazen altar, but for the honour of God, and to shew the, acceptableness of his people's services to him. As by the offerings on the brazen altar satisfaction was made for what had been done displeasing to God, so by the offering on this what they did well was, as it were, recommended to the divine acceptance.

10. This altar was purified with the blood of the sin-offering put upon the horns of it every year, upon the day of atonement. See Lev. xvi, 18,

19. The high priest was to take this in his way as he came out from the holy of holies. This was to intimate, that the sins of the priests who ministered at this altar, and of the people for whom they ministered, put a ceremonial impurity upon it, from which it must be cleansed by the blood of atonement. This altar typified the mediation of Christ: the brazen altar in the court was a type of Christ dying on earth; the golden altar in the sanctuary was a type of Christ interceding in heaven. This altar was before the mercy- seat, for Christ always appears in the presence of God for us; and his intercession is unto God of a sweet smelling savour. And it typified the devotions of the saints, whose prayers are said to be set forth before God as incense, Psalm 1xli, 2. As the smoke of the incense ascended, so must our desires, being kindled with the fire of holy love. When the priest was burning incense the people were praying, Luke i, 10, to signify that prayer is the true incense. This incense was a perpetual incense, for we must pray always. The lamps were dressed or lighted at the same time that the incense was burnt, to teach us that the reading of the scriptures (which are our light and lamp) is a part of our daily work, and should ordinarily accompany our prayers and praises. The devotions of sanctified souls are well-pleasing to God, of a sweet- smelling savour; the prayers of saints are compared to sweet odours, Rev. v, 8, but it is the incense which Christ adds to them that makes them acceptable; and his blood that atones for the guilt which cleaves to our best services. Yet if the heart and life be not holy, even incense is an abomination, Isaiah i, 13.

11. Perhaps the repetition of those words, the Lord spake unto Moses, here and afterwards, ver. 17, 22, 34, intimates, that God did not deliver these precepts to Moses, in a continued discourse, but with many intermissions, giving him time either to write what was said to him, or at least to charge his memory with it.

12. Some think this refers only to the first numbering of them, when the tabernacle was set up, and that this tax was to make up what was wanting in the voluntary contributions. Others think it was to be always when the people were numbered; and that David offended in not demanding it when he numbered the people. But many of the Jewish writers are of opinion, it was to be an annual tribute; only it was begun when Moses first numbered the people. This was that tribute-money which Christ paid lest he should offend his adversaries. The tribute to be paid was half a shekel, about fifteen-pence of our money. In other offerings men were to give according to their ability, but this, which was the ransom of the soul, must be alike for all; for the rich have as much need of Christ as the poor, and the poor are as welcome to him as the rich. And this was to be paid as a ransom of the soul, that there might be no plague among them - Hereby they acknowledged that they received their lives from God, that they had forfeited their lives to him, and that they depended upon his power and patience for the continuance of them; and thus they did homage to the God of their lives, and deprecated those plagues which their sins had deserved. This money was employed in the service of the tabernacle; with it they bought sacrifices, flour, incense wine, oil, fuel, salt, priests garments, and all other things which the whole congregation was interested in.

18. The laver, or font was a large vessel, that would contain a good quantity of water. The foot of brass, it is supposed, was so contrived as to receive the water, which was let out of the laver, by spouts or cocks. They then had a laver for the priests only to wash in, but to us now there is a fountain opened for Judah and Jerusalem, Zech. xiii, 1, an inexhaustible fountain of living water, so that it is our own fault if we remain in our pollution. Aaron and his sons were to wash their hands and feet at this laver every time they went in to minister. For this purpose clean water was put into the laver, fresh every day. Though they washed themselves ever so clean at their own houses, that would not serve, they must wash at the laver. This was designed, to teach them purity in all their ministrations, and to possess them with a reverence of God's holiness, and a dread of the pollutions of sin. They must not only wash and be made clean when they were first consecrated, but they must wash and be kept clean, whenever they went in to minister. He only shall stand in God's holy place that hath clean hands and a pure heart, Psalm xxiv, 3, 4. And it was to teach us, who are daily to attend upon God, daily to renew our repentance for sin, and our believing application of the blood of Christ to our souls for remission.

23. Interpreters are not agreed concerning these ingredients: the spices, which were in all near half a hundred weight, were to be infused in the oil, which was to be about five or six quarts, and then strained out, leaving an admirable smell in the oil. With this oil God's tent and all the furniture of it were to be anointed; it was to be used also in the consecration of the priests. It was to be continued throughout their generations, ver. 31. Solomon was anointed with it, 1 Kings i, 39, and some other of the kings, and all the high priests, with such a quantity of it, as that it ran down to the skirts of the garments; and we read of the making it up, 1 Chron. ix, 30. Yet all agree that in the second temple there was none of this holy oil, which was probably owing to a notion they had, that it was not lawful to make it up; Providence over-ruling that want as a presage of the better unction of the Holy Ghost in gospel-times, the variety of whose gifts was typified by these sweet ingredients.

34. The incense which was burned upon the golden altar was prepared of sweet spices likewise, though not so rare and rich as those which the anointing oil was compounded of. This was prepared once a year, (the Jews say) a pound for each day of the year, and three pound over for the day of atonement. When it was used it was to be beaten very small; thus it pleased the Lord to bruise the Redeemer, when he offered himself for a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour. Concerning both these preparations the same law is here given, that the like should not be made for any common use. Thus God would preserve in the peoples minds a reverence for his own institutions, and teach us not to profane or abuse any thing whereby God makes himself known.

## XXXI

In this chapter,

I. God appoints what workmen should be employed in the building and furnishing the tabernacle, ver. 1-11.

II. He repeats the law of the sabbath, ver. 12-17.

III. He delivers to Moses the two tables of the testimony, ver. 18.

2. See I have called Bezaleel, the grandson of Hur, probably that Hur who had helped to hold up Moses's hand, chap. xvii, 10-12, and was at this time in commission with Aaron for the government of the people in the absence of Moses. Aholiab of the tribe of Dan. is appointed next to Bezaleel, and partner with him. Hiram, who was the head-workman in the building of Solomon's temple, was also of the tribe of Daniel, 2 Chron. ii, 14.

3. And I have filled him with the spirit of God; and ver. 6. In the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put wisdom. Skill in common employments is the gift of God; It is he that puts even this wisdom into the inward parts, Job xxxviii, 36. He teacheth the husbandman discretion, Isaiah xxviii, 26, and the tradesman too, and he must have the praise of it.

13. It is a sign between me and you - The institution of the sabbath was a great instance of God's favour, and a sign that he had distinguished them from all other people: and their religious observance of it, was a great instance of their duty to him. God, by sanctifying this day among them, let them know that he sanctified them, and set them apart for his service, otherwise he would not have revealed to them his holy sabbaths to be the support of religion among them. The Jews by observing one day in seven, after six days labour, testified that they worshipped the God that made the world in six days, and rested the seventh; and so distinguished themselves from other nations, who having first lost the sabbath, the memorial of the creation, by degrees lost the knowledge of the creator, and gave the creature the honour due to him alone.

14. It is holy unto you - That is, it is designed for your benefit as well as for God's honour; it shall be accounted holy by you.

15. It is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord - It is separated from common use, for the service of God; and by the observance of it we are taught to rest from worldly pursuits, and devote ourselves, and all we are, have, and can do, to God's glory.

16. It was to be observed throughout their generations, in every age, for a perpetual covenant - This was to be one of the most lasting tokens of the covenant between God and Israel.

17. On the seventh day he rested - And as the work of creation is worthy to be thus commemorated, so the great Creator is worthy to be thus imitated, by a holy rest the seventh day.

18. These tables of stone, were not prepared by Moses, but probably by the ministry of angels. They were written with the finger of God - That is, by his will and power immediately, without the use of any instrument. They were written in two tables, being designed to direct us in our duty, towards God, and towards man. And they were called tables of testimony, because this written law testified the will of God concerning them, and would be a testimony against them if they were disobedient.

## XXXII

Here is,

I. The sin of Israel, and Aaron particularly in making the golden calf, ver. 1-4. and worshipping it, ver. 5, 6.

II. The notice which God gave of this to Moses, who was now in the mount with him, ver. 7, 8. and the sentence of his wrath against them, ver. 9, 10.

III. The intercession which Moses made for them, ver. 11, 12, 13. and the prevalency of that intercession, ver 14.
IV. His coming down from the mount, and being an eye witness of their idolatry, ver. 15-19. in detestation of which he broke the tables, ver. 19. and burnt the golden calf, ver. 20.
V. The examination of Aaron about it, ver. 21-24.
VI. Execution done upon the ringleaders in the idolatry, ver. 25- 29.
VII. The further intercession Moses made, to turn away the wrath of God from them, ver. 30-32. and a reprieve granted thereupon, reserving them for a further reckoning, ver. 33-35.

1. Up, make us gods which shall go before us. They were weary of waiting for the promised land. They thought themselves detained too long at mount Sinai. They had a God that stayed with them, but they must have a God to go before them to the land flowing with milk and honey. They were weary of waiting for the return of Moses: As for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of Egypt, we know not what is become of him - Observe how slightly they speak of his person, this Moses: And how suspiciously of his delay, we know not what is become of him. And they were weary of waiting for a divine institution of religious worship among them, so they would have a worship of their own invention, probably such as they had seen among the Egyptians. They say, make us gods which shall go before us. Gods! How many would they have? Is not one sufficient? And what good would gods of their own making do them? They must have such Gods to go before them as could not go themselves farther than they were carried!

2. And Aaron said break off the golden ear-rings - We do not find that he said one word to discountenance their proposal. Some suppose, that when Aaron bid them break off their ear-rings, he did it with design to crush the proposal, believing that, though their covetousness would have let them do it, yet their pride would not have suffered them to part with them.

3. And all the people brake off their ear-rings - Which Aaron melted down, and, having a mold prepared, poured the melted gold into it, and then produced it in the shape of an ox or calf, giving it some finishing strokes with a graving tool.

5. And Aaron built an altar before it, and proclaimed a feast - A feast of dedication; yet he calls it a feast to Jehovah; for, as brutish as they were, they did not design to terminate their adoration in the image; but they made it for a representation of the true God, whom they intended to worship in and through this image. And yet this did not excuse them from gross idolatry, no more than it will excuse the Papists, whose plea it is, that they do not worship the image, but God by the image; so making themselves just such idolaters as the worshippers of the golden calf, whose feast was a feast to Jehovah, and proclaimed to be so, that the most ignorant and unthinking might not mistake it.

6. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered sacrifice to this new made deity. And the people sat down to eat and drink of the remainder of what was sacrificed, and then rose up to play - To play the fool, to play the wanton. It was strange that any of the people, especially so great a number of them, should do such a thing. Had they not, but the other day, in this very place, heard the voice of the Lord God speaking to them out of the midst of the fire, Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image? - Yet They made a calf in Horeb, the very place where the law was given

It was especially strange that Aaron should be so deeply concerned, should make the calf and proclaim the feast! Is this Aaron the saint of the Lord! Is this he that had not only seen, but had been employed in summoning the plagues of Egypt, and the judgments executed upon the gods of the Egyptians? What! And yet himself copying out the abandoned idolatries of Egypt? How true is it, that the law made them priests which had infirmity, and needed first to offer for their own sins?

8. They have turned aside quickly - Quickly after the law was given them, and they had promised to obey it; quickly after God had done such great things for them, and declared his kind intentions to do greater.

9. It is a stiff-necked people - Unapt to come under the yoke of the divine law, averse to all good, and prone to evil, obstinate to the methods of cure.

10. Let me alone - What did Moses, or what could he do, to hinder God from consuming them? When God resolves to abandon a people, and the decree is gone forth, no intercession can prevent it. But God would thus express the greatness of his displeasure, after the manner of men, who would have none to interceed for those they resolve to be severe with. Thus also he would put an honour upon prayer, intimating, that nothing but the intercession of Moses could save them from ruin, that he might be a type of Christ, by whose mediation alone God would reconcile the world unto himself.

11. And Moses besought the Lord his God - If God would not be called the God of Israel, yet he hoped he might address him as his own God. Now Moses is standing in the gap to turn away the wrath of God. Psalm cvi, 23. He took the hint which God gave him when he said, Let me alone, which, though it seemed to forbid his interceding, did really encourage it, by shewing what power the prayer of faith hath with God.

12. Turn from thy fierce wrath - Not as if he thought God were not justly angry, but he begs that he would not be so greatly angry as to consume them. Let mercy rejoice against judgment; repent of this evil - Change the sentence of destruction into that of correction, against thy people which thou broughtest up out of Egypt - For whom thou hast done so great things? Wherefore should the Egyptians say, For mischief did he bring them out - Israel is dear to Moses, as his kindred, as his charge; but it is the glory of God that he is most concerned for. If Israel could perish without any reproach to God's name, Moses could persuade himself to sit down contented; but he cannot bear to hear God reflected on; and therefore this he insists upon, Lord, What will the Egyptians say? They will say, God was either weak, and could not, or fickle, and would not compleat the salvation he begun.

13. Remember Abraham - Lord, if Israel be cut off, what will become of the promise?

14. And the Lord repented of the evil he thought to do - Though he designed to punish them, yet he would not ruin them. See here, the power of prayer, God suffers himself to be prevailed with by humble believing importunity. And see the compassion of God towards poor sinners, and how ready he is to forgive.

15. On both their sides - Some on one table and some on the other, so that they were folded together like a book, to be deposited in the ark.

16. The writing of God - Very probably the first writing in the world.

19. He saw the calf, and the dancing, and his anger waxed hot - It is no breach of the law of meekness to shew our displeasure at wickedness. Those are angry and sin not, that are angry at sin only. Moses shewed himself angry, both by breaking the tables, and burning the calf, that he might by these expressions of a strong passion awaken the people to a sense of the greatness of their sin.

He broke the tables before their eyes, as it is Deut. ix, 17, that the sight of it might fill them with confusion when they saw what blessings they had lost. The greatest sign of God's displeasure against any people is his taking his law from them.

20. He burnt the calf - Melted it down, and then filed it to dust; and that the powder to which it was reduced might he taken notice of throughout the camp, he strawed it upon the water which they all drank of. That it might appear that an idol is nothing in the world, he reduced this to atoms, that it might be as near nothing as could be.

21. What did this people unto thee - He takes it for granted that it must needs be something more than ordinary that prevailed with Aaron to do such a thing? Did they overcome thee by importunity, and hadst thou so little resolution as to yield to popular clamour! Did they threaten to stone thee, and couldest not thou have opposed God's threatenings to theirs?

23. They said, make us Gods - It is natural to us to endeavour thus to transfer our guilt. He likewise extenuates his own share in the sin, as if he had only bid them break off their gold, intending but to make a hasty essay for the present, and childishly insinuates that when he cast the gold into the fire, it came out either by accident, or by the magic art of some of the mixt multitude (as the Jewish writers dream) in this shape. This was all Aaron had to say for himself, and he had better have said nothing, for his defense did but aggravate his offense; and yet as sin did abound, grace did much more abound.

25. The people were naked - Stript of their armour, and liable to insults.

26. Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, the place of judgment; and said, Who is on the Lord's side? - The idolaters had set up the golden calf for their standard, and now Moses sets up his in opposition to them.

27. Slay every man his brother - That is, Slay all those that you know to have been active for the making and worshipping of the golden calf, though they were your nearest relations or dearest friends. Yet it should seem they were to slay those only whom they found abroad in the street of the camp; for it might be hoped that those who were retired into their tents were ashamed of what they had done.

28. And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men - Probably these were but few in comparison with the many that were guilty; but these were the men that headed the rebellion, and were therefore picked out to be made examples of; for terror to others.

31. Oh, this people have sinned a great sin - God had first told him of it, ver. 7, and now he tells God of it by way of lamentation. He doth not call them God's people, he knew they were unworthy to be called so, but this people. This treacherous ungrateful people, they have made them gods of gold.

32. If not - If the decree be gone forth, and there is no remedy but they must be ruined, blot me, I pray thee out of the book which thou hast written - That is, out of the book of life. If all Israel must perish, I am content to perish with them. This expression may be illustrated from Rom. ix, 3. For I could wish myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren's sake. Does this imply no more than not enjoying Canaan? Not that Moses absolutely desired this, but only comparatively expresses his vehement zeal for God's glory, and love to his people, signifying, that the very thought of their destruction, and the dishonour of God, was so intolerable to him, that he rather wishes, if it were possible, that God would accept of him, as a sacrifice in their stead, and by his utter destruction, prevent so great a mischief.

33. Whosoever hath sinned, him will I blot out of my book - The soul that sins shall die, and not the innocent for the guilty.

34. My angel shall go before them - Some created angel that was employed in the common services of his kingdom, which intimated that they were not to expect any thing for the future to be done for them out of the common road of providence. When I visit - Hereafter he shall see cause to punish them for other sins, I will visit for this among the rest. From hence the Jews have a saying, that from hence-forward no judgment fell upon Israel, but there was in it an ounce of the powder of the golden calf.

35. And the Lord plagued the people - Probably by the pestilence, or some other infectious disease. Thus Moses prevailed for a mitigation of the punishment, but could not wholly turn away the wrath of God.

## XXXIII

In this chapter we have a further account of the mediation of Moses between God and Israel.

I. He brings a very humbling message from God to them, ver. 1, 2, 3, 5. which has a good effect upon then, ver. 4, 6.

II. He settles a correspondence between God and them; and both God and the people signify their approbation of that correspondence, God by descending in a cloudy pillar, and the people by worshipping at the tent-doors, ver. 7-12.

III. He is earnest with God in prayer, and prevails. (1.) For a promise of his presence with the people, ver. 12-17. (2.) For a sight of his glory for himself, ver. 18-23.

5. I will come up - As if he had said, ye deserve that I should do so. Put off thine ornaments, that I may know what to do with thee - That is, put thyself into the posture of a penitent, that the dispute may be determined in thy favour, and mercy may rejoice against judgment.

6. And Israel stript themselves of their ornaments, by the mount; or, as some read it, at a distance from the mount - Stand afar off, like the publican, Luke xviii, 13. God bid them lay aside their ornaments, and they did so; both to shew in general their deep mourning, and in particular to take a holy revenge upon themselves for giving their ear-rings to make the golden calf of.

7. And Moses took the tabernacle - The tent wherein he gave audience, heard causes, and inquired of God, and pitched it without, afar off from the camp - To signify to them that they were unworthy of it. Perhaps this tabernacle was a model of the tabernacle that was afterwards to be erected, a hasty draught from the pattern shewed him in the mount, designed for direction to the workman, and used in the mean time as a tabernacle of meeting between God and Moses about public affairs.

8. And when Moses went out to the tabernacle, the people looked after him - In token of their respect to him whom before they had slighted, and their dependence upon his mediation. By this it appeared, that they were full of concern what would be the issue.

10. And when they saw the cloudy pillar, that symbol of God's presence, give Moses the meeting, they all worshipped every man at his tent door - Thereby they signified, Their humble adoration

of the divine majesty. Their thankfulness to God, that he was pleased to shew them this token for good, for if he had been pleased to kill them he would not have shewed them such things as these. And their hearty concurrence with Moses as their advocate, in every thing he should promise for them.

11. And the Lord spake to Moses face to face as a man speaketh to his friend - Which intimates not only that God revealed himself to Moses with greater clearness than to any other of the prophets, but also with greater expressions of particular kindness than to any other. He spake not as a prince to a subject, but as a man to his friend, whom he loves, and with whom he takes sweet counsel. And he turned again into the camp - To tell the people what hopes he had of bringing this business to a good issue. But because he intended speedily to return to the tabernacle, he left Joshua there.

12. Moses now returned to the door of the tabernacle, as an important supplicant for two favours, and prevails for both: herein he was a type of Christ the great intercessor, whom the Father heareth always. He is earnest with God for a grant of his presence with Israel in the rest of their march to Canaan. Thou sayst, bring up this people - Lord, it is thou thyself that employest me, and wilt thou not own me? I am in the way of my duty, and shall I not have thy presence with me in that way? Yet, Thou hast said, I know thee by name, as a particular friend, and thou hast also found grace in my sight, above any other.

13. Now therefore, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me thy way - What favour God had expressed to the people they had forfeited the benefit of; and therefore Moses lays the stress of his plea upon what God had said to him. By this therefore he takes hold on God, Lord, if thou wilt do any thing for me, do this for the people. Thus our Lord Jesus, in his intercession, presents himself to the Father, as one in whom he is always well-pleased, and so obtains mercy for us with whom he is justly displeased, Shew me thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight - He insinuates that the people also, though most unworthy, yet were in some relation to God; consider that this nation is thy people; a people that thou hast done great things for, redeemed to thyself, and taken into covenant with thyself; Lord, they are thy own, do not leave them.

15. And he said, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence - He speaks as one that dreaded the thought of going forward without God's presence.

16. Wherein shall it be known to the nations that have their eyes upon us, that I, and thy people, have found grace in thy sight; so as to be separated from all people upon earth? Is it not that thou goest with us? Nothing short of that can answer these characters.

17. I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken - See the power of prayer! See the riches of God's goodness! See in type the prevalency of Christ's intercession, which he ever lives to make for all those that come to God by him! And the ground of that prevalency, is purely in his own merit, it is because thou hast found grace in my sight. And now God is perfectly reconciled to them, and his presence in the pillar of cloud returns to them.

18. I beseech thee shew me thy glory - Moses had lately been in the mount with God, and had had as intimate communion with God, as ever any man had on this side heaven, and yet he is still desiring a farther acquaintance. Shew me thy glory - Make me to see it; so the word is: make it some way or other visible, and enable me to bear the sight of it. Not that he was so ignorant as to think God's essence could be seen with bodily eyes, but having hitherto only heard a voice out of a pillar of cloud or fire, he desired to see some representation of the divine glory, such as God saw fit to gratify him with.

20. Thou canst not see my face - A full discovery of the glory of God would quite overpower the faculties of any mortal man. I will make all my goodness pass before thee - He had given him wonderful instances of his goodness in being reconciled to Israel; but that was only goodness in the stream, he would shew him goodness in the spring. This was a sufficient answer to his request: Shew me thy glory, saith Moses; I will shew thee my goodness, saith God. God's goodness is his glory; and he will have us to know him by the glory of his mercy, more than by the glory of his majesty. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious - In bestowing his gifts, and is not debtor to any, nor accountable to any; all his reasons of mercy are fetched from within himself, not from any merit in his creatures, and I will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy - For his grace is always free. He never damns by prerogative, but by prerogative he saves.

22. I will put thee in a cleft of the rock - In that he was to be sheltered from the dazzling light, and devouring fire of God's glory. This was the rock in Horeb, out of which water was brought, of which it is said, That rock was Christ, 1 Cor. x, 4. 'Tis in the clefts of this rock that we are secured from the wrath of God, which otherwise would consume us: God himself will protect those that are thus hid: and it is only through Christ that we have the knowledge of the glory of God. None can see that to their comfort, but those that stand upon this rock, and take shelter in it.

23. And I will take away my hand - Speaking after the manner of men. And thou shalt see my back-parts - The face in man is the seat of majesty, and men are known by their faces, in them we take a full view of men; that sight of God Moses might not have, but such a sight as we have of a man who is gone past us, so that we only see his back. Now Moses was allowed to see this only, but when he was a witness to Christ's transfiguration, he saw his face shine as the sun.

## XXXIV

Four instances of the return of God's favour we have in this chapter.

I. The orders he gives to Moses to come up to the mount the next morning, and bring two tables of stone with him, ver. 1-4.

II. His meeting him there, and the proclamation of his name, ver. 6-9.

III. The instructions he gave him there, and his converse with him forty days, ver. 10-28.

IV. The honour he put upon him when he sent him down with his face shining, ver. 29-35. In all which God dealt with Moses as a mediator between him and Israel, and a type of the great Mediator.

1. Moses must prepare for the renewing of the tables. Before God himself provided the tables, and wrote on them; now Moses must hew him out the tables, and God would only write upon them. When God was reconciled to them, he ordered the tables to be renewed, and wrote his law in them, which plainly intimates to us, that even under the gospel (of which the intercession of Moses was typical) the moral law should continue to oblige believers. Though Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, yet not from the command of it, but still we are under the law to Christ. When our saviour in his sermon on the mount expounded the moral law, and vindicated it from the corrupt

glosses with which the scribes and Pharisees had broken it, he did in effect renew the tables, and make them like the first; that is, reduce the law to its primitive sense and intention.

5. The Lord descended - By some sensible token of his presence, and manifestation of his glory. He descended in the cloud - Probably that pillar of cloud which had hitherto gone before Israel, and had the day before met Moses at the door of the tabernacle.

6. And the Lord passed by before him - Fixed views of God are reserved for the future state; the best we have in this world are transient. And proclaimed the name of the Lord - By which he would make himself known. He had made himself known to Moses in the glory of his self-existence, and self-sufficiency, when he proclaimed that name, I am that I am; now he makes himself known in the glory of his grace and goodness, and all- sufficiency to us. The proclaiming of it notes the universal extent of God's mercy; he is not only good to Israel, but good to all. The God with whom we have to do is a great God. He is Jehovah, the Lord, that hath his being of himself, and is the fountain of all being; Jehovah-El, the Lord, the strong God, a God of almighty power himself, and the original of all power. This is prefixed before the display of his mercy, to teach us to think and to speak even of God's goodness with a holy awe, and to encourage us to depend upon these mercies. He is a good God. His greatness and goodness illustrate each other. That his greatness may not make us afraid, we are told how good he is; and that we may not presume upon his goodness, we are told how great he is. Many words are here heaped up to acquaint us with, and convince us of God's goodness.

1st, He is merciful, This speaks his pity, and tender companion, like that of a father to his children. This is put first, because it is the first wheel in all the instances of God's goodwill to fallen man. 2ndly, He is gracious. This speaks both freeness, and kindness: it speaks him not only to have a compassion to his creatures, but a complacency in them, and in doing good to them; and this of his own goodwill, not for the sake of any thing in them. 3rdly, He is long-suffering. This is a branch of God's goodness which our wickedness gives occasion for. He is long-suffering, that is, he is slow to anger, and delays the executions of his justice, he waits to be gracious, and lengthens out the offers of his mercy. 4thly, He is abundant in goodness and truth. This speaks plentiful goodness; it abounds above our deserts, above our conception. The springs of mercy are always full, the streams of mercy always flowing; there is mercy enough in God, enough for all, enough for each, enough for ever. It speaks promised goodness, goodness and truth put together, goodness engaged by promise.

5thly, He keepeth mercy for thousands. This speaks,

1. Mercy extended to thousands of persons. When he gives to some, still he keeps for others, and is never exhausted:
2. Mercy entailed upon thousands of generations, even to those upon whom the ends of the world are come; nay, the line of it is drawn parallel with that of eternity itself.

6thly, He forgiveth iniquity, transgression and sin - Pardoning mercy is instanced in, because in that divine grace is most magnified, and because that it is that opens the door to all other gifts of grace. He forgives offenses of all sorts, iniquity, transgression and sin, multiplies his pardons, and with him is plenteous redemption. He is a just and holy God. For, 1st, He will by no means clear the guilty. He will not clear the impenitently guilty, those that go on still in their trespasses; he will not clear the guilty without satisfaction to his justice. 2ndly, He visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children - Especially for the punishment of idolaters. Yet he keepeth not his anger

for ever, but visits to the third and fourth generation only, while he keeps mercy for thousands - This is God's name for ever, and this is his memorial unto all generations.

8. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head - Thus he expressed his humble reverence and adoration of God's glory, together with his joy in this discovery God had made of himself, and his thankfulness for it. Then likewise he expressed his holy submission to the will of God made known in this declaration, subscribing to his justice as well as mercy, and putting himself and his people Israel under the government of such a God as Jehovah had now proclaimed himself to be. Let this God be our God for ever and ever!

9. And he said, I pray thee go among us - For thy presence is all to our safety and success. And pardon our iniquity and our sin - Else we cannot expect thee to go among us. And take us for thine inheritance - Which thou wilt have a particular eye to, and concern for. These things God had already promised Moses; and yet he prays for them, not as doubting the sincerity of God's grants, but as one solicitous for the ratification of them. But it is a strange plea he urges, for it is a stiff-necked people - God had given this as a reason why he would not go along with them, chap. xxxiii, 3. Yea, saith Moses, the rather go along with us; for the worse they are, the more need they have of thy presence. Moses sees them so stiff-necked, that he has neither patience nor power enough to deal with them; therefore, Lord, do thou go among us; else they will never be kept in awe; thou wilt spare, and bear with them, for thou art God and not man.

10. Behold I make a covenant - When the covenant was broke, it was Israel that broke it; now it comes to be renewed, it is God that makes it. If there be quarrels, we must bear all the blame; if there be peace, God must have all the glory. Before all thy people I will do marvels - Such as the drying up of Jordan, the standing still of the sun. Marvels indeed, for they were without precedent, such as have not been done in all the earth; the people shall see, and own the work of the Lord; and they were the terror of their enemies: it is a terrible thing that I will do.

11. Observe that which I command thee - We cannot expect the benefit of the promises, unless we make conscience of the precepts. The two great precepts are,

1. Thou shalt worship no other gods - A good reason is annexed; for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God - As tender in the matters of his worship as the husband is of the honour of the marriage-bed.
2. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods - Thou shalt not worship the true God by images. This was the sin they had lately fallen into, which therefore they are particularly cautioned against. That they might not be tempted to worship other gods, they must not join in affinity or friendship with those that did.

12. Take heed to thyself - It is a sin thou art prone to, and that will easily beset thee; carefully abstain from all advances towards it, make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land - If God in kindness to them drove out the Canaanites, they ought in duty to God not to harbour them: If they espoused their children they would be in danger of espousing their gods. That they might not be tempted to make molten gods, they must utterly destroy those they found, and all that belonged to them, the altars and groves, lest, if they were left standing, they should be brought in process of time either to use them, or to take pattern by them.

21. Here is a repetition of several appointments made before, especially relating to their solemn feasts: when they had made the calf they proclaimed a feast in honour of it; now, that they might never do so again, they are here charged with the observance of the feasts which God had instituted. Thou shalt rest, even in earing-time and in harvest - The most busy times of the year. All wordly

business must give way to that holy rest: harvest-work will prosper the better for the religious observation of the sabbath- day in harvest-time. Hereby we must shew that we prefer our communion with God, before either the business or the joy of harvest.

23. Thrice in the year shall all the men-children appear - But it might be suggested, when all the males slain every part were gone up to worship in the place that God should chuse, the country would he left exposed to the insults of their neighbours; and what would become of the poor women and children? Trust God with them.

24. Neither shalt any man desire thy land - Not only they shall not invade it, but they shall not so much as think of invading it. What a standing Miracle was this, for so many Generations?

28. He wrote - God.

29. The skin of his face shone - This time of his being in the mount he heard only the same he had heard before. But he saw more of the glory of God, which having with open face beheld, he was in some measure changed into the same image. This was a great honour done to Moses, that the people might never again question his mission, or think or speak slightly of him. He carried his credentials in his very countenance, some think as long as he lived, he retained some remainders of this glory, which perhaps contributed to the vigour of his old age; that eye could not wax dim which had seen God, nor that face wrinkle which had shone with his glory.

30. And Aaron and the children of Israel saw it, and were afraid - It not only dazzled their eyes, but struck such an awe upon them as obliged them to retire. Probably they doubted whether it was a token of God's favour, or of his displeasure.

33. And Moses put a veil upon his face - This veil signified the darkness of that dispensation; the ceremonial institutions had in them much of Christ and the gospel, but a veil was drawn over it, so that the children of Israel could not distinctly and steadfastly see those good things to come which the law had a shadow of. It was beauty veiled, gold in the mine, a pearl in the shell; but thanks be to God, by the gospel, the veil is taken away from off the old testament; yet still it remains upon the hearts of those who shut their eyes against the light.

34. When he went before the Lord, he put off the veil - Every veil must be thrown aside when we go to present ourselves unto the Lord. This signified also, as it is explained, 2 Cor. iii, 16, that when a soul turns to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away, that with open face it may behold his glory.

## XXXV

The great affair of setting up God's worship is now upon its former channel again.

I. Moses gives Israel those instructions he had received, which required a present observance, (1.) Concerning the sabbath, ver. 1-3. (2.) Concerning the contribution that was to be made for erecting the tabernacle, ver. 4-9. (3.) Concerning the framing of the tabernacle, and the utensils of it, ver. 10-19.

II. The people bring in their contributions, ver. 20-29.

III. The head workmen are nominated, ver. 30-35.

2. Six days shall work be done - Work for the tabernacle, but on the seventh day - You must not strike a stroke, no not at the tabernacle-work; the honour of the sabbath was above that of the sanctuary.

3. Ye shall kindle no fire - For any servile work, as that of smiths or plumbers. We do not find that ever this prohibition extended farther.

21. Every one whom his spirit made willing - What they did they did chearfully. They were willing; and it was not any external inducement that made them so, but their spirits. It was from a principle of love to God, and his service; a desire of his presence with them by his ordinances; gratitude for the great things he had done for them; and faith in his promises of what he would do further.

22. Tablets or Lockets.

30. The Lord hath called Bezaleel - And those whom God called by name to this service, he filled with the spirit of God, to qualify them for it. The work was extraordinary which Bezaleel was designed for, and therefore he was qualified in an extraordinary manner for it. Thus when the apostles were appointed to be master-builders in setting up the gospel-tabernacle, they were filled with the spirit of God in wisdom and understanding.

## XXXVI

In this chapter,

I. The work of the tabernacle is begun, ver. 1-4.

II. A stop put to the people's contributions, ver. 5-7.

III. A particular account of the making the tabernacle; the fine curtains of it, ver. 8-13. The coarse ones, ver. 14-19. The boards, ver. 20-xxx, The bars, ver. 31-34 The partition veil, ver. 35, 36. and the hangings of the door, ver. 37, 38.

2. And Moses called Bezaleel - "Even those whom God has qualified for, and inclined to the service of the tabernacle, yet must wait for a call to it, either extraordinary, as that of preachers and apostles, or ordinary, as that of pastors and teachers. And observe who they were that Moses called; those in whose heart God had put wisdom for this purpose, beyond their natural capacity, and whose heart stirred him up to come to the work in good earnest." Those are to be called to the building of the gospel tabernacle, whom God has by his grace made in some measure fit for the work, and free to it: ability and willingness, with resolution, are the two things to be regarded in the call of ministers.

35. The veil made for a partition between the holy place and the most holy, signified the darkness and distance of that dispensation compared with the New Testament, which shews us the glory of God more clearly, and invites us to draw near to it; and the darkness and distance of our present state in comparison with heaven, where we shall be ever with the Lord, and see him as he is.

37. An hanging - Which divided the holy place from the court.

## XXXVII

Bezaleel and his workmen are still busy, making,

I. The ark with the mercy-seat and the cherubim, ver. 1-9.

II. The table with its vessels, ver. 10-16.

III. The candle-stick with its appurtenances, ver. 17-24.

IV. The golden altar for incense, ver. 25-28.

V. The holy oil and incense, ver. 29. 1-9. These several ornaments where with the tabernacle was furnished, the people were not admitted to see, but the priests only; and therefore it was requisite they should be thus largely described, particularly to them. And Moses would thus shew the great care which he and his workmen took to make every thing exactly according to the pattern shewed him in the mount. Thus he appeals to every reader concerning his fidelity to him that appointed him, in all his house. And thus he teacheth us to have respect to all God's commandments, even to every jot and tittle of them. In these verses we have an account of the making of the ark with its glorious and significant appurtenances, the mercy-seat and the cherubim. Consider these three together, and they represent the glory of a holy God, the sincerity of a holy heart, and the communion that is between them by a Mediator. It is the glory of a holy God that he dwelleth between the cherubim, that is, is continually attended by the blessed angels, whose swiftness was signified by the wings of the cherubim, and their unanimity in their services, by their faces being one towards another. It is the character of an upright heart, that, like the ark of the testimony, it hath the law of God hid and kept in it. By Jesus Christ the great propitiation there is reconciliation made, and a communion settled, between us and God: he interposeth between us and God's displeasure; and through him we become entitled to God's favour.

10. Observe how much the dispensation of the gospel exceeds that of the law. Tho' here was a table furnished, it was only with shew- bread, bread to be looked upon, not to be fed upon, while it was on the table, and afterwards only by the priests: but to the table Christ has spread in the new covenant all good Christians are invited guests, and to them it is said, Eat, O friends, come eat of my bread. What the law gave but a sight of at a distance, the gospel gives the enjoyment of.

17. This candlestick, which was not of wood overlaid with gold, but all beaten-work of pure gold only, signified that light of divine Revelation with which God's church upon earth (which is his tabernacle among men) hath always been enlightened, being always supplied with fresh oil from Christ the good olive, Zech. iv, 2, 3. The bible is a golden candlestick, it is of pure gold; from it light is diffused to every part of God's tabernacle, that by it the spiritual priests may see to do the service of his sanctuary. The candlestick has not only its bowls for necessary use, but its knops and flowers for ornament; many things which God saw fit to beautify his word with, which we can no more give a reason for than for these knops and flowers, and yet must be sure they wert added for good purpose. Let us bless God for this candlestick, have an eye to it continually, and dread the removal of it out of its place!

25. The incense burnt on this altar daily, signified both the prayers of saints, and the intercession of Christ, to which is owing the acceptableness of them.

## XXXVIII

Here is an account,

I. Of the making of the brazen altar, ver. 1-7. and the laver, ver. 8.

II. The preparing of the hangings for the inclosing of the court in which the tabernacle was to stand, ver. 9-20.

III. A summary account of the gold, silver and brass that was contributed to, and, used in the preparing of the tabernacle, ver. 21-31.

1. The altar of burnt-offering - On this all their sacrifices were offered. Christ was himself the altar to his own sacrifice of atonement, and so he is to all our sacrifices of acknowledgment. We must have an eye to him in offering them, as God hath in accepting them.

8. This laver signified the provision that is made in the gospel for cleansing our souls from the pollution of sin by the merit of Christ, that we may be fit to serve the holy God in holy duties. This is here said to be made of the looking-glasses of the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle. It should seem these women were eminent for devotion, attending more constantly at the place of public worship than others, and notice is here taken of it to their honour. These looking-glasses were of the finest brass, burnished for that purpose. In the laver, either they were artfully joined together, or else molten down and cast anew; but it is probable the laver was so brightly burnished that the sides of it still served for looking-glasses, that the priests when they came to wash might there see their faces, and so discover the spots to wash them clean.

9. And he made the court - The walls of the court, were like the rest, curtains, or hangings. This represented the state of the Old Testament church, it was a garden enclosed; the worshippers were then confined to a little compass. But the inclosure being of curtains only, intimated that that confinement of the church to one particular nation was not to be perpetual. The dispensation itself was a tabernacle-dispensation, moveable and mutable, and in due time to be taken down and folded up, when the place of the tent should be enlarged, and its cords lengthened, to make room for the Gentile world.

21. By the hand of Ithamar - Here we have a breviate of the account which by Moses's appointment the Levites took and kept of the gold, silver, and brass, that was brought in for the tabernacle's use, and how it was employed. Ithamar the son of Aaron was appointed to draw up this account. All the gold amounted to twenty nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels over; Which some compute to be about one hundred and fifty thousand pounds worth of gold, according to the present value of it. The silver amounted to about thirty-four thousand pounds of our money. The raising of the gold by voluntary contribution, and of the silver by way of tribute, shews that either way may be taken for the defraying of public expences, provided that nothing be done with partiality.

## XXXIX

This chapter gives us an account of the finishing of the work of the tabernacle.

I. The last thing prepared was the holy garments. The ephod, and its curious girdle, ver. 1-5. The onyx stones for the shoulders, ver. 6, 7. The breast-plate with the precious stones in it, ver. 8-21. The robe of the ephod, ver. 22-26. The coats, bonnets and breeches for the inferior priests, ver. 27-29. And the plate of the holy crown, ver. 30, 31.

II. A summary account of the whole work, ver. 32-43.

1. The priests garments are called here clothes of service - Those that wear robes of honour must look upon them as clothes of service; for those upon whom honour is put, from them service is expected. Holy garments were not made for men to sleep in, but to do service in, and then they are indeed for glory and beauty. These also were shadows of good things to come, but the substance is Christ. He is our great high priest; he put upon him the clothes of service when he undertook the work of our redemption; arrayed himself with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which he received not by measure; charged himself with all God's spiritual Israel, bare them on his shoulder, carried them in his bosom, and presented them in the breast-plate of judgment unto his Father. And, lastly, he crowned himself with holiness to the Lord, consecrated his whole undertaking to the honour of his Fathers holiness. And all true believers are spiritual priests. The clean linen with which all their clothes of service must be made, is the righteousness of saints: and holiness to the Lord must be so written upon their foreheads, that all who converse with them may see they bear the image of God's holiness.

32. Thus was all the work finished - In not much more than five months. Though there was a great deal of fine work, such as used to be the work of time, embroidering, and engraving, not only in gold, but in precious stones, yet they went through with it in a little time, and with the greatest exactness imaginable. The workmen were taught of God, and so were kept from making blunders, which would have retarded them. And the people were hearty and zealous in the work, and impatient till it was finished. God had prepared their hearts, and then the thing was done suddenly, 2 Chron. xxix, 36.

43. And Moses did look upon all the work - Piece by Piece, and behold they had done it according to the pattern shewed him - For the same that shewed him the pattern, guided their hand in the work. And Moses blessed them - He not only praised them, but prayed for them: he blessed them as one having authority. We read not of any wages Moses paid them for their work, but his blessing he gave them. For though ordinarily the labourer be worthy of his hire, yet in this case, they wrought for themselves. The honour and comfort of God's tabernacle among them would be recompence enough. And they had their meat from heaven on free-cost, for themselves and their families, and their raiment waxed not old upon them; so that they neither needed wages, nor had reason to expect any. But indeed this blessing in the name of the Lord was wages enough for all their work. Those whom God employs he will bless, and those whom he blesseth, they are blessed indeed. The blessing he commands is life for evermore.

## XL

In this chapter,

I. Orders are given for setting up the tabernacle, and fixing all the appurtenances of it, ver. 1-8. and the consecrating of it, ver. 8-11. and of the priests, ver. 12-15.

II. Care taken to do all this, and as it was appointed to be done, ver. 16-33.

III. God's taking possession of it by the cloud, ver. 34-38.

2. The time for doing this is, On the first day of the first month - This wanted but fourteen days of a year since they came out of Egypt. Probably the work was made ready just at the end of the year, so that the appointing this day gave no delay. In Hezekiah's time they began to sanctify the temple on the first day of the first month, 2 Chron. xxix, 17. The new moon (which by their computation was the first day of every month) was observed by them with some solemnity; and therefore this first new moon of the year was thus made remarkable.

15. Their anointing shall be an everlasting priesthood - A seal that their priesthood shall continue as long as the Jewish polity lasts. He signifies that this unction should be sufficient for all succeeding priests. None were afterwards anointed but the high- priests.

34. As when God had finished this earth, which he designed for man's habitation, he made man, and put him in possession of it; so when Moses had finished the tabernacle, which was designed for God's dwelling-place among men, God came and took possession of it. By these visible tokens of his coming among them, he testified both the return of his favour, which they had forfeited by the golden calf, and his gracious acceptance of their care and pains about the tabernacle. Thus God shewed himself well- pleased with what they had done, and abundantly rewarded them. A cloud covered the tent - The same cloud which, as the chariot or pavilion of the Shechinah, had come up before them out of Egypt, now settled upon the tabernacle, and hovered over it, even in the hottest and clearest day; for it was none of those clouds which the sun scatters. This cloud was intended to be a token of God's presence, constantly visible day and night to all Israel. A protection of the tabernacle: they had sheltered it with one covering upon another, but after all, the cloud that covered it was its best guard: And a guide to the camp of Israel in their march through the wilderness. While the cloud continued on the tabernacle, they rested; when it removed, they removed and followed it, as being purely under a divine conduct. And the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle - The Shechinah now made an awful entry into the tabernacle, passing through the outer part of it into the most holy place, and there seating itself between the cherubim. It was in light and fire, and, for ought we know, no other-wise, that the Shechinah made itself visible. With these the tabernacle was now filled; yet as before the bush, so now the curtains were not consumed, for, to those that have received the anointing, the majesty of God is not destroying. Yet now so dazzling was the light, and so dreadful was the fire, that Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, at the door of which he attended, till the splendour was a little abated, and the glory of the Lord retired within the veil. But what Moses could not do, our Lord Jesus has done, whom God caused to draw near and approach, and as the fore-runner he is for us entered, and has invited us to come boldly even to the mercy-seat. He was able to enter into the holy place not made with hands; he is himself the true tabernacle, filled with the glory of God, even with that divine grace and truth which

were figured by this fire and light. In him the Shechinah took up its rest for ever, for in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

## NOTES ON THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES CALLED LEVITICUS

THIS book, containing the actions of about one month's space, acquaint us with the Levitical ceremonies used after the tabernacle was erected in the wilderness, and is therefore called Leviticus: It treats of laws concerning persons, and things, clean and unclean; as also purifyings in general once a year, and divers particular cleansings, with a brief repetition of divers laws, together with certain feasts, of seven years rest, of the jubilee, and the redemption of things consecrated to God; but especially of such ceremonies as were used about offerings and sacrifices, which were both expiatory for trespasses committed, whether by the People or the priests; and also eucharistical in the owning of God's blessings. Here are declared also laws for the regulating of these, and prescribing the lawful time for marriages; here is set down how several abominable sins are punishable by the magistrate; and how these things are to be managed by certain persons appropriated to the tribe of Levi, whose office is confirmed from heaven, and the male-administration of it threatened, and the judgment particularly inflicted on Nadab and Abihu for an example. Here are promises, and threatenings, to the observers, or breakers of this law. The records of even these abrogated laws are of use to us, for the strengthening of our faith in it, as the lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and for the increase of our thankfulness to God, for freeing us from that heavy yoke. Directions concerning burnt-offerings: A bullock, ver. 1-9. A sheep, goat, lamb, or kid, ver. 10-13. A turtle dove, or young pigeon, ver. 14-17.

1. Moses - Stood without, Exod. xl, 35, waiting for God's call. The tabernacle - From the mercy-seat in the tabernacle.

2. There are divers kinds of sacrifices here prescribed, some by way of acknowledgment to God for mercies either desired or received; others by was of satisfaction to God for men's sins; others were mere exercises of devotion. And the reason why there were so many kinds of them was, partly a respect to the childish state of the Jews, who by the custom of nations, and their own natural inclinations were much addicted to outward rites and ceremonies, that they might have full employment of that kind in Gods's service, and thereby be kept from temptations to idolatry; and partly to represent as well the several perfections of Christ, the true sacrifice, and the various benefits of his death, as the several duties which men owe to their Creator and Redeemer, all which could not be so well expressed by one sort of sacrifice. Of the flock - Or, Of the sheep; though the Hebrew word contains both the sheep and goats. Now God chose these creatures for his sacrifices, either,

1. In opposition to the Egyptian idolatry, to which divers of the Israelites had been used, and were still in danger of revolting to again, that the frequent destruction of these creatures might bring such silly deities into contempt. Or,
2. Because these are the fittest representations both of Christ and of true Christians, as being gentle, and harmless, and patient, and useful to men. Or,

3. As the best and most profitable creatures, with which it is fit God should be served, and which we should be ready to part with, when God requires us to do so. Or.
4. As things most common, that men might never want a sacrifice when they needed, or God required it.

3. A burnt sacrifice - Strictly so called, such as was to be all burnt, the skin excepted. For every sacrifice was burnt, more or less. The sacrifices signified that the whole man, in whose stead the sacrifice was offered, was to be entirely offered or devoted to God's service; and that the whole man did deserve to be utterly consumed, if God should deal severely with him; and directed us to serve the Lord with all singleness of heart, and to be ready to offer to God even such sacrifices or services wherein we ourselves should have no part or benefit. A male - As being more perfect than the female, Mal. i, 14, and more truly representing Christ. Without blemish - To signify,

1. That God should be served with the best of every kind.
2. That man, represented by these sacrifices, should aim at all perfection of heart and life, and that Christians should one day attain to it, Eph. v, 27.
3. The spotless and compleat holiness of Christ. Of his own will - According to this translation, the place speaks only of free-will offerings, or such as were not prescribed by God to be offered in course, but were offered by the voluntary devotion of any person, either by way of supplication for any mercy, or by way of thanksgiving for any blessing received. But it may seem improper to restrain the rules here given to free-will offerings, which were to be observed in other offerings also. At the door - In the court near the door, where the altar stood, ver. 5. For here it was to be sacrificed, and here the people might behold the oblation of it. And this farther signified, that men could have no entrance, neither into the earthly tabernacle, the church, nor into the heavenly tabernacle of glory, but by Christ, who is the door, John x, 7, 9, by whom alone we have access to God.

4. He shall put his hand - Both his hands, chap. viii, 14, 18, and chap. xvi, 21. Whereby he signified,

1. that he willingly gave it to the Lord.
2. That he judged himself worthy of that death which it suffered in his stead; and that he laid his sins upon it with an eye to him upon whom God would lay the iniquity of us all, Isaiah liii, 6, and that together with it he did freely offer up himself to God. To make atonement - Sacramentally; as directing his faith and thoughts to that true propitiatory sacrifice which in time was to be offered up for him. And although burnt-offerings were commonly offered by way of thanksgiving; yet they were sometimes offered by way of atonement for sin, that is, for sins in general, as appears from Job i, 5, but for particular sins there were special sacrifices.

5. And he - Either,

1. the offerer, who is said to do it, namely, by the priest; for men are commonly said to do what they cause others to do, as John iv, 1, 2. Or,
2. the priest, as it follows, or the Levite, whose office this was. Shall sprinkle the blood - Which was done in a considerable quantity, and whereby was signified,
   1. That the offerer deserved to have his blood spilt in that manner.

2. That the blood of Christ should be poured forth for sinners, and that this was the only mean of their reconciliation to God, and acceptance with him.

6. Pieces - Namely, the head, and fat, and inwards, and legs, ver. 8, 9.

7. Put fire - Or, dispose the fire, that is, blow it up, and put it together, so as it might be fit for the present work. For the fire there used and allowed came down from heaven, chap. ix, 24, and was to be carefully preserved there, and all other fire was forbidden, chap. x, 1, &c.

8. The fat - All the fat was to be separated from the flesh, and to be put together, to increase the flame, and to consume the other parts of the sacrifice more speedily.

9. But the inwards shall he wash - To signify the universal and perfect purity both of the inwards, or the heart, and of the legs, or ways or actions, which was in Christ, and which should be in all Christians. And he washed not only the parts now mentioned, but all the rest, the trunk of the body, and the shoulders. A sweet savour - Not in itself, for so it rather caused a stink, but as it represented Christ's offering up himself to God as a sweet smelling savour.

11. North-ward - Here this and other kinds of sacrifices were killed, chap. vi, 25, and chap. vii, 2, because here seems to have been the largest and most convenient place for that work, the altar being probably near the middle of the east-end of the building, and the entrance being on the south-side. Besides this might design the place of Christ's death both more generally, in Jerusalem, which was in the sides of the north, Psalm xlviii, 2, and more specially, on mount Calvary, which was on the northwest side of Jerusalem.

14. Turtle-doves - These birds were appointed for the poor who could not bring better. And these birds are preferred before others, partly because they were easily gotten, and partly because they are fit representations of Christ's chastity, and meekness, and gentleness, for which these birds are remarkable. The pigeons must be young, because then they are best; but the turtle-doves are better when they are grown up, and therefore they are not confined to that age.

15. His head - From the rest of the body; as sufficiently appears, because this was to be burnt by itself, and the body afterwards, ver. 17. And whereas it is said chap. v, 8. He shall - wring his head from his neck, but shall not divide it asunder, that is spoken not of the burnt-offering as here, but of the sin-offering.

16. With its feathers - Or, with its dung or filth, contained in the crop and in the guts. On the east - Of the Tabernacle. Here the filth was cast, because this was the remotest place from the holy of holies, which was in the west-end; to teach us, that impure things and persons should not presume to approach to God, and that they should be banished from his presence. The place of the ashes - Where the ashes fell down and lay, whence they were afterwards removed without the camp.

17. He shall cleave the bird through the whole length, yet so as not to separate the one side from the other. A sweet savour unto the Lord - Yet after all, to love God with all our hearts, and to love our neighbour as ourselves, is better than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

## II

Directions concerning the meal-offerings.

I. Of fine flour with oil and frankincense, ver. 1-11.

II. Of the first fruits, ver. 12-16.

1. A meal-offering - (Not meat-offering, an ancient false print, which has run thro' many editions of our bible.) This was of two kinds, the one joined with other offerings, Num. xv, 4, 7, 10, which was prescribed, together with the measure or proportion of it: the other, of which this place speaks, was left to the offerer's good will both for the thing, and for the quantity. And the matter for this offering was things without life, as meal, corn, or cakes. Now this sort of sacrifices were appointed,

1. because these are things of greatest necessity and benefit to man, and therefore it is meet that God should be served with them, and owned and praised as the giver of them.
2. In condescension to the poor, that they might not want an offering for God, and to shew that God would accept even the meanest services, when offered with a sincere mind.
3. These were necessary provisions for the feast which was to be presented to God, and for the use of the priests, who were to attend upon these holy ministrations. He shall pour oil - This may note the graces of the Holy Ghost, which are compared to oil, and anointing with it, Psalm xlv, 7, 1 John ii, 20, and which are necessary to make any offering acceptable to God. Frankincense - Manifestly designed Christ's satisfaction and intercession, which is compared to a sweet odour, Eph. v, 2.

2. He shall take - That priest to whom he brought it, and who is appointed to offer it. The memorial - That part thus selected and offered; which is called a memorial, either

1. to the offerer, who by offering this part is minded, that the whole of that he brought, and of all which he hath of that kind, is God's to whom this part was paid as an acknowledgment. Or
2. to God, whom (to speak after the manner of men) this did put in mind of his gracious covenant and promises of favour, and acceptance of the offerer and his offering. A sweet savour unto the Lord - And so are our spiritual offerings, which are made by the fire of holy love, particularly that of almsgiving. With such sacrifices God is well-pleased.

3. Sons - To be eaten by them, chap. vi, 16. Most holy - Or such as were to be eaten only by the priests, and that only in the holy place near the altar.

4. In the oven - Made in the sanctuary for that use.

6. In pieces - Because part of it was offered to God, and part given to the priests.

11. No leaven - Namely, in that which is offered of free-will; for in other offerings it might be used, chap. vii, xxiii. This was forbidden, partly to mind them of their deliverance out of Egypt, when they were forced thro' haste to bring away their meal or dough (which was the matter of this oblation) unleavened; partly to signify what Christ would be, and what they should be, pure and free from all error in the faith and worship of God, and from all hypocrisy, and malice or wickedness, all which are signified by leaven. Nor any honey - Either,

1. because it hath the same effect with leaven in paste or dough, making it sour, and swelling. Or,
2. in opposition to the sacrifices of the Gentiles, in which the use of honey was most frequent. Or,
3. to teach us, that God's worship is not to be governed by men's fancies and appetites but by God's will.

12. Ye may offer them - Or either of them, leaven or honey. They shall not be burnt - But reserved for the priests.

13. Salt - To signify that incorruption of mind, and sincerity of grace, which in scripture is signified by salt, Mark ix, 49, Colossians iv, 6, and which is necessary in all them that would offer an acceptable offering to God. Or in testimony of that communion which they had with God in these exercises of worship; salt being the great symbol of friendship in all nations is called, either,

1. because it represented the perpetuity of God's covenant with them, which is designed by salt, Num. xviii, 19, 2 Chron. xiii, 5. Or,
2. because it was so particularly required as a condition of their covenant with God; this being made absolutely necessary in all their offerings; and as the neglect of sacrifices was a breach of covenant on their part, so also was the neglect of salt in their sacrifices.

14. First-fruits - Of thine own free-will; for there were other first- fruits, and that of several sorts, which were prescribed, and the time, quality, and proportion of them appointed by God.

16. Made by fire - The fire denotes that fervency of spirit, which ought to be in all our religious services. Holy love is the fire, by which all our offerings must be made: else they are not of a sweet savour to God.

## III

Directions concerning peace-offerings. A bullock or an heifer, ver. 1-5. A lamb, ver. 6-11. A goat, ver. 12-16. No fat or blood to be eaten, ver. 17.

1. A peace-offering - This was an offering for peace and prosperity, and the blessing of God, either,

1. obtained, and so it was a thank-offering, or,
2. desired; and so it was a kind of supplication to God. A female - Which were allowed here, tho' not in burnt-offerings, because those principally respected the honour of God, who is to be served with the best; but the peace-offerings did primarily respect the benefit of the offerer, and therefore the choice was left to himself. Burnt-offerings had regard to God, as in himself the best of beings, and therefore were wholly burned. But peace-offerings had regard to God as a benefactor to his creatures, and therefore were divided between the altar, the priest, and the offerer.

2. At the door - Not on the north-side of the altar, where the burnt- offering was killed, as also the sin-offering, and the trespass- offering, but in the very entrance of the court where the brazen altar stood, which place was not so holy as the other; as appears both because it was more remote from the holy of holies, and because the ashes of the sacrifices were to be laid here. And the reason of this difference is not obscure, both because part of this sacrifice was to be waved by the hands of the offerer, chap. vii, 30, who might not come into the court; and because this offering was not

so holy as the others, which were to be eaten only by the priest, whereas part of these were eaten by the offerer.

5. Upon the burnt sacrifice - Either,

1. Upon the remainders of it, which were yet burning; or rather,
2. After it; for the daily burnt-offering was first to be offered, both as more eminently respecting God's honour; and as the most solemn and stated sacrifice, which should take place of all occasional oblations, and as a sacrifice of an higher nature, being for atonement, without which no peace could be obtained, nor peace offering offered with acceptance.

9. The rump - Which in sheep is fat, and sweet, and in these parts was very much larger and better than ours.

11. Burnt it - The parts now mentioned; the rest fell to the priest, chap. vii, 31. The food - That is, the fuel of the fire, or the matter of the offering. It is called food, Hebrew. bread, to note God's acceptance of it, and delight in it; as men delight in their food.

16. Shall burn them - The parts mentioned, among which the tail is not one, as it was in the sheep. because that in goats is a refuse part. All the fat - This is to be limited,

1. To those beasts, which were offered or offerable in sacrifice, as it is explained, chap. vii, 23, 25.
2. To that kind of fat which is above-mentioned, and required to be offered, which was separated, or easily separable from the flesh for the fat which was here and there mixed with the flesh they might eat.

17. All your dwellings - Not only at or near the tabernacle, not only of those beasts which you actually sacrifice, but also in your several dwellings, and of all that kind of beasts. Fat - Was forbidden,

1. To preserve the reverence of the holy rites and sacrifices.
2. That they might be taught hereby to acknowledge God as their Lord, and the Lord of all the creatures, who might reserve what he pleased to himself.
3. To exercise them in obedience to God, and self-denial and mortification of their appetites, even in those things which probably many of them would much desire. Blood - Was forbidden partly to maintain reverence to God and his worship; partly out of opposition to idolaters, who used to drink the blood of their sacrifices; partly with respect to Christ's Blood, thereby manifestly signified. God would not permit the very shadows of this to be used as a common thing. Nor will he allow us, tho' we have the comfort of the atonement made, to assume to ourselves any share in the honour of making it.

## IV

Directions concerning sin-offerings; which were intended for sins committed thro' ignorance, either by the priest himself, ver. 1-12. or by the whole congregation, ver. 13-21. or by a ruler, ver. 22-26. or by a private person, ver. 27-35.

1. The Lord spake unto Moses - The laws contained in the three first chapters, seem to have been delivered to Moses at one time. Here begin the laws of another day, which God delivered from between the Cherubim.

2. If a soul sin - This must necessarily be understood of more than common daily infirmities; for if every such sin had required an offering, it had not been possible either for most sinners to bear such a charge, or for the altar to receive so many sacrifices, or for the priests to manage so infinite a work. And for ordinary sins, they were ceremonially expiated by the daily offering, and by that on the great day of atonement, chap. xvi, 30. Through ignorance - Or, error, either not knowing his act to be sinful, as appears by comparing ver. 13, 14, or not considering it, but falling into sin thro' the power of some sudden passion or temptation, as the Hebrew word signifies, Psalm 1xix, 67. Things which ought not to be done - The words may be rendered, in or about every, or any of the commandments of the Lord which should not be done; or, which concern things that should not be done, namely, in any negative commands. (And there is great reason why a sacrifice should be more necessary for these, than for other sins, because affirmative precepts do not so strictly and constantly bind men as the negative do.) Then he shall offer according to his quality, which is here to be understood out of the following verses.

3. If the priest - That is, the high-priest, who only was anointed after the first time. His anointing is mentioned, because he was not compleat high-priest 'till he was anointed. Do sin - Either in doctrine or practice, which it is here supposed he may do. And this is noted as a character of imperfection in the priesthood of the law, whereby the Israelites were directed to expect another and better high-priest, even one who is holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, Heb. vii, 26. According to the sin of the people - In the same manner as any of the people do; which implies that God expected more circumspection from him, than from the people. But the words may be rendered, to the sin or guilt of the people, which may be mentioned as an aggrevation of his sin, that by it he commonly brings sin, and guilt, and punishment upon the people, who are infected or scandalized by his example. A young bullock - The same sacrifice which was offered for all the people, to shew how much his sin was aggravated by his quality. Sin-offering - Hebrew. sin, which word is oft taken in that sense.

4. On the head - To testify both his acknowledgment of his sin, and faith in God's promise for the expiation of his sins through Christ, whom that sacrifice typified. Kill the bullock - By one of the priests, whom he should cause to do it.

5. To the tabernacle - Into the tabernacle; which was not required nor allowed in any other sacrifice, possibly to shew the greatness of the high-priest's sin, which needed more than ordinary diligence in him, and favour from God to expiate it.

6. Seven times - A number much used in scripture, as a number of perfection; and here prescribed, either to shew that his sins needed more then ordinary purgation, and more exercise of his faith and repentance, both which graces he was obliged to join with that ceremonial rite. Before the veil - The second veil dividing between the holy of holies, which is generally called the veil of the sanctuary.

7. All the blood - All the rest; for part was disposed elsewhere.

12. The whole bullock - So no part of this was to be eaten by the priests, as it was in other sin-offerings. The reason is plain, because the offerer might not eat of his own sin-offering, and the priest was the offerer in this case, as also in the sin-offering for the whole congregation below, of which the priest himself was a member. Shall be carried forth - Not himself, which would have

defiled him, but by another whom he shall appoint for that work. Without the camp - To signify either,

1. The abominable nature of sin, especially in high and holy persons, or when it overspreads a whole people. Or,
2. The removing of the guilt or punishment of that sin from the people. Or,
3. That Christ should suffer without the camp or gate. Where the ashes are - For the ashes, though at first they were thrown down near the altar, chap. i, 16, yet afterwards they, together with the filth of the sacrifices, were carried into a certain place without the camp.

13. The whole congregation - The body of the people, or the greater part of them, their rulers concurring with them.

14. A bullock - But if the sin of the congregation was only the omission of some ceremonial duty, a kid of the goats was to be offered, Num. xv, 24.

15. The elders - Who here acted in the name of all the people, who could not possibly perform this act in their own persons.

17. And sprinkle it - It was not to be poured out there, but sprinkled only; for the cleansing virtue of the blood of Christ was sufficiently represented by sprinkling. It was sprinkled seven times: seven is a number of perfection; because God made the world in six days, and rested the seventh. This signified the perfect satisfaction Christ made, and the compleat cleansing of our souls thereby.

18. The altar - Of incense: Which is before the Lord - That is, before the holy of holies, where the Lord was in a more special manner present.

20. For a sin-offering - That is, for the priest's sin-offering, called the first bullock, ver. 21.

24. The burnt-offering - So called by way of eminency, to wit, the daily burnt-offering. It is a sin-offering - And therefore to be killed where the burnt-offering is killed; whereby it is distinguished from the peace-offering, which were killed elsewhere.

26. It shall be forgiven - Both judicially, as to all ecclesiastical censures or civil punishment; and really, upon condition of repentance and faith in the Messiah to come.

28. A female - Which here was sufficient, because the sin of one of those was less than the sin of the ruler, for whom a male was required.

33. He shall slay it - Not by himself, but by the hands of the priest.

35. Burn them - The fat; but he useth the plural number, because the fat was of several kinds, as we saw ver. 8, 9. upon the offerings, together with them, or after them; because the burnt-offerings were to have the first place.

## V

Directions concerning trespass-offerings. Both this and the sin- offering were intended to make atonement for sin, but the former was more general: The latter was to be offered only in some particular cases. If a man sinned, By hearing and concealing blasphemy, ver. 1. By touching an unclean thing, ver. 2, 3.By swearing, ver. 4. He was to offer a lamb or kid, ver. 5, 6. Or two young pigeons, ver. 7-10. Or fine flour, ver. 11-13. Or a ram, if he had embezzled holy things, ver. 14-19.

1. And hear - And for that is, as that particle is often used. For this declares in particular what the sin was. Or, namely, that of cursing, or blasphemy, or execration, as the word commonly signifies, and that either against one's neighbour, or against God. This may seem to be principally intended here, because the crime spoken of is of so high a nature, that he who heard it, was obliged to reveal it, and prosecute the guilty. He hath seen - Been present when it was said. Or known - By sufficient information from others. His iniquity - That is, the punishment of it; so that word is oft used, as Gen. xix, 15, Num. xviii, 1.

2. If it be hidden from him - If he do it unawares, yet that would not excuse him, because he should have been more circumspect to avoid all unclean things. Hereby God designed to awaken men to watchfulness against, and repentance for, their unknown, or unobserved sins. He shall be clean - Not morally, for the conscience was not directly polluted by these things, but ceremonially.

3. When he knoweth - As soon as he knoweth it, he must not delay to make his peace with God. Otherwise he shall be guilty - For his violation and contempt of God's authority and command.

4. If a soul swear - Rashly, without consideration either of God's law, or his own power or right, as David did, 1 Sam. xxv, 22. To do evil - To himself, to punish himself either in his body, or estate, or something else which is dear to him. Or rather to his neighbour. And it be hid from him - That is, he did not know, or not consider, that what he swore to do, was or would be impossible, or unlawful: When he discovers it to be so, either by his own consideration, or by information from others, whether it was good or evil which he swore to do.

5. In one of these things - In one of the three forementioned cases, either by sinful silence, or by an unclean touch, or by rash swearing. He shall confess - Before the Lord in the place of public worship. And this confession is not to be restrained to the present case, but by a parity of reason, and comparing of other scriptures, to be extended to other sacrifices for sin, to which this was a constant companion.

6. His trespass-offering - But how comes confession and a sacrifice to be necessary for him that touched an unclean thing, when such persons were cleansed with simple washing, as appears from chap. xi, 25, 28, 32, 40, 43, and Num. xix, 7, 8, 10, 19? This place speaks of him that being so unclean did come into the tabernacle, as may be gathered by comparing this place with Num. xix, 13, which if any man did, knowing himself to be unclean, which was the case there, he was to be cut off for it; and if he did it ignorantly, which is the case here, he was upon discovery of it to offer this sacrifice.

7. Not able - Through poverty. And this exception was allowed also in other sin-offerings. For a sin-offering - Which was for that particular sin, and therefore offered first: before the burnt-offering, which was for sins in general; to teach us not to rest in general confessions and repentance, but distinctly and particularly, as far as we can, to search out, and confess, and loath, and leave our particular sins, without which God will not accept our other religious services.

9. It is a sin-offering - This is added as the reason why its blood was so sprinkled and spilt.

10. According to the manner - Or order appointed by God. The priest shall make an atonement - Either declaratively, he shall pronounce him to be pardoned; or typically, with respect to Christ.

11. The tenth part of an ephah - About six pints. He shall put no oil, neither frankincense - Either to distinguish these from the meal-offerings, chap. ii, 1, or as a fit expression of their sorrow for their sins, in the sense whereof they were to abstain from things pleasant; or to signify that by his sins he deserved to be utterly deprived both of the oil of gladness, the gifts, graces and comforts

of the Holy Ghost; and of God's gracious acceptance of his prayers and sacrifices, which is signified by incense, Psalm 1xli, 2.

13. As a meal offering - As it was in the meal-offering, where all, except one handful, fell to the share of the priests. And this is the rather mentioned here, because in the foregoing sacrifices, chap. iv, 3, &c. chap. iv, 13, &c. the priest had no part reserved for him.

15. A trespass - Against the Lord and his priests. Through ignorance - For if a man did it knowingly, he was to be cut off, Num. xv, 30. In the holy things - In things consecrated to God, and to holy uses; such as tithes and first-fruits, or any things due, or devoted to God, which possibly a man might either with-hold, or employ to some common use. A ram - A more chargeable sacrifice than the former, as the sin of sacrilege was greater. With thy estimation - As thou shalt esteem or rate it, thou, O priest; and at present, thou, O Moses, for he as yet performed the priest's part. And this was an additional charge and punishment to him; besides the ram, he was to pay for the holy thing which he had with-held or abused, so many shekels of silver as the priest should esteem proportionable to it.

17. The former law concerns the alienation of holy things from sacred to common use; this may concern other miscarriages about holy things, and holy duties, as may be gathered from ver. 19, where this is said to be a trespass against the Lord, not in a general sense, for so every sin was; but in a proper and peculiar sense.

## VI

Further directions concerning trespass-offerings, ver. 1-7. Concerning the burnt-offerings, ver. 8-13. Concerning the meal- offerings, ver. 14-18. Particularly that at the consecration of the priests, ver. 19-23. Concerning the sin-offering, ver. 24-30.

2. If a soul sin - This sin, though directly committed against man, is emphatically said to be done against the Lord, not only in general, for so every sin against man is also against the Lord, but in a special sense, because this was a violation of human society, whereof God is the author, and president, and defender: and because it was a secret sin, of which God alone was the witness and judge: and because God's name was abused in it by perjury. To keep - In trust. Or in fellowship - Hebrew. Or in putting of the hand: that is, commerce or fellowship in trading, which is very usual when one man puts any thing into another's hand, not to keep it, but to improve it for the common benefit of them both, in which cases of partnership it is easy for one to deceive the other, and therefore provision is made against it. And this is called a putting of the hand, because such agreements used to be confirmed by giving or joining their hands together. By violence - Secretly; for he seems to speak here of such sins as could not be proved by witness. Or hath deceived - Got any thing from him by calumny, or fraud, or circumvention; so the word signifies.

3. Swear falsely - His oath being required, seeing there was no other way of discovery left.

4. Is guilty - This guilt being manifested by his voluntary confession upon remorse, whereby he reapeth this benefit, that he only restores the principal with the addition of a fifth part; whereas if he were convicted of his fault, he was to pay double, Exod. xxii, 9.

5. In the day - It must not be delayed, but restitution to man must accompany repentance towards God. Wherever wrong has been done, restitution must be made, and till it is made to the utmost of our power we cannot look for forgiveness; for the keeping of what is unjustly got, avows the taking: And both together make but one continued act of unrighteousness.

9. And the Lord spake - Hitherto he hath prescribed the sacrifices themselves; now he comes to the manner of them. The burnt- offering - The daily one, which Exod. xxix, 38, Num. xxviii, 3, as the following words shew. This was to be so managed and laid on piece after piece, that the fire might be constantly maintained by it. The morning burnt-offerings were to be kept burning all the day from morning to night also; but he mentions not that, because there was such a constant succession of sacrifices in the day-time that there needed no law for feeding and keeping in the fire then; the only danger was for the night, when other sacrifices were not offered, but only the evening burnt-offering, which if it had been consumed quickly, as the morning burnt-offering was, there had been danger of the going out of that fire, which they were commanded diligently and constantly to keep in.

10. The ashes which the fire hath consumed - That is, the wood consumed into ashes.

11. Other garments - Because this was no sacred, but a common work. A clean place - Where no dung or filth was laid. The priest himself was to do all this. God's servants must think nothing below them but sin.

12. It shall not be put out - The fire coming down from heaven, was to be perpetually preserved, and not suffered to go out, partly that there might be no occasion or temptation to offer strange fire; and partly to teach them whence they were to expect the acceptance of all their sacrifices, even from the divine mercy, signified by the fire that came down from heaven which was an usual token of God's favourable acceptance. Every morning - Though the evening also be doubtless intended, yet the morning is only mentioned, because then the altar was cleansed, and the ashes taken away, and a new fire made. Thereon - Upon the burnt- offering, which thereby would be sooner consumed, that the way might be made for other sacrifices.

13. Thus should we keep the fire of holy love ever burning in our hearts.

14. Of the meal-offering - Of that which was offered alone, and that by any of the people, not by the priest, for then it must have been all burnt. This law before delivered, is here repeated for the sake of some additions made to it.

16. His sons - The males only might eat these, because they were most holy things; whereas the daughters of Aaron might eat other holy things. In the court - In some special room appointed for that purpose. The reason why this was to be eaten only by holy persons, and that in an holy place, is given ver. 17, because it is most holy.

17. It - That part which remains to the priest; for the part offered to God seems not to have been baked at all.

18. Every one - That is, none should touch, or eat them, but consecrated persons, priests, or their sons.

20. When he is anointed - For high-priest for he only of all the priests was to be anointed in future ages. This law of his consecration was delivered before, and is here repeated because of some additions made to it. Perpetual - Whensoever any of them shall be so anointed. At night - Or, in the evening; the one to be annexed to the morning-sacrifice, the other to the evening- sacrifice, over and besides that meal-offering which every day was to be added to the daily morning and evening sacrifices.

21. Thou - Who art so anointed and consecrated.

23. It shall not be eaten - No part of it shall be eaten by the priest, as it was when the offering was for the people. The reason of the difference is, partly because when he offered it for the people, he was to have some recompence for his pains; partly to signify the imperfection of the Levitical priest, who could not bear their own iniquity; for the priest's eating part of the people's sacrifices did signify his typical bearing of the people's iniquity; and partly to teach the priests and ministers of God, that it is their duty to serve God with singleness of heart, and to be content with God's honour though they have no present advantage by it.

26. For sin - For the sins of the rulers, or of the people, or any of them, but not for the sins of the priests; for then its blood was brought into the tabernacle, and therefore it might not be eaten.

27. Upon any garment - Upon the priest's garment; for it was he only that sprinkled it, and in so doing he might easily sprinkle his garments. In the holy place - Partly out of reverence to the blood of sacrifices, which hereby was kept from a profane or common touch; and partly that such garments might be decent, and fit for sacred administrations.

28. Broken - Because being full of pores, the liquor in which it was sodden might easily sink into it, whereby it was ceremonially holy, and therefore was broken, lest afterwards it should be abused to common uses. Rinsed - And not broken, as being of considerable value, which therefore God would not have unnecessarily wasted. And this being of a more solid substance than an earthen vessel, was not so apt to drink in the moisture.

## VII

Further directions, concerning the trespass-offering, ver. 1-7. The burnt-offering and meal-offering, ver. 8-10. The peace- offering, ver. 11-21. Fat and blood again forbidden, ver. 22-27. The priest's share of it, ver. 28-34. The conclusion of these instructions, ver. 35-38.

7. So is - In the matter following, for in other things they differed. The priests shall have it - That part of it, which was by God allowed to the priest.

9. All the meal-offering - Except the part reserved by God, chap. ii, 2, 9. Because these were ready drest and hot, and to be presently eaten; shall be the priests - The priest, who offered it, was in reason to expect, something more than his brethren who laboured not about it; and that he had only in this offering; for the others were equally distributed.

10. Dry - Without oil, or drink-offering, as those chap. v, 11, Num. v, 15. All the sons of Aaron - These were to be equally divided among all the priests. And there was manifest reason for this difference, because these were in greater quantity than the former; and being raw, might more easily be reserved for the several priests to dress it in that way which each of them liked.

13. Leavened bread - Because this was a sacrifice of another kind than those in which leaven was forbidden, this being a sacrifice of thanksgiving for God's blessings, among which leavened bread was one. Leaven indeed was universally forbidden, chap. ii, 11. But that prohibition concerned only things offered and burnt upon the altar, which this bread was not.

14. Of it - That is, of the offering, one of each part of the whole: it being most agreeable to the rules laid down before and afterward, that the priest should have a share in the unleavened cakes and wafers, as well as in the leavened bread.

16. A vow - Offered in performance of a vow, the man having desired some special favour from God, and vowed the sacrifice to God if he would grant it. On the morrow also - Which was not allowed for the thank-offering.

18. Neither shall it be imputed - For an acceptable service to God.

19. And the flesh - Namely of the holy offering, of which he is here treating; and therefore the general word is to be so limited; for other flesh one might eat in this case. That toucheth - After its oblation; which might easily happen, as it was conveyed from the altar to the place where it was eaten: for it was not eaten in the holy place, as appears, because it was eaten by the priests, together with the offerers, who might not come thither. The flesh - That is, the other flesh; that which shall not be polluted by any unclean touch. All that are clean - Whether priests or offerers, or guests invited to the feast.

20. That eateth - Knowingly; for if it were done ignorantly, a sacrifice was accepted for it. Not being cleansed from his uncleanness according to the appointment, chap. xi, 24, &c. This verse speaks of uncleanness from an internal cause, as by an issue, &c. for what was from an external cause is spoken of in the next verse.

21. Of man - Or, of women, for the word signifies both.

23. The general prohibition of eating fat, chap. iii, 17, is here explained of those kind of creatures which were sacrificed. The fat of others they might eat.

24. He speaks still of the same kinds of beasts, and shews that this prohibition reaches not only to the fat of those beasts which were offered to God, but also of those that died, or were killed at home. And if this seems a superfluous prohibition, since the lean as well as the fat of such beasts were forbidden, chap. xxii, 8, it must be noted, that prohibition reached only to the priests, ver. 4.

29. Shall bring - Not by another, but by himself, that is, those parts of the peace-offering, which are in a special manner offered to God. His oblation unto the Lord - That is, to the tabernacle, where the Lord was present in a special manner. Though part of such offerings might be eaten in any clean place, chap. x, 14, yet not till they had been killed, and part of them offered to the Lord in the place appointed by him for that purpose.

30. His own hands - After the beast was killed, and the parts of it divided, the priest was to put the parts mentioned into the hands of the offerer. Offerings made by fire - So called, not strictly, as burnt-offerings are, because some parts of these were left for the priest, but more largely, because even these peace-offerings were in part, tho' not wholly, burnt. Waved - To and fro, by his hands, which were supported and directed by the hands of the priest.

31. His sons - The portion of every succeeding high-priest and his family.

34. The wave-breast and heave-shoulder - The breast or heart is the seat of wisdom, and the shoulder of strength for action; and these two may denote that wisdom, and power, which were in Christ our high-priest, and which ought to be in every priest.

35. Of the anointing of Aaron - That is, of the priesthood; the sign put for the thing signified; and the anointing by a like figure is put for the part of the sacrifices belonging to the priest by virtue of his anointing. This was their portion appointed them by God in that day, and therefore to be given to them in after ages.

37. Of the consecrations - That is, of the sacrifice offered at the consecration of the priests.

## VIII

This chapter gives an account of the consecration of Aaron and his sins before the congregation, Moses washes and dresses them, ver. 1-9. Anoints the tabernacle with its utensils, and Aaron, ver. 10-12. Clothes his sons, ver. 13. Offers for them a sin- offering, ver. 14-17. A burnt-offering, ver. 18-21. The ram of consecration, ver. 22-30. Declares to them God's charge, which they perform, ver. 31-36.

3. All the congregation - The elders who represented all, and as many of the people as would, and could get thither, that all might be witnesses both of Aaron's commission from God, and of his work and business.

12. He poured - In a plentiful manner, as appears from Psalm 1xxxiii, 2, whereas other persons and things were only sprinkled with it: because his unction was to typify the anointing of Christ with the Spirit, which was not given by measure to him. A measure of the same anointing is given to all believers.

14. The bullock - There were indeed seven bullocks to be offered at his consecration, one every day; but here he mentions only one, because he here describes only the work of the first day.

17. His hide - Which in the offerings for the people was not burnt, but given to the priest.

18. He brought the ram - Hereby they gave to God the glory of this great honour which was put upon them: and also signified the devoting themselves and all their service to God.

19. He - Either Moses, as in the following clause, or some other person by his appointment; which may be the reason why he is not named here, as he is to the sprinkling of the blood, which was an action more proper to the priest, and more essential to the sacrifice.

29. Moses's part - Who at this time administering the priest's office was to receive the priest's wages.

31. The flesh - That which was left of the ram, and particularly the breast, which was said to be Moses's part, ver. 29, and by him was given to Aaron, that he and his sons might eat of it, in token that they and only they should have the right to do so for the future.

33. Seven days - In each of which the same ceremonies were to be repeated, and other rites to be performed. He - Either God or Moses; for the words may be spoken by Moses, either in God's name or in his own; Moses speaking of himself in the third person, which is very common in scripture.

36. So Aaron and his sons did all things - And thus the covenant of life and peace, Mal. ii, 5, was made with them. But after all the ceremonies used in their consecration, one point was reserved for the honour of Christ's priesthood. They were made priests without an oath; but Christ with an oath, Heb. vii, 21. For neither these priests, nor their priesthood was to continue. But His is a perpetual and unchangeable priesthood.

## IX

Moses appoints Aaron to offer various sacrifices, ver. 1-7. Aaron offers for himself, ver. 8-14. Offers for, and blesses the people, ver. 15-22. God signifies his acceptance of their persons and of their sacrifices, ver. 23-24.

1. On the eighth day - Namely, from the day of his consecration, or when the seven days of his consecration were ended. The eighth day is famous in scripture for the perfecting and purifying both of men and beasts. See chap. xii, 2, 3; xiv, 8, 9, 10; xv, 13, 14; xxii, 27. And the elders of Israel - All the congregation were called to be witnesses of Aaron's installment into his office, to prevent their murmurings and contempt; which being done, the elders were now sufficient to be witnesses of his first execution of his office.

2. For a sin-offering - For himself and his own sins, which was an evidence of the imperfection of that priesthood, and of the necessity of a better. The Jewish writers suggest, that a calf was appointed, to remind him of his sin in making the golden calf. Thereby he had rendered himself for ever unworthy of the honour of the priesthood: on which he had reason to reflect with sorrow and shame, in all the atonements he made.

3. A sin-offering - For the people, for whose sin a young bullock was required, chap. iv, 15, but that was for some particular sin; this was more general for all their sins. Besides, there being an eye here to the priest's consecration and entrance into his office, it is no wonder if there be some difference in these Sacrifices from those before prescribed.

4. The Lord will appear - Hebrew. Hath appeared. He speaks of the thing to come as if it were past, which is frequent in scripture, to give them the more assurance of the thing.

5. Before the tabernacle where God dwelt.

6. The glory of the Lord - The glorious manifestation of God's powerful and gracious presence.

7. Go and offer - Moses had hitherto sacrificed, but now he resigns his work to Aaron, and actually gives him that commission which from God he had received for him. For thyself and for the people - The order is very observable, first for thyself, otherwise thou art unfit to do it for the people. Hereby God would teach us, both the deficiency of this priesthood, and how important it is that God's ministers should be in the favour of God themselves, that their ministrations may be acceptable to God, and profitable to the people.

9. The altar - Of burnt-offering, of which alone he speaks both in the foregoing and following words; and the blood was poured out at the bottom of this altar only, not of the altar of incense, as appears from chap. iv, 7, where indeed there is mention of putting some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of incense, in this case of the priest's sacrificing for his own sins. But there seems to be a double difference,

1. That sacrifice was offered for some particular sin, this for his sins indefinitely.
2. There he is supposed to be compleat in his office, and here he is but entering into his office, and therefore must prepare and sanctify himself by this offering upon the brazen altar in the court, before he can be admitted into the holy place where the altar of incense was. And the like is to be said for the difference between the sin-offering for the people here, and chap. iv, 17, 18.

10. He burnt it - By ordinary fire, which was used until the fire came down from heaven, ver. 24, though afterwards it was forbidden. And if it had not been allowed otherwise, yet this being

done by Aaron at the command of Moses, and consequently with God's approbation, it was unquestionably lawful. Add to this, that there is nothing said to be consumed by that heavenly fire, but the burnt-offering with the fat belonging to it, namely, that burnt- offering mentioned ver. 16, which therefore is not there said to be burnt, as it is said of the other burnt-offering, ver. 13, and of the rest of the sacrifices in their places.

16. The burnt-offering - Which also was offered for the people, as the last mentioned sin-offering was.

17. Besides the burnt-sacrifice - Which was to be first offered every morning; for God will not have his ordinary and stated service swallowed up by extraordinary.

19. That - Fat. Which covereth the inwards - Or the Guts.

22. Aaron lifted up his hands - Which was the usual rite of blessing. By this posture he signified both whence he expected the blessing, and his hearty desire of it for them. And blessed them - In some such manner, as is related, Num. vi, 24, &c. though not in the same form, for it is not probable that he used it before God delivered it And this blessing was an act of his priestly office, no less than sacrificing. And herein be was a type of Christ, who came into the world to bless us, and when he was parting from his disciples, lifted up his hands and blessed them: yea, and in them his whole church, of which they were the elders and representatives. And came down - From the altar; whence he is said to come down, either

1. Because the altar stood upon raised ground, or
2. Because it was nearer the holy place, which was the upper end.

23. And Moses - Went in with Aaron to direct him, and to see him perform those parts of his office which were to be done in the holy place, about the lights, and the table of shew-bread, and the altar of incense, upon which part of the blood of the sacrifices now offered was to be sprinkled, chap. iv, 7, 16. And blessed the people - Prayed to God for his blessing upon them, as this phrase is explained, Num. vi, 23, &c. and particularly for his gracious acceptation of these and all succeeding sacrifices, and for his signification thereof by some extraordinary token. And the glory of the Lord - Either a miraculous brightness shining from the cloudy pillar, as Exod. xvi, 10, or a glorious and visible discovery of God's gracious presence and acceptance of the present service.

24. And there came a fire - In token of God's approbation of the priesthood now instituted, and the sacrifices offered, and consequently of others of the like nature. And this fire now given was to be carefully kept, and not suffered to go out, chap. vi, 13, and therefore was carried in a peculiar vessel in their journeys in the wilderness. From before the Lord - Or, from the presence of the Lord, that is, from the place where God was in a special manner present, either from heaven or from the holy of holies. They shouted - As wondering at, rejoicing in, and blessing God for this gracious discovery of himself, and his favour. This also was a figure of good things to come. Thus the Spirit descended in fire upon the apostles, so ratifying their commission, as this does that of the priests. And the descent of this holy fire into our souls, to kindle in them devout affections, and such an holy zeal as burns up all unholiness, is a certain token of God's gracious acceptance.

## X

The death of Nadab and Abihu, and quieting of Aaron, ver. 1-3. Orders given to bury them, and not to mourn, ver. 4-7. A command not to drink wine or strong drink, and to distinguish between holy and unholy, ver. 8-11. Directions concerning the parts of the burnt-offerings which were to be eaten, ver. 12-15. Moses reproves the priests, but is pacified by Aaron, ver. 16-20.

1. Strange fire - Fire so called, because not taken from the altar, as it ought, but from some common fire. Before the Lord - Upon the altar of incense. Which he commanded not - Not commanding may be here put for forbidding, as it is, Jer. xxxii, 35. Now as this was forbidden implicitly; chap. vi, 12, especially when God himself made a comment upon that text, and by sending fire from heaven declared of what fire he there spake; so it is more than probable it was forbidden expressly, though that be not here mentioned, nor was it necessary it should be.

2. From the Lord - From heaven, or rather from the sanctuary. Devoured them - Destroyed their lives; for their bodies and garments were not consumed. Thus the sword is said to devour, 2 Sam. ii, 26. Thus lightning many times kill persons, without any hurt to their garments.

3. The Lord spake - Though the words be not recorded in scripture, where only the heads of discourses are contained, yet it is probable they were uttered by Moses in God's name. Howsoever the sense of them is in many places. I will be sanctified - This may note, either,

1. their duty to sanctify God, to demean themselves with such care, and reverence, and watchfulness, as becomes the holiness of the God whom they serve; whence he leaves them to gather the justice of the present judgment. Or,
2. God's purpose to sanctify himself, to manifest himself to be an holy and righteous God by his severe and impartial punishment of all transgressors, how near soever they are to him. That come nigh me - Who draw near to me, or to the place where I dwell, and are admitted into the holy place, whence others are shut out. It is a description of the priests. I will be glorified - As they have sinned publickly and scandalously, so I will vindicate my honour in a public and exemplary manner, that all men may learn to give me the glory of my holiness by an exact conformity to my laws. And Aaron held his peace - In acknowledgment of God's justice and submission to it. He murmured not, nor replied against God.

4. Moses called Mishael - For Aaron and his sons were employed in their holy ministrations, from which they were not called for funeral solemnities. Brethren - That is, kinsmen, as that word is oft used. Out of the camp - Where the burying-places of the Jews were, that the living might neither be annoyed by the unwholesome scent of the dead, nor defiled by the touch of their graves.

5. In their coats - In the holy garments wherein they ministered; which might be done, either,

1. as a testimony of respect due to them, notwithstanding their present failure; and that God in judgment remembered mercy, and when he took away their lives, spared their souls. Or,
2. because being polluted both by their sin, and by the touch of their dead bodies, God would not have them any more used in his service.

6. Uncover not your head - That is, give no signification of your sorrow; mourn not for them; partly lest you should seem to justify your brethren, and tacitly reflect upon God as too severe; and partly lest thereby you should be diverted from, or disturbed in your present service, which God

expects to be done chearfully. But bewail the burning - Not so much in compassion to them, as in sorrow for the tokens of divine displeasure.

7. Ye shall not go from the tabernacle - Where at this time they were, because this happened within seven days of their consecration. The oil of the Lord is upon you - You are persons consecrated peculiarly to God's service, which therefore it is just you should prefer before all funeral solemnities.

9. Drink not wine - it is not improbable, that the sin of Nadab and Abihu was owing to this very thing. But if not, yet drunkenness is so odious a sin in itself, especially in a minister, and most of all in the time of his administration of sacred things, that God saw fit to prevent all occasions of it. And hence the devil, who is God's ape, required this abstinence from his priests in their idolatrous service.

10. Between holy and unholy - Persons and things, which Nadab and Abihu did not.

11. Ye may teach - Which drunken persons are very unfit to do.

12. Eat it - Moses repeats the command, partly lest their grief should cause them to neglect their meat prescribed by God, (which abstinence would have been both a signification of their sorrow which God had forbidden them, and a new transgression of a divine precept;) and partly to encourage them to go on in their holy services, and not to be dejected, as if God would no more accept them or their sacrifices.

13. In the holy place - in the court, near the altar of burnt- offerings.

14. In a clean place - In any of your dwellings, or any place in the camp, which was kept clean from all ceremonial defilement. In any place where the women as well as the men might come, for the daughters of the priest might eat these as well as their sons, if they were maids, or widows, or divorced, chap. xxii, 11-13.

16. He was angry with Eleazar - He spares Aaron at this time, as overwhelmed with sorrow, and because the rebuking him before his sons might have exposed him to some contempt; but he knew that the reproof though directed to them, would concern him too. Who were left alive - And therefore ought to have taken warning.

17. God hath given it to you - As a reward of your service, whereby you expiate, bear, and take away their sins, by offering those sacrifices, by which God through Christ is reconciled to the penitent and believing offerers.

18. The blood was not brought in - Because Aaron was not yet admitted into the holy place, whither that blood should have been brought, 'till he had prepared the way by the sacrifices which were to be offered in the court.

19. They have offered - They have done the substance of the thing, though they have mistaken this one circumstance. Such things - Whereby, haying been oppressed with grief, it is not strange nor unpardonable if I have mistaked. Should it have been accepted - Because it was not to be eaten with sorrow, but with rejoicing and thanksgiving.

20. He rested satisfied with his answer. it appeared, that Aaron sincerely aimed at pleasing God: and those who do so, will find he is not extreme to mark what is done amiss.

## XI

Of clean and unclean beasts, ver. 1-8. Fishes, ver. 9-12. Fowls, ver. 13-19. Creeping things whether flying, ver. 20-28. or creeping upon the earth, ver. 29-43. An exhortation to holiness, ver. 44, 45. The conclusion, ver. 46, 47.

1. From the laws concerning the priests, he now comes to those which belong to all the people. God spake to both of them, because the cognizance of the following matters belonged to both: the priest was to direct the people about the things forbidden or allowed, where any doubt or difficulty arose; and the magistrate was to see the direction followed.

2. These are the beasts - Though every creature of God be good and pure in itself, yet it pleased God to make a difference between clean and unclean, which he did in part before the flood, Gen. vii, 2, but more fully here for many reasons; as,

1. To assert his own sovereignty over man, and all the creatures which men may not use but with God's leave.
2. To keep up the wall of partition between the Jews and other nations, which was very necessary for many great and wise purposes.
3. That by bridling their appetite in things in themselves lawful, and some of them very desirable, they might be better prepared and enabled to deny themselves in things simply and grossly sinful.
4. For the preservation of their health, some of the creatures forbidden being, though used by the neighbouring nations, of unwholesome nourishment, especially to the Jews, who were very obnoxious to leprosies. To teach them to abhor that filthiness, and all those ill qualities for which some of these creatures are noted.

3. Cloven-footed - That is, divided into two parts only: This clause is added to explain and limit the former, as appears from ver. 26, for the feet of dogs, cats &c. are parted or cloven into many parts. And cheweth the cud - Hebrew. and bringeth up the cud, that is, the meat once chewed, out of the stomach in the mouth again, that it may be chewed a second time for better concoction. And this branch is to be joined with the former, both properties being necessary for the allowed beasts. But the reason hereof must be resolved into the will of the law-giver; though interpreters guess that God would hereby signify their duties, by the first, that of discerning between good and evil; and by the latter, that duty of recalling God's word to our minds and meditating upon it.

4. The camel - An usual food in Arabia, but yielding bad nourishment. Divideth not the hoof - So as to have his foot cloven in two, which being expressed, ver. 3, is here to be understood. Otherwise the camel's hoof is divided, but it is but a small and imperfect division.

5. As for the names of the following creatures, seeing the Jews themselves are uncertain and divided about them, it seems improper to trouble the unlearned readers with disputes about them.

8. Ye shall not touch - Not in order to eating, as may be gathered by comparing this with Gen. iii, 3. But since the fat and skins of some of the forbidden creatures were useful, for medicinal and other good purposes, and were used by good men, it is not probable that God would have them cast away. Thus God forbad the making of images, Exod. xx, 4, not universally, but in order to the worshipping them, as Christian interpreters agree.

9. Fins and scales - Both of them; such fishes being more cleanly, and more wholesome food than others. The names of them are not particularly mentioned, partly because most of them wanted

names, the fish not being brought to Adam and named by him as other creatures were; and partly because the land of Canaan had not many rivers, nor great store of fish.

11. Unto you - This clause is added to shew that they were neither abominable in their own nature, nor for the food of other nations; and consequently when the partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles was taken away, these distinctions of meat were to cease.

13. Among the fowls - The true signification of the following Hebrew words is now lost, as the Jews at this day confess; which not falling out without God's singular providence may intimate the cessation of this law, the exact observation whereof since Christ came is become impossible. In general, this may be observed, that the fowls forbidden in diet, are all either ravenous and cruel, or such as delight in the night and darkness, or such as feed upon impure things; and so the signification of these prohibitions is manifest, to teach men to abominate all cruelty or oppression, and all works of darkness and filthiness. The ossifrage and the osprey - Two peculiar kinds of eagles, distinct from that which being the chief of its kind, is called by the name of the whole kind.

15. After his kind - According to the several kinds, known by this general name, which includes, besides ravens properly so called, crows, rooks, pyes, and others.

20. All fowls - Flying things that crawl or creep upon the earth, and so degenerate from their proper nature, and are of a mongrel kind, which may intimate that apostates and mongrels in religion are abominable in the sight of God. Upon all four - Upon four legs, or upon more than four, which is all one to the present purpose.

22. The locust - Locusts, though unusual in our food, were commonly eaten by the Ethiopians, Lybians, Parthians, and other eastern people bordering upon the Jews. And as it is certain the eastern locusts were much larger than ours, so it is probable they were of different qualities, and yielding better nourishment.

23. All other - That is, which have not those legs above and besides their feet mentioned, ver. 21.

24. Unclean - And such were excluded both from the court of God's house, and from free conversation with other men.

25. Beareth - Or, taketh away, out of the place where it may lie, by which others may be either offended, or polluted.

27. Upon his paws - Hebrew. upon his hands, that is, which hath feet divided into several parts like fingers, as dogs, cats, apes, and bears.

34. That on which such water cometh - That flesh or herbs or other food which is dressed in water, in a vessel so polluted, shall be unclean; not so, if it be food which is eaten dry, as bread, or fruits; the reason of which difference seems to be this, that the water did sooner receive the pollution in itself, and convey it to the food so dressed.

36. Of this no reason can be given, but the will of the law-giver and his merciful condescension to men's necessities, water being scarce in those countries; and for the same reason God would have the ceremonial law of sacrifices, give place to the law of mercy.

37. Seed - Partly because this was necessary provision for man; and partly because such seed would not be used for man's food till it had received many alterations in the earth whereby such pollution was taken away.

38. If any water - The reason of the difference is, because wet seed doth sooner receive, and longer retain any pollution and partly because such seed was not fit to be sown presently, and therefore that necessity which justified the use of the dry seed, could not be pretended in this case.

39. If any beast die - Either of itself, or being killed by some wild beast, in which cases the blood was not poured forth, as it was when they were killed by men either for food or sacrifice.

40. He that eateth - Unwittingly, for if he did it knowingly, it was a presumptuous sin against an express law, Deut. xiv, 21, and therefore punished with cutting off.

41. Every creeping thing - Except those expressly excepted, ver. 29, 30.

42. Upon the belly - As worms and snakes, Upon all four - As toads and divers serpents.

44. Ye shall be holy - By this he gives them to understand, that all these cautions about eating or touching these creatures was not for any real uncleanness in them, but only that by diligent observation of these rules they might learn with greater care to avoid all moral pollutions, and to keep themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and from all familiar and intimate converse with notorious sinners.

45. That bringeth you up out of Egypt - This was a reason why they should chearfully submit to distinguishing laws, who had been so honoured with distinguishing favours.

46. This is the law - It was so, as long the Mosaic dispensation lasted. But under the gospel we find it expressly repealed by a voice from heaven, Acts x, 15. Let us therefore bless God, that to us every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused.

## XII

Laws concerning the uncleanness of women in child-birth, ver. 1-5. Concerning their purification, ver. 6-8.

1. From uncleanness contracted by the touching or eating of external things, he now comes to that uncleanness which ariseth from ourselves.

2. Seven days - Not for any filthiness which was either in the conception, or in bringing forth, but to signify the universal and deep pollution of man's nature, even from the birth, and from the conception. Seven days or thereabouts, nature is employed in the purgation of most women. Her infirmity - Her monthly infirmity. And it may note an agreement therewith not only in the time, chap. xv, 19, but in the degree of uncleanness.

4. In the blood of her purifying - In her polluted and separated estate; for the word blood or bloods signifies both guilt, and uncleanness, as here and elsewhere. And it is called the blood of her purifying, because by the expulsion or purgation of that blood, which is done by degrees, she is purified. No hallowed thing - She shall not eat any part of the peace-offerings which she or her husband offered, which otherwise she might have done; and, if she be a priest's wife, she shall not eat any of the tythes or first fruits, or part of the hallowed meats, which at other times she together with her husband might eat.

5. Threescore and six days - The time in both particulars is double to the former, not so much from natural causes, as to put an honour upon the sacrament of circumcision, which being administered to the males, did put an end to that pollution sooner than otherwise had been.

6. For a son or a daughter - For the birth of a son, or of a daughter: but the purification was for herself, as appears from the following verses. A sin-offering - Because of her ceremonial uncleanness, which required a ceremonial expiation.

8. The morality of this law obliges women who have received mercies from God in child-bearing, with all thankfulness to acknowledge his goodness to them, owning themselves unworthy of it, and (which is the best purification) to continue in faith, and love, and holiness, with sobriety.

## XIII

Rules whereby the priest was to judge of the leprosy, ver. 1- 44. Directions concerning the leper, ver. 45, 46. Concerning the leprosy in garments, ver. 47-59.

2. In the skin - For there is the first seat of the leprosy, the bright spot shining like the scale of a fish, as it is in the beginning of a leprosy. The priest - The priest was to admit to, or exclude from, the sanctuary, and therefore to examine who were to be excluded.

3. When the hair is turned white - This change of colour was an evidence both of the abundance of excrementious humours, and of the weakness of nature, as we see in old and sick persons. His flesh - For the leprosy consumed both the skin and the flesh.

4. Seven days - For greater assurance; to teach ministers not to be hasty in their judgments, but diligently to search and examine all things before-hand. The plague is here put for the man that hath the plague.

6. Dark - Contrary to the white colour of the leprosy. But the word may be rendered, have contracted itself, and thus the opposition seems to be most clear as the spreading of itself. He shall wash his clothes - Though it was no leprosy, to teach us, that no sin is so small as not to need to be washed by the blood of Christ, which was the thing designed by all these washings.

10. White in the skin - With a preternatural and extraordinary whiteness. Raw flesh - This shewed it was not a superficial leprosy but one of a deeper and more malignant nature, that had eaten into the very flesh, for which cause it is in the next verse called an old or inveterate leprosy.

13. All his flesh - When it appeared in some one part it discovered the ill humour which lurked within, and withal the inability of nature to expel it; but when it overspread all, it manifested the strength of nature conquering the distemper, and purging out the ill humours into the outward parts.

14. In it - That is in the place where the appearance of leprosy was, when the flesh was partly changed into a whiter colour, and partly kept its natural colour, this variety of colours was an evidence of the leprosy, as one and the same colour continuing, was a sign of soundness.

15. The raw flesh - This is repeated again and again, because raw or living flesh might rather seem a sign of soundness, and the priest might easily be deceived by it, and therefore he was more narrowly to look into it.

16. Unto white - As it is usual with sores, when they begin to be healed, the skin which is white, coming upon the flesh.

21. Dark - Or, and be contracted.

22. A plague - Or the plague of leprosy, of which he is speaking.

24. A hot burning - A burning of fire, by the touch of any hot- iron, or burning coals, which naturally makes an ulcer or sore in which the following spot is.

28. Of the burning - Arising from the burning mentioned, ver. 24.

30. A yellow, thin hair - The leprosy in the body turned the hair white, in the head or beard it turned it yellow. And if a man's hair was yellow before, this might easily be distinguished from the rest, either by the thinness or smallness of it, or by its peculiar kind of yellow, for there are divers kinds of the same colour manifestly differing from one another.

31. No black hair - For had that appeared, it had ended the doubt, the black hair being a sign of soundness and strength of nature, as the yellow hair was a sign of unsoundness.

33. He shall be shaven - For the more certain discovery of the growth or stay of the plague.

36. He shall not seek - He need not search for the hair, or any other sign, the spreading of it being a sure sign of leprosy.

39. If the spots be darkish white - Or, contracted, or confined to the place where they are, and white.

42. It is a leprosy - It is a sign that such baldness came not from age, or any accident, but from the leprosy.

45. His clothes shall be rent - In the upper and fore parts, which were most visible. This was done partly as a token of sorrow, because though this was not a sin, yet it was an effect of sin, and a sore punishment, whereby he was cut off both from converse with men, and from the enjoyment of God in his ordinances; partly as a warning to others to keep at a due distance from him wheresoever he came. And his head bare - Another sign of mourning. God would have men though not overwhelmed with, yet deeply sensible of his judgments. A covering on his upper lip - Partly as another badge of his sorrow and shame, and partly for the preservation of others from his breath or touch. Unclean, unclean - As begging the pity and prayers of others, and confessing his own infirmity, and cautioning those who came near him, to keep at a distance from him.

46. He shall dwell alone - Partly for his humiliation; partly to prevent the infection of others; and partly to shew the danger of converse with spiritual lepers, or notorious sinners.

47. Leprosy in garments and houses is unknown in these times and places, which is not strange, there being some diseases peculiar to some ages and countries. And that such a thing was among the Jews, cannot reasonably be doubted; for, if Moses had been a deceiver, a man of his wisdom, would not have exposed himself to the contempt of his people by giving laws about that which their experience shewed to be but a fiction.

48. In the warp or woof - A learned man renders it in the outside, or in the inside of it. If the signification of these words be doubtful now, as some of those of the living creatures and precious stones are confessed to be, it is not material to us, this law being abolished; it sufficeth that the Jews understood these things by frequent experience.

55. If it have not changed its colour - If washing doth not take away that vicious colour, and restore it to its own native colour.

## XIV

The manner of cleansing a leper, ver. 1-9. The sacrifices to be offered for him, ver. 10-32. The management of an house suspected of leprosy, ver. 33-53. The summary of the whole, ver. 54-57.

2. He shall be brought to the priest - Not into the priest's house, but to some place without the camp or city, which the priest shall appoint.

3. Healed by God-For God alone did heal or cleanse him really, the priest only declaratively.

4. Two birds - The one to represent Christ as dying for his sins, the other to represent him as rising again for his purification or justification. Clean - Allowed for food and for sacrifice. Cedar-wood - A stick of cedar, to which the hyssop and one of the birds was tied by the scarlet thread. Cedar seems to be chosen, to note that the leper was now freed from that corruption which his leprosy had brought upon him, that kind of wood being in a manner incorruptible. Scarlet - A thread of wool of a scarlet colour, to represent both the leper's sinfulness, and the blood of Christ, and the happy change of the leper's colour and complexion, which before was wan and loathsome, now sprightly and beautiful. Hyssop - The fragrant smell of which, signified the cure of the leper's ill scent.

5. Killed - By some other man. The priest did not kill it himself, because it was not properly a sacrifice, as being killed without the camp, and not in that place to which all sacrifices were confined. In an earthen-vessel - That is, over running water put in an earthen-vessel - Thus the blood of the bird and the water were mixed together, partly for the conveniency of sprinkling, and partly to signify Christ, who came by water and blood, 1 John v, 6. The running water, that is, spring or river water by its liveliness and motion did fitly signify the restoring of liveliness to the leper, who was in a manner dead before.

7. Into the open field - The place of its former abode, signifying the taking off that restraint which was laid upon the leper.

8. All his hair - Partly to discover his perfect soundness; partly to preserve him from a relapse through any relicks of it which might remain in his hair or in his clothes. Out of his tent - Out of his former habitation, in some separate place, lest some of his leprosy yet lurking in him should break forth to the infection of his family.

9. All his hair - Which began to grow again, and now for more caution is shaved again.

10. Oil is added as a fit sign of God's grace and mercy, and of the leper's healing. A log is a measure containing six egg-shells full.

11. Maketh him clean - The healing is ascribed to God, ver. 13, but the ceremonial cleansing was an act of the priest using the rites which God had prescribed.

12. A trespass-offering - To teach them, that sin was the cause of leprosy, and of all diseases, and that these ceremonial observations had a farther meaning, to make them sensible of their spiritual diseases, that they might fly to God in Christ for the cure of them.

14. The priest shall put it - To signify, that he was now free to hear God's word in the appointed places, and to touch any person or thing without defiling it, and to go whither he pleased.

15. The oil - As the blood signified Christ's blood by which men obtained remission of sins, so the oil noted the graces of the spirit by which they are renewed.

16. Before the Lord - Before the second veil which covered the holy of holies.

17. Upon the blood - Upon the place where that blood was put.

25. The priest shall put the blood - Upon the extremities of the body, to include the whole. And some of the oil was afterwards put in the same places upon the blood. That blood seems to have been a token of forgiveness, the oil of healing: For God first forgiveth our iniquities, and then healeth our diseases. When the leper was anointed, the oil must have blood under it, to signify that all the graces and comforts of the spirit, all his sanctifying influences are owing to the death of Christ. It is by his blood alone that we are sanctified.

36. That all be not made unclean - It is observable here, that neither the people nor the household stuff were polluted till the leprosy was discovered and declared by the priest, to shew what great difference God makes between sins of ignorance, and sins against knowledge.

37. In the walls of the house - This was an extraordinary judgment of God peculiar to this people, either as a punishment of their sins, which were much more sinful and inexcusable than the sins of other nations; or as a special help to repentance, which God afforded them above other people; or as a token of the mischievous nature of sin, typified by leprosy, which did not only destroy persons, but their habitations also: Hollow streaks - Such as were in the bodies of leprous persons.

40. An unclean place - Where they used to cast dirt and filthy things.

57. To teach - To direct the priest when to pronounce a person or house clean or unclean. So it was not left to the priests power or will, but they were tied to plain rules, such as the people might discern no less than the priest.

## XV

This chapter contains laws concerning other ceremonial uncleannesses, contracted either by bodily disease, or some natural incidents, whether in men, ver. 1-18, or in women, ver. 19- 33.

2. A running issue - Commonly called the running of the reins, a grievous and loathsome disease, which is generally the consequence of sin.

3. His flesh be stopped - That is, if it have run, and be stopped in great measure, either by the grossness of the humour, or by some obstructions that it cannot run freely.

7. The flesh - That is, any part of his body.

11. And hath not rinsed - That is, the person touched, to whom the washing of his hands is prescribed, if speedily done; but if that was neglected, a more labourious course was enjoined.

13. When he is cleansed - When his issue hath wholly ceased.

15. An atonement - Not as if this was in itself a sin, but only a punishment of sin; though oft-times it was sinful, as being a fruit of intemperance.

18. A man - Or, The man, that had such an issue, which is plainly to be understood out of the whole context. For though in some special cases relating to the worship of God, men were to forbear the use of the marriage-bed, yet to affirm that the use of it in other cases did generally defile the persons, and make them unclean till even, is contrary to the whole current of scripture, which affirms the marriage-bed to be undefiled, Heb. xiii, 4, to the practice of the Jews, which is a good comment upon their own laws, and to the light of nature and reason.

19. And if a woman - Hebrew. And a woman when she shall have an issue of blood, and her issue shalt be in her flesh, that is, in her secret parts, as flesh is taken, ver. 2. So it notes her monthly disease. Put apart - Not out of the camp, but from converse with her husband and others, and from access to the house of God. Seven days - For sometimes it continues so long; and it was decent to allow some time for purification after the ceasing of her issue. Whosoever toucheth her - Of grown persons. For the infant, to whom in that case she might give suck, was exempted from this pollution by the greater law of necessity, and by that antecedent law which required women to give suck to their own children.

24. Seven days - If he did this ignorantly; but if the man and woman did this knowingly, being accused and convicted, they were punished with death, chap. xx, 18, for as there was a turpitude in the action, so it was very prejudicial to the children then begotten, who were commonly weak, or leprous; which was also an injury to the commonwealth of Israel, and redounded to the dishonour of God and of the true religion, that the professors thereof gave such public evidence of their intemperance.

28. Seven days - From the stopping of her issue. And this was for trial, whether it was only a temporary obstruction, or a real cessation.

31. When they defile my tabernacle - Both ceremonially, by coming into it in their uncleanness, and morally by the contempt of God's express command to cleanse themselves. The grand reason of all these laws was, to separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness. Hereby they were taught their privilege and honour, that they were purified unto God, a peculiar people; for that was a defilement to them, which was not so to others. They were also taught their duty, which was to keep themselves clean from all pollutions.

## XVI

The institution of the yearly day of atonement for the whole nation. The whole service is committed to the high-priest, who is,

1. Then only to come into the holy of holies, in his linen garments with a young bullock, ver. 1-4.

2. To offer a goat, and a bullock for a sin-offering, ver. 5-13.

3. To sprinkle the blood before the mercy seat, and upon the altar, ver. 13-19.

4. To confess over the scape-goat, the sins of the people, and then send him into the wilderness, ver. 20-23.

5. To offer the burnt-offerings, ver. 24-28. And,

6. To appoint this day to be a solemn fast, by a statute for ever, ver. 29-34.

2. At all times - Not whensoever he pleaseth, but only when I shall appoint him, namely, to take down the parts and furniture of it upon every removal, and to minister unto me once in the year. Lest he die - For his irreverence and presumption. In the cloud - In a bright and glorious cloud, over the mercy-seat, as a token when I would have him come.

3. With a young bullock - That is, with the blood of it; the body of it was to be offered upon the altar of burnt-offerings. A sin- offering - For his own and family's sins; for a goat was offered for the sins of the people.

4. The linen coat - It is observable, the high-priest did not now use his peculiar and glorious robes, but only his linen garments, which were common to him with the ordinary priests. The reason whereof was, because this was not a day of feasting and rejoicing, but of mourning and humiliation, at which times people were to lay aside their ornaments. These are holy - Because appropriated to an holy and religious use.

8. For the Lord - For the Lord's use by way of sacrifice. Both this and the other goat typified Christ; this in his death and passion for us; that in his resurrection for our deliverance.

11. The bullock - Mentioned in general, ver. 6. The ceremonies whereof are here particularly described. This was a different bullock or heifer from that Num. xix, 2, 5, 9, 10, 17, as appears by comparing the places.

12. Within the veil - That is, into the holy of holies, ver. 2.

13. Upon the fire - Which was in the censer, ver. 12.

14. Upon the mercy-seat - To teach us, that God is merciful to sinners only through and for the blood of Christ. With his face east-ward, or upon the eastern part, towards the people, who were in the court which lay east-ward from the holy of holies, which was the most western part of the tabernacle. This signified that the high-priest in this act represented the people, and that God accepted it on their behalf. Before the mercy-seat - On the ground.

15. Then shall he kill the goat - He went out of the holy of holies, and killed it, and then returned thither again with its blood. And whereas the high-priest is said to be allowed to enter into that place but once in a year, that is to be understood, but one day in a year, though there was occasion of going in and coming out more than once upon that day.

16. Because of the uncleannesses of Israel - For though the people did not enter into that place, yet their sins entered thither, and would hinder the effects of the high-priest's mediation on their behalf if God was not reconciled to them. In the midst of their uncleanness - ln the midst of a sinful people, who defile not themselves only, but also God's sanctuary. And God hereby shewed them, how much their hearts needed to be purified, when even the tabernacle, only by standing in the midst of them, needed this expiation.

17. In the tabernacle - ln the holy place, where the priests and Levites were at other times. This was commanded for the greater reverence to the Divine Majesty then in a more special manner appearing, and that none of them might cast an eye into the holy of holies, as the high-priest went in or came out.

18. The altar before the Lord - That is, the altar of incense, where the blood of sacrifices was to be put, particularly the blood of the sin-offerings offered upon this day of atonement, and which is most properly said to be before the Lord, that is, before the place where God in a special manner dwelt. His going out relates to the holy of holies, into which he was said to go in, ver. 17.

19. Seven times - To signify its perfect cleansing, (seven being a number of perfection) and our perfect reconciliation by the blood of Christ.

21. All the iniquities - He mentions iniquities, transgressions, and sins, to note sins of all sorts, and that a free and full confession was to be made, and that the smallest sins needed, and the greatest sins were not excluded from, the benefit of Christ's death here represented. On the head - Charging all their sins and the punishment due to them upon the goat, which tho' only a ceremony, yet being

done according to God's appointment and manifestly pointing at Christ upon whom their iniquities and punishments were laid, Isaiah liii, 5, 6, it was available for this end. And hence the Heathens took their custom of selecting one beast or man, upon whom they laid all their imprecations and curses, and whom they killed as an expiatory sacrifice for their sins, and to prevent their ruin. A fit man - Hebrew. a man of time, that is, of years and discretion, who may be trusted with this work. Into the wilderness - Which signified the removal of their sins far away both from the people, and out of God's sight. And here the goat being neglected by all men, and exposed to many hazards from wild beasts, which were numerous there, might farther signify Christ's being forsaken both by God and by men, even by his own disciples, and the many dangers and sufferings he underwent. The Jews write, that this goat was carried to the mountain called Azazel, whence the goat is so called, ver. 10, and that there he was cast down headlong.

24. He shall put on his linen garments - Not his ordinary priestly linen garments, for he was to leave them in the tabernacle, ver. 23, but the high-priestly garments, called his garments properly, and by way of distinction. And this change of his garments was not without cause. For the common priestly garments were more proper for him in the former part of his ministration, both because he was to appear before the Lord in the most holy place to humble himself and make atonement for his own and for the people's sins, and therefore his meanest attire was most fit, and because he was to lay his hands upon that goat on which all their sins were put, by which touch both he and his garments would be in some sort defiled, and therefore as he washed himself, so we may presume his linen garments were laid by for the washing, as the clothes of him who carried away the scape-goat were washed, ver. 26. And the high-priestly garments were most proper for the latter part of his work, which was of another nature.

29. The seventh month - Answering part to our September and part to our October; when they had gathered in all their fruits, and were most at leisure for God's service: This time God chose for this and other feasts, herein graciously condescending to men's necessities and conveniences. This feast began in the evening of the ninth day, and continued till the evening of the tenth. Your souls - Yourselves, both your bodies, by abstinence from food and other delights, and your minds by grief for former sins, which though bitter, yet is voluntary in all true penitents, who are therefore here said to afflict themselves, or to be active in the work.

31. A sabbath - Observed as a sabbath-day from all servile works, and diligent attendance upon God's worship.

32. He - The high-priest, who was to anoint his successor.

34. This shall be an everlasting statute - By which were typified the two great gospel privileges; remission of sins, and access to God, both which we owe to the mediation of the Lord Jesus.

## XVII

Two prohibitions,

1. That no sacrifice be offered by any but the priests, nor any where but at the door of the tabernacle, ver. 1-9.
2. That no blood be eaten, ver. 10-16.

3. That killeth-Not for common use, for such beasts might be killed by any person or in any place but for sacrifice. In the camp, or out of the camp - That is, anywhere.

4. The tabernacle - This was appointed in opposition to the Heathens, who sacrificed in all places; to cut off occasions of idolatry; to prevent the people's usurpation of the priest's office, and to signify that God would accept of no sacrifices but through Christ and in the Church; (of both which the tabernacle was a type.) But though men were tied to this law, God was free to dispense with his own law, which he did sometimes to the prophets, as 1 Sam. vii, 9, xi, 15. He hath shed blood - He shall be punished as a murderer. The reason is, because he shed that blood, which, though not man's blood, yet was precious, being sacred and appropriated to God, and typically the price by which men's lives were ransomed.

5. They offer - The Israelites, before the building of the tabernacle, did so, from which they are now restrained. Peace- offerings - He nameth not these exclusively from others, as appears from the reason of the law, and from ver. 8, 9, but because in these the temptation was more common in regard of their frequency, and more powerful, because part of these belonged to the offerer, and the pretense was more plausible, because their sanctity was of a lower degree than others, these being only called holy, and allowed in part to the people, whereas the others are called most holy, and were wholly appropriated either to God, or to the priests.

6. Upon the altar - This verse contains a reason of the foregoing law, because of God's propriety in the blood and fat, wherewith also God was well pleased, and the people reconciled. And these two parts only are mentioned, as the most eminent, and peculiar, though other parts also were reserved for God.

7. Unto devils - So they did, not directly or intentionally, but by construction and consequence, because the devil is the author of idolatry, and is eminently served, and honoured by it. And as the Egyptians were notorious for their idolatry, so the Israelites were infected with their leaven, Josh. xxiv, 14, Ezek. xx, 7, xxiii, 2, 3. A whoring - Idolatry, especially in God's people, is commonly called whoredom, because it is a violation of that covenant by which they were peculiarly betrothed or married to God.

10. I will set my face - I will be an enemy to him, and execute vengeance upon him immediately; because such persons probably would do this in private, so that the magistrate could not know nor punish it. Write that man undone, for ever undone, against whom God sets his face.

11. Is in the blood - Depends upon the blood, is preserved and nourished by it. The blood maketh atonement - Typically, and in respect of the blood of Christ which it represented, by which the atonement is really made. So the reason is double;

1. because this was eating up the ransom of their own lives, which in construction was the destroying of themselves.
2. because it was ingratitude and irreverence towards that sacred blood of Christ which they ought to have in continual veneration.

15. That eateth - Through ignorance or inadvertency; for if it was done knowingly, it was more severely punished. A stranger - Who is a proselyte to the Jewish religion: other strangers were allowed to eat such things, Deut. xiv, 21, out of which the blood was either not drawn at all, or not regularly.

16. His iniquity - The punishment of it, and therefore must offer a sacrifice for it.

## XVIII

A prohibition of conformity to the heathens, ver. 1-5. Particular laws against incest, ver. 6-18. Against unnatural lusts and barbarous idolatries, ver. 19-23. Enforced from the destruction of the Canaanites, ver. 24-30.

2. Your God - Your sovereign, and lawgiver. This is often repeated because the things here forbidden were practiced and allowed by the gentiles, to whose custom he opposes divine authority and their obligation to obey his commands.

3. Egypt and Canaan - These two nations he mentions, because their habitation and conversation among them made their evil example in the following matters more dangerous. But under them he includes all other nations.

4. My judgments - Though you do not see the particular reason of some of them, and though they be contrary to the laws and usages of the other nations.

5. He shall live in them - Not only happily here, but eternally hereafter. This is added as a powerful argument why they should follow God's commands, rather than mens examples, because their life and happiness depend upon it. And though in strictness, and according to the covenant of works they could not challenge life for so doing, except their obedience was universal, perfect, constant and perpetual, and therefore no man since the fall could be justified by the law, yet by the covenant of grace this life is promised to all that obey God's commands sincerely.

6. To uncover their nakedness - I think Mark. Free has made it highly probable, that this phrase does not mean marriage, but fornication, throughout this chapter. So it unquestionably means in the twentieth chapter.

16. Thy brother's wife - God afterwards commanded, that in one case, a man should marry his brother's widow.

18. Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister - Perhaps this text doth not simply forbid the taking one wife to another, but the doing it in such a manner or for such an end, that he may vex or punish, or revenge himself of the former; which probably was a common motive amongst that hardhearted people to do so.

19. As long as she is set apart - No not to thy own wife. This was not only a ceremonial pollution, but an immorality also, whence it is put amongst gross sins, Ezek. xviii, 6. And therefore it is now unlawful under the gospel.

21. Pass through fire - This was done, either by burning them in the fire, or by making them pass between two great fires, which was a kind of consecration of them to that God. Moloch - Called also Milcom, was an idol chiefly of the Ammonites. He seems to be the Saturn of the heathens, to whom especially children and men were sacrificed. This is mentioned, because the neighbours of Israel were most infected with this idolatry, and therefore they are particularly cautioned against it, though under this one instance all other idols and acts, or kinds of idolatry, are manifestly comprehended and forbidden.

25. I visit - I am about to visit, that is, to punish.

26. Nor any stranger - In nation or religion, of what kind soever. For though they might not force them to submit to their religion, yet they might restrain them from the publick contempt of

the Jewish laws, and from the violation of natural laws, which, besides the offense against God and nature, were matters of evil example to the Israelites themselves.

29. Cut off - This phrase therefore of cutting off, is to be understood variously, either of ecclesiastical, or civil punishment, according to the differing natures of the offenses for which it is inflicted.

## XIX

Various Precepts to be holy, ver. 1, 2. To honour parents and sabbaths, ver. 3. To shun idolatry, ver. 4. Duty to eat their peace-offering, ver. 5- 8. To leave gleanings for the poor, ver. 9, 10. Not to steal, lie, swear falsely, or defraud, ver. 11-13. Not to curse the deaf, or put a stumbling-block before the blind, ver. 14. Not to judge unjustly, carry tales, or bear false witness, ver. 15, 16. To reprove sinners, not to revenge themselves; to love their neighbours, ver. 17, 18. Not to mix different things, ver. 19. Not to lie with their bond- maids, ver. 20-22. Not to eat of the fruit of the land for four years, ver. 23-25. Not to eat blood, use enchantments, or heathen customs, ver. 26-28. Or prostitute their daughters, ver. 29. To reverence God and his sanctuary, ver. 30. Not to regard wizards, ver. 31. To honour the aged, ver. 32. Love and right the stranger, ver. 33, 34. Do no injustice, ver. 34, 35, 36.

2. Be ye holy - Separated from all the forementioned defilements, and entirely consecrated to God and obedient to all his laws. I am holy - Both in my essence, and in all my laws, which are holy and just and good.

3. His mother - The mother is put first, partly because the practice of this duty begins there, mothers, by perpetual converse, being sooner known to their children than their fathers; and partly because this duty is commonly neglected to the mother, upon whom children have not so much dependence as they have upon their father. And this fear includes the two great duties of reverence and obedience. And keep my sabbaths - This is added, to shew, that, whereas it is enjoined to parents that they should take care the sabbath be observed both by themselves and their children, it is the duty of children to fear and obey their parents in this matter. But that, if parents should neglect their duty herein, or by their command, counsel, or example, draw them to pollute the sabbath, the children in that case must keep the sabbath, and prefer the command of God before the commands of their parents.

4. Idols - The word signifies such as are no Gods, or nothings, as they are called, 1 Cor. viii, 4, many idols having no being, but in the fancy of their worshippers, and all of them having no virtue or power to do good or evil, Isaiah xli, 23.

5. At your own will - Or, according to your own pleasure, what you think fit: For though this in general was required, yet it was left to their choice to determine the particulars.

6. On the morrow - He speaks here of that sort of peace-offerings, which were offered either by vow or freely for the obtaining of some mercy, for the other sort, which was by way of gratitude for mercies received, were to be eaten the same day.

10. I am the Lord your God - Who gave you all these things with a reservation of my right in them, and with a charge of giving part of them to the poor.

12. Ye shall not swear falsely - This is added, to shew how one sin draws on another, and that when men will lye for their own advantage, they will easily be induced to perjury. Profane the name - By any unholy use of it. So it is an additional precept, thou shalt not abuse my holy name by swearing either falsely or rashly.

14. Before the blind - To make them fall. Under these two particulars are manifestly forbidden all injuries done to such as are unable to right or defend themselves; of whom God here takes the more care, because they are not able to secure themselves. Fear thy God - Who both can and will avenge them.

15. The poor - So as through pity to him to give an unrighteous sentence.

16. Stand against the blood - In judgment as a false accuser or false witness, for accusers and witnesses use to stand, whilst the Judges sit in courts of judicature.

17. Thou shalt not hate - As thou dost, in effect, if thou dost not rebuke him. Thy brother - The same as thy neighbour, that is, every man. If thy brother hath done wrong, thou shalt neither divulge it to others, nor hate him, and smother that hatred by sullen silence; nor flatter him therein, but shalt freely and in love, tell him of his fault. And not suffer sin upon him - Not suffer him to lie under the guilt of any sin, which thou by rebuking him, and thereby bringing him to repentance, couldst free him from.

18. Thy neighbour - Every man, as plainly appears,

1. By comparing this place with ver. 34, where this law is applied to strangers.
2. Because the word neighbour is explained by another man, chap. xx, 10 Rom. xiii,
   8. As thyself - With the same sincerity, though not equality of affection.

19. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender - This was prohibited, partly to restrain the curiosity and boldness of men, who might attempt to amend or change the works of God, partly that by the restraint here laid even upon brute-creatures men might be taught to abhor all unnatural lusts, partly to teach the Israelites to avoid mixtures with other nations, either in marriage or in religion, which also may be signified by the following prohibitions.

20. She shall be scourged - Hebrew. There shall be a scourging, which probably may belong to both of them, for

1. Both were guilty.
2. It follows, they shall not be punished with death, which may seem to imply that they were to be punished by some other common and considerable punishment, which scourging indeed was, but the paying of a ram was a small penalty and very unsuitable to the greatness of the offense. And the offering of the ram as a trespass offering for the sin against God, is not inconsistent with making satisfaction other ways for the injury done to men, but only added here as farther punishment to the man, either because he only could do this, and not the woman, who being a bondwoman had nothing of her own to offer. Or because his sex and his freedom aggravated his sin. Not put to death - Which they should have been, had she been free, Deut. xxii, 23, 24. The reason of this difference is not from any respect which God gives to persons, for bond and free are alike to him, but because bond-women were scarce wives, and their marriages were scarce true-marriages, being neither made by their choice, but their masters authority,

nor continued beyond the year of release, but at her master's or husband's pleasure.

23. As uncircumcised - That is, As unclean, not to be eaten but cast away. This precept was serviceable,

1. To the trees themselves, which grew the better and faster, being early stript of those fruits, which otherwise would have drawn away much more of the strength from the tree.
2. To men, both because the fruit then was less wholesome, and because hereby men were taught to bridle their appetites; a lesson of great use and absolute necessity in a holy life.

24. Holy - Consecrated to the Lord, as the first-fruits and tithes were, and therefore given to the priests and Levites, Num. xviii, 12, 13 Deut. xviii, 4 yet so that part of them were communicated to the poor widows and fatherless and strangers. See Deut. xiv, 28. To bless the Lord, by whose power and goodness the trees bring forth fruit to perfection.

25. That it may yield the increase - That God may be pleased to give his blessing, which alone can make them fruitful.

26. Any thing with the blood - Any flesh out of which the blood is poured. Neither shall ye use enchantments - It was unpardonable in them, to whom were committed the oracles of God, to ask counsel of the devil. And yet worse in Christians, to whom the son of God is manifested, to destroy the works of the devil. For Christians to have their nativities cast, or their fortunes told, or to use charms for the cure of diseases, is an intolerable affront to the Lord Jesus, a support of idolatry, and a reproach both to themselves, and to that worthy name by which they are called. Nor observe times - Superstitiously, esteeming some days lucky, others unlucky.

27. The corners of your heads - That is your temples, ye shall not cut off the hair of your heads round about your temples. This the Gentiles did, either for the worship of their idols, to whom young men used to consecrate their hair, being cut off from their heads, as Homer, Plutarch and many others write; or in funerals or immoderate mournings, as appears from Isaiah xv, 2 Jer. xlviii, 37. And the like is to be thought concerning the beard or the hair in the corner, that is, corners of the beard. The reason then of this prohibition is because God would not have his people agree with idolaters, neither in their idolatries, nor in their excessive sorrowing, no nor so much as in the appearances of it.

28. Cuttings in your flesh - Which the Gentiles commonly did both in the worship of their idols, and in their solemn mournings, Jer. xvi, 6.

29. Do not prostitute - As the Gentiles frequently did for the honour of some of their idols, to whom women were consecrated, and publickly prostituted.

31. Wizards - Them that have entered into covenant with the devil, by whose help they foretel many things to come, and acquaint men with secret things. See ver. 27 Deut. xviii, 11; 1 Sam. xxviii, 3, 7, 9; 2 Kings xxi, 6.

32. Rise up - To do them reverence when they pass by, for which end they were obliged, as the Jews say, presently to sit down again when they were past, that it might be manifest they arose out of respect to them. Fear thy God - This respect is due to such, if not for themselves, yet for God's sake, who requires this reverence, and whose singular blessing old age is.

33. Vex him - Either with opprobrious expressions, or grievous exactions.

34. As one born among you - Either 1, as to the matters of common right, so it reacheth to all strangers. Or 2, as to church- privileges, so it concerns only those who were proselytes. Ye were strangers - And therefore are sensible of the fears, distresses, and miseries of such, which call for your pity, and you ought to do to them, as you desired others should do to you, when you were such.

35. In mete-yard - In the measuring of lands, or dry things, as cloth, ribband. In measure - In the measuring liquid or such dry things as are only contigious, as corn or wine.

36. A just ephah and a just hin - These two two measures are named as most common, the former for dry, the latter for moist things, but under them he manifestly comprehends all other measures.

37. Therefore - Because my blessings and deliverances are not indulgences to sin, but greater obligations to all duties to God and men.

## XX

Prohibitions against offering children to Moloch, ver. 1-5. Against consulting wizards, ver. 6. Holiness enjoined, ver. 7, 8. Against cursing parents, ver. 9. Against adultery, ver. 10 Against incestuous mixtures, ver. 11-21. Holiness again enjoined, ver. 22- 26. Soothsayers to be stoned, ver. 27.

2. The people - Here follow the punishments of the crimes forbidden in the former chapters.

3. I will set my face against that man - Deal with him as an enemy, and make him a monument of my justice. To defile my sanctuary - Because the sanctuary was defiled by gross abominations committed in that city or land where God's sanctuary was: or because by these actions they declared to all men that they esteemed the sanctuary and service of God abominable and vile, by preferring such odious idolatry before it. And to profane my name - Partly by despising it themselves, partly by disgracing it to others, and giving them occasion to blaspheme it, and to abhor the true religion.

4. Hide their eyes - Wink at his fault, and forbear to accuse and punish him.

6. To go a whoring - To seek counsel or help from them.

8. Who sanctify you - Who separate you from all nations, and from their impurities and idolatries, to be a peculiar people to myself; and who give you my grace to keep my statutes.

9. Curseth - This is not here meant of every perverse expression, but of bitter reproaches or imprecations. His blood shall be upon him - He is guilty of his own death: he deserves to die for so unnatural a crime.

12. Confusion - By perverting the order which God hath appointed, and making the same off-spring both his own child and his grandchild.

13. Put to death - Except the one party was forced by the other. See Deut. xxii, 25.

14. They - All who consented to it.

15. Slay the beast - Partly for the prevention of monstrous births, partly to blot out the memory of so loathsome a crime.

17. See her nakedness - In this and several of the following verses, uncovering nakedness plainly appears to mean not marriage, but fornication or adultery.

20. They shall die childless - Either shall be speedily cut off ere they can have a child by that incestuous conjunction; if this seem a less crime than most of the former incestuous mixtures, and therefore the magistrate forbear to punish it with death; yet they shall either have no children from such an unlawful bed, or their children shall die before them.

21. His brother's wife - Except in the case allowed by God, Deut. xxv, 5.

27. A man or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, shall surely be put to death - They that are in league with the devil, have in effect made a covenant with death: and so shall their doom be.

## XXI

Directions to the priests, ver. 1-9. To the high-priest, ver. 10- 15. None of these must have any blemish, ver. 16-24.

1. Among his people - None of the priests shall touch the dead body, or assist at his funeral, or eat of the funeral feast. The reason of this law is evident, because by such pollution they were excluded from converse with men, to whom by their function they were to be serviceable upon all occasions, and from the handling of holy things. And God would hereby teach them, and in them all successive ministers, that they ought entirely to give themselves to the service of God. Yea, to renounce all expressions of natural affection, and all worldly employments, so far as they are impediments to the discharge of their holy services.

2. Near to him - Under which general expression his wife seems to be comprehended, though she be not expressed. And hence it is noted as a peculiar case, that Ezekiel, who was a priest, was forbidden to mourn for his wife, Ezek. xxiv, 16, &c. These exceptions God makes in condescension to human infirmity, because in such cases it was very hard to restrain the affections. But this allowance concerns only the inferior priest, not the high- priest.

3. That is nigh him - That is, by nearness not of relation, (for that might seem a needless addition) but of habitation, one not yet cut off from the family. For if she was married, she was now of another family, and under her husband's care in those matters.

4. Being - Or, seeing he is a chief man, for such not only the high- priest, but others also of the inferior priests were. He shall not defile himself for any other person whatsoever. To profane himself - Because such defilement for the dead did profane him, or make him as a common person, and consequently unfit to manage his sacred employment.

5. They shall not make baldness - In funerals, as the Heathens did. Though I allow them to defile themselves for some of the dead, yet in no case shall they use these superstitious rites, which also the people were forbidden to do; but the priests in a more peculiar manner, because they are by word and example to teach the people their duty.

6. Holy unto their God - Devoted to God's service, and always prepared for it, and therefore shall keep themselves from all defilements. The name of their God - Which they especially bear.

The bread of their God - That is, the shew-bread: or rather, all the other offerings, besides burnt-offerings: which are called bread, because bread is commonly put for all food.

7. Profane - Or defiled, or deflowered, though it were done secretly, or by force: because the priest must take care that all the members of his family be free not only from gross wickedness, but from all suspicions of evil.

8. Thou - O Moses, and whosoever shall succeed in thy place, to whom it belongs to see my laws observed, shall take care that the priest be holy, and do not defile himself by any of these forbidden marriages.

9. And the daughter - And by analogy his son also, and his wife, because the reason of the law here added, concerns all. And nothing is more common than to name one kind for the rest of the same nature, as also is done chap. xviii, 6. She profaneth her father - Exposeth his person and office, and consequently religion, to contempt.

10. The garments - Those holy garments, which were peculiar to him. Shall not uncover his head - This being then the posture of mourners, chap. x, 6, though afterwards the custom was changed and mourners covered their heads, 2 Sam. xv, 30, Esth vi, 12. Nor rent his clothes - Another expression of mourning.

11. Go in - Into the chamber or house where they lie. This and divers other rites here prescribed were from hence translated by the Heathens into their use, whose priests were put under the same obligations.

12. Out of the sanctuary - To attend the funerals of any person: for upon other occasions he might and did commonly go out. Nor profane the sanctuary - Either by the performance of a civility, or by entering into the sanctuary before the seven days allotted for his cleansing, Num. xix, 11, were expired. The crown of the anointing oil - Or, the crown, the golden plate, which is called the holy crown, Exod. xxix, 6, and the anointing oil of his God are upon him. So there is only an ellipsis of the conjunction and, which is frequent. And these two things, being most eminent, are put for the rest, as the sign is put for the thing signified, that is, for he is God's high-priest.

13. In her virginity - Or, a virgin, partly because as he was a type of Christ, so his wife was a type of the church, which is compared to a virgin, and partly for greater caution and assurance that his wife was not a defiled or deflowered person. Most of these things are forbidden to all the priests; and here to the high-priest, to shew that he also, and he especially is obliged to the same cautions.

15. I the Lord sanctify him - I have separated him from all other men for my immediate service, and therefore will not have that race corrupted.

17. Of thy seed - Whether the high priest, or the inferior ones. That hath - In all successive ages, any defect or excess of parts, any notorious deformity or imperfection in his body. The reason hereof is partly typical, that he, might more fully represent Christ, the great high-priest, who was typified both by the priest and sacrifice, and therefore both were to be without blemish; partly moral, to teach all Christians and especially ministers of holy things, what purity and perfection of heart and life they should labour after, and that notorious blemishes in the mind or conversation, render a man unfit for the ministry of the gospel; and partly prudential, because such blemishes were apt to breed contempt of the person; and consequently, of his function, and of the holy things wherein he ministered. For which reason, such persons as have notorious defects or deformities, are still unfit for the ministry except where there are eminent gifts and graces, which vindicate a man from the contemptibleness of his bodily presence. The particular defect's here mentioned, I

shall not enlarge upon because some of the Hebrew words are diversely interpreted, and because the use of these things being abolished, the knowledge of them is not necessary.

18. A flat nose - Most restrain this word to the nose, and to some great deformity relating to it. But according to others, it signifies more generally, a person that wants some member or members, because the next word, to which it is opposed, signifies one that hath more members than he should.

21. A blemish - Any notorious blemish whereby he is disfigured, though not here mentioned.

22. He shall eat - Which a priest having any uncleanness might not do whereby God would shew the great difference between natural infirmities sent upon a man by God, and moral defilements which a man brought upon himself.

23. To the veil - To the second veil which was between the holy and the most holy place, to burn incense, to order the shew-bread, and to dress the lamps, which were nigh unto that veil though without. My altar - The altar of burnt-offering, which was without the sanctuary. The sense is, he shall not execute the priest's office, which was to be done in those two places.

## XXII

A priest, having any uncleanness, must not eat of the holy things, ver. 1-7. No priest must eat that which dies of itself, or is torn, ver. 8, 9. No stranger must eat of holy things, ver. 10-13. Of them that do it ignorantly, ver. 14-16. Sacrifices must be without blemish, and of a due age, ver. 17-27. Thank offerings must be eaten the same day, ver. 29, 30. An exhortation to obedience, ver. 31-33.

2. Separate themselves - When any uncleanness is upon them, as appears from ver. 3, 4. From the holy things - From eating of those parts of the offerings, which belong to them. Only of the tithes they might eat. They - The children of Israel. And it ill became the priests to profane or pollute what the people did hallow.

3. Goeth unto the holy things - To eat them, or to touch them; for if the touch of one of the people having his uncleanness upon him defiled the thing he touched, much more was it so in the priest. Cut off - From my ordinances by excommunication: He shall be excluded both from the administration, and from the participation of them.

7. His food - His portion, the means of his subsistence. This may be added, to signify why there was no greater nor longer a penalty put upon the priests than upon the people in the same case, because his necessity craved some mitigation: tho' otherwise the priests being more sacred persons, deserved a greater punishment.

9. Lest they bear sin - Incur guilt and punishment. For it - For the neglect or violation of it.

10. No stranger - Of a strange family, who is not a priest; but there is an exception to this rule, ver. 11. A sojourner - One that comes to his house and abides there for a season, and eats at his table.

12. A stranger - To one of another family, who is no priest. Yet the priest's wife, though of another family, might eat. The reason of which difference is, because the wife passeth into the name, state and privileges of her husband, from whom the family is denominated.

14. Unto it - Over and above the principle, and besides the ram to be offered to God, chap. v, 15. And shall give unto the priest the holy thing - That is, the worth of it, which the priest was either to take to himself or to offer to God, as the nature of the thing was.

15. They - The people shall not profane them, by eating them: or the priests shall not profane them, that is, suffer the people to profane them, without censure and punishment.

16. They - That is, the priests, shall not (the negative particle being understood out of the foregoing clause) suffer them - That is, the people, to bear the iniquity of trespass - That is, the punishment of their sin, which they might expect from God, and for the prevention whereof the priest was to see restitution made.

18. Strangers - Such as were proselytes.

19. A male - For a burnt-offering, which was always of that kind: but the females were accepted in peace-offerings, and sin- offerings.

25. A stranger's hand - From proselytes: even from those, such should not be accepted, much less from the Israelites. The bread of your God - That is, the sacrifices.

28. In one day - Because it favoured of cruelty.

32. Hallowed, or sanctified, either by you in keeping my holy commands, or upon you in executing my holy and righteous judgments. I will manifest myself to be an holy God that will not bear the transgression of my laws.

## XXIII

Directions concerning the sabbath, ver. 1-3. The passover, ver. 4-8. The first fruits, ver. 9-14. The feast of pentecost, ver. 15- 22. of trumpets, ver. 23-25. Of atonement, ver. 26-32. Of tabernacles, ver. 33-44.

2. Ye shall proclaim - Cause to be proclaimed, by the priests. Holy convocations - Days for your assembling together to my worship in a special manner.

3. Ye shall do no work therein - So it runs in the general for the sabbath day, and for the day of expiation, ver. 28, excluding all works about earthly employments whether of profit or of pleasure; but upon other feast days he forbids only servile works, as ver. 7, 21, 36, for surely this manifest difference in the expressions used by the wife God must needs imply a difference in the things. In all your dwellings - Other feasts, were to be kept before the Lord in Jerusalem only, whither all the males were to come for that end; but the sabbath was to be kept in all places, both in synagogues, and in their private houses.

4. These are the feasts of the Lord - Or rather, the solemnities: (for the day of atonement was a fast:) and so the word is used, Isaiah xxxiii, 20, where Zion is called the city of our solemnities.

10. An omer - They did not offer this corn in the ear, or by a sheaf or handful, but, as Josephus, 3. 10 affirms, and may be gathered from chap. ii, 14, 15, 16, purged from the chaff, and dryed, and beaten out.

11. He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord - In the name of the whole congregation, which as it were sanctified to them the whole harvest, and gave them a comfortable use of all the rest. For

then we may eat our bread with joy, when God hath accepted our works. And thus should we always begin with God; begin our lives with him, begin every day with him, begin every work and business with him: seek ye first the kingdom of God. The morrow after the sabbath - After the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, which was a sabbath or day of rest, as appears from ver. 7, or upon the sixteenth day of the month. And this was the first of those fifty days, in the close whereof was the feast of pentecost.

13. Two tenth deals - Or, parts, of an ephah, that is, two omers, whereas in other sacrifices of lambs there was but one tenth deal prescribed. The reason of which disproportion may be this, that one of the tenth deals was a necessary attendant upon the lamb, and the other was peculiar to this feast, and was an attendant upon that of the corn, and was offered with it in thanksgiving to God for the fruits of the earth.

14. Bread - Made of new wheat. Nor green ears - Which were usual, not only for offerings to God, but also for man's food.

15. From the morrow - From the sixteenth day of the month, and the second day of the feast of unleavened bread inclusively.

16. A new meal-offering - Of new corn made into loaves.

18. One bullock and two rams - In Num. xxviii, 11, 19, it is two young bullocks and one ram. Either therefore it was left to their liberty to chuse which they would offer, or one of the bullocks there, and one of the rams here, were the peculiar sacrifices of the feast day, and the other were attendants upon the two loaves, which were the proper offering at this time. And the one may be mentioned there, and the other here, to teach us, that the addition of a new sacrifice did not destroy the former, but both were to be offered, as the extraordinary sacrifices of every feast did not hinder the oblation of the daily sacrifice.

19. One kid - In chap. iv, 14, the sin-offering for the sin of the people is a bullock, but here a kid; &c. the reason of the difference may be this, because that was for some particular sin of the people, but this only in general for all their sins.

20. Wave them - Some part of them in the name of the whole; and so for the two lambs, otherwise they had been too big and too heavy, to be waved. For the priests - Who had to themselves not only the breast and shoulder as in others, which belonged to the priest, but also the rest which belonged to the offerer; because the whole congregation being the offerer here, it could neither be distributed to them all, nor given to some without offense to the rest.

21. An holy convocation - A sabbath or day of rest, called pentecost; which was instituted, partly in remembrance of the consummation of their deliverance out of Egypt by bringing them thence to the mount of God, or Sinai, as God had promised, and of that admirable blessing of giving the law to them on the 50th day, and forming them into a commonwealth under his own immediate government; and partly in gratitude for the farther progress of their harvest, as in the passover they offered a thank-offering to God for the beginning of their harvest. The perfection of this feast, was the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles on this very day, in which the law of faith was given, fifty days after Christ our passover was sacrificed for us. And on that day the apostles, having themselves received the first-fruits of the spirit, begat three thousand souls thro' the word of truth, as the first- fruits of the Christian church.

22. When ye reap, thou - From the plural, ye, he comes to the singular, thou, because he would press this duty upon every person who hath an harvest to reap, that none might plead exemption from it. And it is observable, that though the present business is only concerning the worship of

God, yet he makes a kind of excursion to repeat a former law of providing for the poor, to shew that our devotion to God is little esteemed by him if it be not accompanied with acts of charity to men.

24. A sabbath - Solemnized with the blowing of trumpets by the priests, not in a common way, as they did every first day of every month, but in an extraordinary manner, not only in Jerusalem, but in all the cities of Israel. They began to blow at sun-rise, and continued blowing till sun-set. This seems to have been instituted,

1. To solemnize the beginning of the new year, whereof as to civil matters and particularly as to the Jubilee, this was the first day; concerning which it was fit the people should be admonished, both to excite their thankfulness for God's blessings in the last year, and to direct them in the management of their civil affairs.
2. To put a special honour upon this month. For as the seventh day was the sabbath, and the seventh year was a sabbatical year, so God would have the seventh month to be a kind of sabbatical month, for the many sabbaths and solemn feasts which were observed in this more than in any other month. And by this sounding of the trumpets in its beginning, God would quicken and prepare them for the following sabbaths, as well as that of atonement and humiliation for their sins, as those of thanksgiving for God's mercies.

27. Afflict your souls - With fasting, and bitter repentance for all, especially their national sins, among which no doubt God would have them remember their sin of the golden calf. For as God had threatened to remember it in after times to punish them for it, so there was great reason why they should remember it to humble themselves for it.

28. Whatsoever soul - Either of the Jewish nation, or religion. Hereby God would signify the absolute necessity which every man had of repentance and forgiveness of sin, and the desperate condition of all impenitent persons.

32. From even to even - The day of atonement began at the evening of the ninth day, and continued till the evening of the tenth day. Ye shall celebrate your sabbath - This particular sabbath is called your sabbath, possibly to note the difference between this and other sabbaths: for the weekly sabbath is oft called the sabbath of the Lord. The Jews are supposed to begin every day, and consequently their sabbaths, at the evening, in remembrance of the creation, as Christians generally begin their days and sabbaths with the morning in memory of Christ's resurrection.

34. Of tabernacles - Of tents or booths or arbours. This feast was appointed to remind them of that time when they had no other dwellings in the wilderness, and to stir them up to bless God, as well for the gracious protection then afforded them, as for the more commodious habitations now given them; and to excite them to gratitude for all the fruits of the year newly ended, which were now compleatly brought in.

36. Ye shall offer - A several-offering each day. The eighth day - Which though it was not one of the days of this feast strictly taken. Yet in a larger sense it belonged to this feast, and is called the great day of the feast, John vii, 37. And so indeed it was, as for other reasons, so because, by their removal from the tabernacles into fixed habitations, it represented that happy time wherein their 40 years tedious march in the wilderness was ended with their settlement in the land of Canaan, which it was most fit they should acknowledge with such a solemn day of thanksgiving as this was.

37. A sacrifice - A sin-offering, called by the general name, a sacrifice, because it was designed for that which was the principal end of all sacrifices, the expiation of sin.

38. Beside the sabbaths - The offerings of the weekly sabbaths. God will not have any sabbath-sacrifice diminished because of the addition of others, proper to any other feast. And it is here to be noted, that though other festival days are sometimes called sabbaths, yet these are here called the sabbaths of the Lord, in way of contradistinction, to shew that this was more eminently such than other feast-days. Your gifts - Which being here distinguished from the free-will-offerings made to the Lord, may note what they freely gave to the priests over and above their first- fruits and tithes or other things which they were enjoined to give.

39. This is no addition of a new, but only a repetition of the former injunction, with a more particular explication both of the manner and reason of the feast. The fruit - Not the corn, which was gathered long before, but that of the trees, as vines, olives, and other fruit-trees: which compleated the harvest, whence this is called the feast of in-gathering.

40. Of goodly trees - Namely, olive, myrtle and pine, mentioned, Neh. viii, 15, 16, which were most plentiful there, and which would best preserve their greenness. Thick trees - Fit for shade and shelter. And willows - To mix with the other, and in some sort bind them together. And as they made their booths of these materials, so they carried some of these boughs in their hands, as is affirmed by Jewish and other ancient writers.

42. In booths - Which were erected in their cities or towns, either in their streets, or gardens, or the tops of their houses. These were made flat, and therefore were fit for the use.

44. The feasts of the Lord - We have reason to be thankful, that the feasts of the Lord, now are not so numerous, nor the observance of them so burdensome and costly; but more spiritual and significant, and surer and sweeter earnests of the everlasting feast, at the last in-gathering, which we hope to be celebrating to eternity.

## XXIV

Laws concerning the lamps, ver. 1-4. The shew-bread, ver. 5-9. Blasphemy occasioned by that of Shelomith's son, ver. 10-16. The law of retaliation, ver. 17-22. The blasphemer stoned, ver. 23.

2. To cause the lamps to burn - Hebrew. the lamp: yet ver. 4, it is the lamps: The seven lamps made all one lamp. In allusion to which, the Blessed Spirit is represented, Rev. iv, 5, by seven lamps of fire before the throne. For there are diversities of gifts, but one spirit.

3. Aaron - Either by himself, or by his sons, Exod. xxv, 37.

4. The pure candlestick - So called, partly because it was made of pure gold, partly because it was to be always kept clean.

5. Thou - By the priests or Levites, whose work it was to prepare them, 1Chr ix, 32. Twelve cakes - Representing the twelve tribes.

6. Two rows - Not one above another, but one beside another, as the frankincense put upon each, ver. 7, shews.

7. Pure frankincense - Unmixed and uncorrupted, or of the best sort, to be burnt before the Lord. On the bread - And this was done every time that the bread was changed. For a memorial - For that part which properly belonged to God, whereas the rest belonged to the priests.

8. From the children of Israel - And these cakes are said to be received from or offered by the children of Israel, bought with the money which they contributed. By an everlasting covenant - By virtue of that compact made between me and them, by which they were obliged to keep this amongst other commands, and, they so doing, I am obliged to be their God and to bless them. And this may be here called an everlasting covenant, not only because it was to endure as long as the Jewish polity stood, but also because this was to stand everlastingly, or continually, and therefore the new cakes were first brought before the old were taken away.

9. It - The old bread now to be taken away. Made by fire - The incense was offered by fire, and that for or instead of the bread, and therefore the bread was reputed as if it had been so offered.

10. Whose father was an Egyptian - This circumstance seems noted, partly to shew the danger of marriages with persons of wicked principles, and partly by this severity against him who was a stranger by the father, and an Israelite by the mother, to shew that God would not have this sin go unpunished amongst his people, what-soever he was that committed it. Went out - Out of Egypt, being one of that mixed multitude, which came out with the Israelites, Exod. xii, 32. It is probable, this was done when the Israelites were near Sinai.

11. The name of the Lord - The words of the Lord, or of Jehovah, are supplied out of ver. 16, where they are expressed; here they are omitted perhaps for the aggravation of his crime. He blasphemed the name so called by way of eminency; that name which is above every name; that name which a man should in some sort tremble to mention; which is not to be named without cause or without reverence. And cursed - Not the Israelite only, but his God also, as appears from ver. 15, 16. And they brought him - Either the people who heard him, or the inferior magistrate, to whom he was first brought.

12. That the mind of the Lord might be shewed - For God had only said in general, that he would not hold such guiltless, that is, he would punish them, but had not declared how he would have them punished by men.

14. Lay their hands upon his head - Whereby they gave public testimony that they heard this person speak such words, and did in their own and all the peoples names, demand justice to be executed upon him, that by this sacrifice God might be appeased, and his judgments turned away from the people, upon whom they would certainly fall if he were unpunished. Stone him - The same punishment which was before appointed for those who cursed their parents.

15. Whosoever curseth his God - Speaketh of him reproachfully. Shall bear his sin - That is, the punishment of it; shall not go unpunished.

16. He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord - This is a repetition of the same sin in other words, which is common. As this law is laid down in general terms, ver. 15, so both the sin and the punishment are particularly expressed, ver. 16. All the congregation - To shew their zeal for God, and to beget in them the greater dread and abhorrence of blasphemy.

17. He that killeth - This law is repeated here, to prevent the mischievous effects of men's striving together, which as here it caused blasphemy, so it might in others lead to murder.

22. One law - That is, in matters of common right, but not as to church privileges.

23. Stone him with stones - This blasphemer was the first that died by the law of Moses. Stephen the first that died for the gospel, died by the abuse of the law. The martyr and the malefactor suffered the same death; but how vast the difference between them.

## XXV

In token of his peculiar right to the land of Canaan, God in this chapter appoints,

1. That every seventh year should be a year of rest, ver. 1-7.
2. That every fiftieth year should be a year of jubilee, ver. 8-17. A peculiar blessing annext, ver. 18-22. The land sold may be redeemed: if not, it shall revert at the year of jubilee, only with some exceptions, ver. 23-34. Usury forbidden, ver. 35-38. Jewish servants to be released at the jubilee, ver. 39. but heathens might be retained, ver. 40-46. Of an Israelite that sold himself to a stranger, ver. 47-55.

1. In mount Sinai - That is, near mount Sinai. So the Hebrew particle beth is sometimes used. So there is no need to disturb the history in this place.

2. When ye come into the land - So as to be settled in it; for the time of the wars was not to be accounted, nor the time before Joshua's distribution of the land among them. Keep a sabbath - That is, enjoy rest and freedom from plowing, and tilling. Unto the Lord - In obedience and unto the honour of God. This was instituted,

1. For the assertion of God's sovereign right to the land, in which the Israelites were but tenants at God's will.
2. For the trial of their obedience.
3. For the demonstration of his providence as well in general towards men, as especially towards his own people.
4. To wean them from inordinate love, and pursuit of worldly advantages, and to inure them to depend upon God alone, and upon God's blessing for their subsistence.
5. To put them in mind of that blessed and eternal rest provided for all good men.

4. A sabbath of rest to the land - They were neither to do any work about it, nor expect any harvest from it. All yearly labours were to be intermitted in the seventh year, as much as daily labours on the seventh day.

5. Of its own accord - From the grains that fell out of the ears the last reaping time. Thou shalt not reap - That is, as thy own peculiarly, but only so as others may reap it with thee, for present food. Undressed - Not cut off by thee, but suffered to grow for the use of the poor.

6. The sabbath of the land - That is, the growth of the sabbath, or that fruit which groweth in the sabbatical year. For thy servant - For all promiscuously, to take food from thence as they need it.

9. The jubilee - Signified the true liberty from our spiritual debts and slaveries to be purchased by Christ, and to be published to the world by the sound of the gospel. The seventh month - Which was the first month of the year for civil affairs; the jubilee therefore began in that month; and, as

it seems, upon this very tenth day, when the trumpet sounded, as other feasts generally began when the trumpet sounded. In the day of atonement - A very fit time, that when they fasted and prayed for God's mercy to them in the pardon of their sins, then they might exercise their charity to men in forgiving their debts; and to teach us, that the foundation of all solid comfort must be laid in repentance and atonement for our sins through Christ.

10. The fiftieth year - The year of jubilee was not the forty and ninth year, as some learned men think, but precisely the fiftieth. The old weekly sabbath is called the seventh day, because it truly was so, being next after the six days of the week and distinct from them all: and the year of release is called the seventh year, ver. 4, as immediately following the six years, ver. 3, and distinct from them all. And in like manner the jubilee is called the fiftieth year, because it comes next after seven tines seven or forty-nine years, ver. 8, and is distinct from them all. Unto all the inhabitants - Understand such as were Israelites; principally to all servants, even to such as would not and did not go out at the seventh year, and to the poor, who now were acquitted from all their debts, and restored to their possessions. Jubilee - So called either from the Hebrew word Jobel which signifies first a ram, and then a ram's horn, by the sound whereof it was proclaimed; or from Jubal the inventor of musical instruments, Gen. iv, 21, because it was celebrated with music and all expressions of joy. Unto his possession - Which had been sold or otherwise alienated from him. This law was not at all unjust, because all buyers and sellers had an eye to this condition in their bargains; but it was expedient in many regards, as

1. To mind them that God alone was the Lord and proprietor both of them and of their lands, and they only his tenants; a point which they were very apt to forget.
2. That hereby inheritances, families, and tribes, might be kept entire and clear until the coming of the Messiah, who was to be known as by other things, so by the tribe and family out of which he was to come. And this accordingly was done by the singular providence of God until the Lord Jesus did come. Since which time those characters are miserably confounded: which is no small argument that the Messiah is come.
3. To set bounds both to the insatiable avarice of some, and the foolish prodigality of others, that the former might not wholly and finally swallow up the inheritances of their brethren, and the latter might not be able to undo themselves and their posterity for ever, which was a singular privilege of this law and people. His family - From whom he was gone, being sold to some other family either by himself or by his father.

12. It shall be holy - So it was, because it was sequestered in great part from worldly employments and dedicated to God, and to the exercise of holy joy and thankfulness; and because it was a type of that holy and happy jubilee which they were to expect and enjoy under the Messiah. The increase thereof - Such things as it produced of itself. Out of the field - Whence they in common with others might take it as they needed it; but must not put it into barns, See ver. 5, and Exod. xxiii, 11.

14. Ye shall not oppress - Neither the seller by requiring more, nor the buyer by taking the advantage from his brother's necessities to give him less than the worth of it.

15. Years of fruits - Or, fruitful years; for there were some unfruitful years; those wherein they were not allowed to sow or reap.

16. Years of fruits - Or, For the number of the fruits. The meaning is, he selleth not the land, but only the fruits thereof, and that for a certain time.

21. For three years - Not compleatly, but in great part, namely, for that part of the 6th year which was between the beginning of harvest and the beginning of the 7th year, for the whole 7th year, and for that part of the 8th year which was before the harvest, which reached almost until the beginning of the ninth year. This is added to shew the equity of this command. As God would hereby try their faith and obedience, so he gave them an eminent proof of his own exact providence and tender care over them in making provisions suitable to their necessities.

22. Old fruit - Of the sixth year principally, if not solely.

23. For ever - So as to be for ever alienated from the family of him that sells it. Or, absolutely and properly, so as to become the property of the buyer: Or, to the extermination or utter cutting off, namely, of the seller, from all hopes and possibility of redemption. The land is mine - Procured for you by my power, given to you by my grace and bounty, and the right of propriety reserved by me. With me - That is, in my land or houses: thus he is said to sojourn with another that dwells in his house. Howsoever in your own or other mens opinions you pass for lords and proprietors, yet in truth, ye are but strangers and sojourners, not to possess the land for ever, but only for a season, and to leave it to such as I have appointed for it.

24. A redemption - A right of redemption in the time and manner following.

25. If any of his kin come - Or, If the redeemer come, being near akin to him, who in this was an eminent type of Christ, who was made near akin to us by taking our flesh, that he might perform the work of redemption for us.

27. The years of the sale - That is, from the time of the sale to the jubilee. See above, ver. 15, 16. The overplus - That is, a convenient price for the years from this redemption to the jubilee.

28. Go out - That is, out of the buyer's hand, without any redemption money.

30. It shall not go out - The reasons before alledged for lands do not hold in such houses; there was no danger of confusion in tribes or families by the alienation of houses. The seller also had a greater propriety in houses than in lands, as being commonly built by the owner's cost and diligence, and therefore had a fuller power to dispose of them. Besides, God would hereby encourage persons to buy and possess houses in such places, as frequency and fulness of inhabitants in cities, was a great strength, honour and advantage to the whole land.

31. In the villages - Because they belonged to and were necessary for the management of the lands.

34. May not be sold - Not sold at all, partly, because it was of absolute necessity for them for the keeping of their cattle, and partly because these were no enclosures, but common fields, in which all the Levites that lived in such a city had an interest, and therefore no particular Levite could dispose of his part in it.

35. A sojourner - Understand it of proselytes only, for of other strangers they were permitted to take usury, Deut. xxiii, 20.

36. Of him - That is, of thy brother, whether he be Israelite, or proselyte. Or increase - All kinds of usury are in this case forbidden, whether of money, or of victuals, or of any thing that is commonly lent by one man to another upon usury, or upon condition of receiving the thing lent with advantage and overplus. If one borrow in his necessity, there can be no doubt but this law is binding still. But it cannot be thought to bind, where money is borrowed for purchase of lands, trade, or other improvements. For there it is reasonable, that the lender share with the borrower in the profit.

39. As a bond-man - Neither for the time, for ever, nor for the manner, with the hardest and vilest kinds of service, rigorously and severely exacted.

41. Then shall he depart - Thou shalt not suffer him or his to abide longer in thy service, as thou mightest do in the year of release, Exod. xxi, 2, 6.

42. They are my servants - They, no less than you, are members of my church and people; such as I have chosen out of all the world to serve me here, and to enjoy me hereafter, and therefore are not to be oppressed, neither are you absolute lords over them to deal with them as you please.

43. Fear thy God - Though thou dost not fear them who are in thy power, and unable to right themselves, yet fear that God who hath commanded thee to use them kindly, and who can and will avenge their cause, if thou oppress them.

47. The flock - Hebrew. root, that is, one of the root or flock. So the word root is elsewhere used for the branch or progeny growing from it. He seems to note one of a foreign race and country, transplanted into the land of Israel, and there having taken root amongst the people of God, yet even such an one, though he hath some privilege by it, shall not have power to keep an Hebrew servant from the benefit of redemption.

50. According to the time of an hired servant - Allowance shall be made for the time wherein he hath served, proportionable to that which is given to an hired servant for so long service, because his condition is in this like theirs; it is not properly his person, but his work and labour that was sold.

53. In thy sight - Thou shalt not suffer this to be done, but whethe thou art a magistrate, or a private person, thou shalt take care according to thy capacity to get it remedied.

## XXVI

A general enforcement of the preceding laws, by promises of reward, and threats of punishment: Wherein is,

I. A repetition of some principal commandments, ver. 1, 2.

II. A promise of all good to the obedient, ver. 3-13.

III. A threatening of terrible judgments to the disobedient, ver. 14- 39.

IV. A promise of mercy to the penitent, ver. 40-46.

1. An image - Or pillar, that is, to worship it, or bow down to it, as it follows. Otherwise this was not simply prohibited, being practiced by holy men, both before and after this law.

2. My sanctuary - By purging and preserving it from all uncleanness, by approaching to it and managing all the services of it with reverence, and in such manner only as God hath appointed.

4. Rain - Therefore God placed them not in a land where there were such rivers as the Nile, to water it and make it fruitful, but in a land which depended wholly upon the rain of heaven, the key whereof God kept in his own hand, that so he might the more effectually oblige them to obedience, in which their happiness consisted.

5. The vintage - That is, you shall have so plentiful an harvest, that you shall not be able to thresh out your corn in a little time, but that work will last till the vintage.

6. The sword - That is, war, as the sword is oft taken. It shall not enter into it, nor have passage through it, much less shall your land be made the seat of war.

8. Five - A small number; a certain number for an uncertain.

9. Establish my covenant - That is, actually perform all that I have promised in my covenant made with you.

10. Bring forth - Or, cast out, throw them away as having no occasion to spend them, or give them to the poor, or even to your cattle, that you may make way for the new corn, which also is so plentiful, that of itself it will fill up your barns.

11. I will set - As I have placed it, so I will continue it among you, and not remove it from you, as once I did upon your miscarriage, Exod. xxxiii, 7.

12. I will walk among you - As I have hitherto done, both by my pillar of cloud and fire, and by my tabernacle, which have walked or gone along with you in all your journeys, and staid among you in all your stations, to protect, conduct, instruct, and comfort you. And I will own you for that peculiar people which I have singled out of mankind, to bless you here and to save you hereafter.

13. Upright - With heads lifted up, not pressed down with a yoke. It notes their liberty, security, confidence and glory.

15. Break my covenant - Break your part of that covenant made between me and you, and thereby discharge me from the blessings promised on my part.

16. That shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart - Two remarkable effects of this distemper, when it continues long. It eminently weakens the sight, and sinks the spirit. All chronical diseases are here included in the consumption, all acute in the burning ague or fever. 19. The pride of your power - That is, your strength of which you are proud, your numerous and united forces, your kingdom, yea, your ark and sanctuary. I will make your heaven as iron - The heavens shall yield you no rain, nor the earth fruits.

20. In vain - in plowing, and sowing, and tilling the ground.

25. The quarrel of my covenant - That is, my quarrel with you for your breach of your covenant made with me.

26. When I have broken the staff of your bread - By sending a famine or scarcity of bread, which is the staff and support of man's present life. Ten women - That is, ten or many families, for the women took care for the bread and food of all the family. By weight - This is a sign and consequence both of a famine, and of the baking of the bread of several families together in one oven, wherein each family took care to weigh their bread, and to receive the same proportion which they put in.

29. The flesh of your sons - Through extreme hunger. See Lam. iv, 10.

30. High places - In which you will sacrifice after the manner of the Heathens. The carcases of your idols - So he calls them, either to signify that their idols how specious soever or glorious in their eyes, were in truth but lifeless and contemptible carcases; or to shew that their idols should be so far from helping them, that they should be thrown down and broken with them, and both should lie together in a forlorn and loathsome state.

31. Sanctuaries - God's sanctuary, called sanctuaries here, as also Psalm 7iii, 17; 7iv, 7 Jer. li, 51 Ezek. xxviii, 18, because there were divers apartments in it, each of which was a sanctuary, or, which is all one, an holy place, as they are severally called. And yours emphatically, not mine, for I disown and abhor it, and all the services you do in it, because you have defiled it. I will not smell

- Not own or accept them. Your sweet odours - Either of the incense, or of your sacrifices, which when offered with faith and obedience, are sweet and acceptable to me.

32. Who dwell therein - Having driven you out and possessed your places.

33. After you - The sword shall follow you into strange lands, and you shall have no rest there.

34. The land shall enjoy her sabbaths - It shall enjoy those sabbatical years of rest from tillage, which you through covetousness would not give it.

37. When none pursueth - Your guilt and fear causing you to imagine that they do pursue when indeed they do not.

39. Pine away - Be consumed and melt away by degrees through diseases, oppressions, griefs, and manifold miseries.

40. If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they have trespassed against me - That is, with their prevarication with me and defection from me to idolatry, which by way of eminency he calls their trespass: and that also they have walked contrary to me, ver. 41, and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies - That is, that they are not come into these calamities by chance, nor by the misfortune of war, but by my just judgment upon them. And, if then their uncircumcised, that is, impure, carnal, profane, and impenitent hearts be humbled, that is, subdued, purged, reformed: if to this confession they add sincere humiliation and reformation, I will do what follows.

41. If they accept of - The meaning is, if they sincerely acknowledge the righteousness of God and their own wickedness, and patiently submit to his correcting hand; if with David they are ready to say, it is good for them that they are afflicted, that they may learn God's statutes, and yield obedience to them for the future, which is a good evidence of true repentance.

42. I will remember my covenant - So as to make good all that I have promised in it. For words of knowledge or remembrance in scripture, commonly denote affection and kindness. I will remember the land - Which now seems to be forgotten and despised, as if I had never chosen it to be the peculiar place of my presence and blessing.

44. For I am the Lord their God - Therefore neither the desperateness of their condition, nor the greatness of their sins, shall make me wholly make void my covenant with them and their ancestors, but I will in due time remember them for good, and for my covenant's sake return to them in mercy. From this place the Jews take great comfort, and assure themselves of deliverance out of their present servitude and misery. And from this, and such other places, St. Paul concludes, that the Israelitish nation, tho' then rejected and ruined, should be gathered again and restored.

46. These are the laws which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel - Hereby his communion with his church is kept up. He manifests not only his dominion over them, but his favour to them, by giving them his law. And they manifest not only their holy fear, but their holy love by the observance of it. And thus it is made between them rather as a covenant than as a law: for he draws them with the cords of a man.

## XXVII

Laws concerning persons sanctified to God, ver. 1-8. Concerning cattle, ver. 9-13. Concerning houses and lands, ver. 14-25. An exception concerning firstlings, ver. 26-27. Concerning what was devoted, ver. 28, 29. Concerning tithes, ver. 30-34.

2. A singular vow-Or, an eminent, or hard vow, not concerning things, which was customary, but concerning persons, which he devoted to the Lord, which was unusual and difficult: yet there want not instances of persons who devoted either themselves or their children, and that either more strictly, as the Nazarites, and the Levites, 1 Sam. i, 11, and for these there was no redemption admitted, but they were in person to perform the service to which they were devoted: or more largely, as some who were not Levites, might yet through zeal to God, or to obtain God's help, which they wanted or desired, devote themselves or their children to the service of God and of the sanctuary, tho' not in such a way as the Levites, which was forbidden, yet in some kind of subserviency to them. And because there might be too great a number of persons thus dedicated, which might be burdensome to the sanctuary, an exchange is allowed, and the priests are directed to receive a tax for their redemption. By thy estimation - Thine, O man that vowest, as appears from ver. 8, where his estimation is opposed to the priest's valuation. Nor was there any fear of his partiality in his own cause, for the price is particularly limited. But where the price is undetermined, there, to avoid that inconvenience, the priest is to value it, as ver. 8, 12.

3. Unto sixty years - Which is the best time for strength and service, and therefore prized at the highest rate.

4. Thirty shekels - Less than the man's price, because she is inferior to him both in strength and serviceableness.

5. Five years old - At which age they might be vowed by their parents, as appears from 1 Sam. i, 11-28, tho' not by themselves; and the children were obliged by their parents vow, which is not strange considering the parents right to dispose of their children so far as is not contrary to the mind of God.

8. Than thy estimation - If he be not able to pay the price which thou, according to the rules here given, requirest of him.

9. Whereof men bring an offering - That is, a clean beast. Giveth - Voweth to give: Shall be holy - Consecrated to God, either to be sacrificed, or to be given to the priest, according to the manner of the vow, and the intention of him that voweth.

10. He shall not alter it, nor change it - Two words expressing the same thing more emphatically, that is, he shall in no wise change it, neither for one of the same, nor of another kind: partly because God would preserve the reverence of consecrated things, and therefore would not have them alienated, and partly to prevent abuses of them who on this pretense might exchange it for the worse. It and the exchange - That is, both the thing first vowed, and the thing offered or given in exchange. This was inflicted upon him as a just penalty for his levity in such weighty matters.

11. Unclean - Either for the kind, or for the quality of it; if it were such an one as might not be offered.

14. Sanctify his house - By a vow, for of that way and manner of sanctification he speaks in this whole chapter.

15. The fifth part - Which he might the better do, because the priests did usually put a moderate rate upon it.

16. Of his possession - That is, which is his by inheritance, because particular direction is given about purchased lands, ver. 22. And he saith, part of it, for it was unlawful to vow away all his possessions, because thereby he disabled himself from the performance of divers duties, and made himself burdensome to his brethren. According to the seed - That is, according to the quantity and quality of the land, which is known by the quantity of seed which it can receive and return. Fifty-shekels - Not to be paid yearly, 'till the year of jubilee, but once for all, as is most probable,

1. Because here is no mention of any yearly payment, but only of one payment.
2. Because it is probable that lands were moderately valued, that men might be rather encouraged to make such vows, than deterred by excessive impositions. But if this were yearly rent, it was an excessive rate, and much more than the land ordinarily yielded. For an omer is but the tenth part of an ephah, about a pottle of our measure, which quantity of seed would not extend very far, and in some lands would yield but an inconsiderable crop, especially in barley, which was cheaper than wheat and which for that reason, among others, may be mentioned rather than wheat.

17. From the year of jubilee - That is, immediately after the year of jubilee is past. According to thy estimation - Now mentioned, of fifty shekels for an omer of barley seed. It shall stand - That is, that price shall be paid without diminution.

18. After the jubilee - That is, some considerable time after. The defalcation from the full price of fifty shekels shall be more or less as the years are more or fewer.

20. If he will not redeem it - When the priest shall set a price upon it, and offer it to him in the first place to redeem it: or, rather and, for this seems to be added by way of accumulation, if he, that is, the priest, of whom he might have redeemed it, upon his refusal, offers it to sale, and have sold the field to another man - He shall for ever lose the benefit of redemption.

21. When it goeth out - That is, out of the possession of the other man to whom the priest sold it. The possession shall be the priests - For their maintenance. Nor is this repugnant to that law, that the priests should have no inheritance in the land, Num. xviii, 20, for that is only spoken of, the tribe of Levi in general, in reference to the first division of the land, wherein the Levites were not to have a distinct part of land, as other tribes had; but this doth not hinder, but some particular lands might be vowed and given to the priests, either for their own benefit, or for the service of the sanctuary.

22. His possession - His patrimony or inheritance.

23. Thy estimation - That is, the price which thou, O Moses, by my direction hast set in such cases. To the jubilee - As much as it is worth, for that space of time between the making of the vow and the year of jubilee: for he had no right to it for any longer time, as the next verse tells us. As an holy thing - As that which is to be consecrated to God instead of the land redeemed by it.

25. The shekel - About 2s. 6d.

26. No man shall sanctify it - By vow; because it is not his own, but the Lord's already, and therefore to vow such a thing to God is a tacit derogation from, and an usurpation of the Lord's right, and a mocking of God by pretending to give what we cannot withhold from him. Or ox or sheep - Under these two eminent kinds he comprehends all other beasts which might be sacrificed

to God, the firstlings whereof could not be redeemed but were to be sacrificed; whereas the firstlings of men were to be redeemed, and therefore were capable of being vowed, as we see, 1 Sam. i, 11.

27. An unclean beast - That is, if it be the first-born of an unclean beast, as appears from ver. 26, which could not be vowed, because it was a first-born, nor offered, because it was unclean, and therefore is here commanded to be redeemed or sold. It shall be sold - And the price thereof was given to the priests, or brought into the Lord's treasury.

28. No devoted thing - That is, nothing which is absolutely devoted to God with a curse upon themselves or others, if they disposed not of it according to their vow; as the Hebrew word implies. Most holy - That is, only to be touched or employed by the priests, and by no other persons; no not by their own families, for that was the state of the most holy things.

29. Devoted of men - Not by men, as some would elude It; but of men, for it is manifest both from this and the foregoing verses, that men are here not the persons devoting, but devoted to destruction, either by God's sentence, as idolaters, Exod. xxii, 20 Deut. xxiii, 15, the Canaanites, Deut. xx, 17, the Amalekites, Deut. xxv, 19, and 1 Sam. xv, 3, 26, Benhaded, 1 Kings xx, 42, or by men, in pursuance of such a sentence of God, as Num. xxi, 2, 3; xxxi, 17, or for any crime of an high nature, as Jude xxi, 5 Josh. xvii, 15. But this is not to be generally understood, as some have taken it, as if a Jew might by virtue of this Text, devote his child or his servant to the Lord, and thereby oblige himself to put them to death. For this is expressly limited to all that a man hath, or which is his, that is, which he hath a power over. But the Jews had no power over the lives of their children or servants, but were directly forbidden to take them away, by that great command, thou shalt do no murder. And seeing he that killed his servant casually by a blow with a rod was surely to be punished, as is said, Exod. xxi, 20, it could not be lawful wilfully to take away his life upon pretense of any such vow as this. But for the Canaanites, Amalekites, &c. God the undoubted Lord of all men's lives, gave to the Israelites a power over their persons and lives, and a command to put them to death. And this verse may have a special respect to them or such as them.

30. The tithe - There are divers sorts of tithes, but this seems to be understood only of the ordinary and yearly tithes belonging to the Levites, as the very expression intimates, and the addition of the fifth part in case of redemption thereof implies.

32. Under the rod - Either,

1. The tither's rod, it being the manner of the Jews in tithing to cause all their cattle to pass through some gate or narrow passage, where the tenth was marked by a person appointed for that purpose and reserved for the priest. Or
2. the shepherd's rod, under which the herds and flocks passed, and by which they were governed and numbered. See Jer. xxxiii, 13 Ezek. xx, 37.

34. These are the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai - This has reference to the whole book. Many of these commandments are moral: others ceremonial and peculiar to the Jewish economy: Which yet are instructive to us, who have a key to the mysteries that are contained in them. Upon the whole, we have cause to bless God, that we are not come to mount Sinai, that we are not under the dark shadows of the law, but enjoy the clear light of the gospel. The doctrine of our reconciliation to God by a Mediator, is not clouded with the smoke of burning sacrifices, but cleared by the knowledge of Christ, and him crucified. And we may praise him, that we are not under the yoke of the law, but under the sweet and easy instructions of the gospel, which pronounces those the true worshippers, that worship the Father in spirit and in truth, by Christ only, who is our priest, temple, altar, sacrifice, purification and all.

# NOTES ON THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES CALLED NUMBERS

THIS book is thus entitled, because of the numbers of the children of Israel, so often mentioned therein, an eminent accomplishment of God's promise to Abraham, that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude. It also relates two numberings of them, one at mount Sinai, chap. 1. the other, thirty-nine years after. And there are not three men of the same in the last account that were in the first. The book is almost equally divided, between histories and laws intermixed. An abstract of much of this book we have in a few words, Psalm xcv, 10. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation: and an application of it to ourselves, Heb. iv, 1. Let us fear lest we come short!

## I

Orders given to Moses to number the people, ver. 1-4. Persons named to assist him therein, ver. 5-16. The particular number of each tribe, ver. 17-43. The sum of all together, ver. 44-46. The Levites excepted, ver. 47-54.

1. In the wilderness - Where now they had been a full year or near it, as may be gathered by comparing this place with Exod. xix, 1; xl, 17.

2. Take the sum - This is not the same muster with that Exod. xxxviii, 26, as plainly appears, because that was before the building of the tabernacle, which was built and set up on the first day of the first month, Exod. xl, 2, but this was after it, on the first day of the second month. And they were for different ends; that was to tax them for the charges of the tabernacle; but this was for other ends, partly that the great number of the people might be known to the praise of God's faithfulness, in making good his promises of multiplying them, and to their own encouragement: partly for the better ordering their camp and march, for they were now beginning their journey; and partly that this account might he compared with the other in the close of the book, where we read that not one of all this vast number, except Caleb and Joshua were left alive; a fair warning to all future generations to take heed of rebelling against the Lord. It is true, the sums and numbers agree in this and that computation, which is not strange, because there was not much time between the two numberings, and no eminent sin among the people in that interval, whereby God was provoked to diminish their numbers. Some conceive that in that number, Exod. xxx, 11-16 and xxxviii, 25, 26, the Levites were included, which are here excepted, ver. 47, and that in that interval of time, there were grown up as many more men of those years as there were Levites of the same age. Israel - So the strangers mixed with them, were not numbered. Their fathers - The people were divided into twelve tribes, the tribes into great families, ver. xxvi, 5, these great families into lesser families called the houses of their fathers, because they were distinguished one from another by their fathers.

5. Reuben - The tribes are here numbered according to the order or quality of their birth, first the children of Leah, then of Rachel, and then of the handmaids.

12. Deuel - Called Reuel, chap. iii, 14, the Hebrew letters Daleth and Resh being often changed.

19. He numbered them - For ought that appears in one day.

20. By their generations - That is, the persons begotten of Reuben's immediate children, who are here subdivided into families, and they into houses, and they into particular persons.

27. Threescore and fourteen thousand - Far more than any other tribe, in accomplishing Jacob's prophecy, Gen. xlix, 8-12.

33. ephraim - Above 8000 more than Manasseh, towards the accomplishment of that promise, Gen. xlviii, 20, which the devil in vain attempted to defeat by stirring up the men of Gath against them, 1Chr vii, 21, 22.

37. Thirty five thousand - The smallest number, except one, though Benjamin had more immediate children than any of his brethren, Gen. xlvi, 21, whereas Daniel had but one immediate son, Gen. xlvi, 23, yet now his number is the biggest but one of all the tribes, and is almost double to that of Benjamin. Such great and strange changes God easily can, and frequently doth make in families, 1 Sam. ii, 5. And therefore let none boast or please themselves too much in their numerous offspring.

49. Levi - Because they were not generally to go out to war, which was the thing principally eyed in this muster, ver. 3, 20, 45, but were to attend upon the service of the tabernacle. They that minister upon holy things, should not entangle themselves in secular affairs. The ministry itself is work enough for a whole man, and all little enough to be employed in it.

50. The tabernacle of testimony - So called here, and Exod. xxxviii, 21, because it was made chiefly for the sake of the ark of the testimony, which is often called the testimony.

51. That cometh nigh - The stranger elsewhere is one of another nation, here one of another tribe. So as to do the offices mentioned, ver. 50.

53. No wrath - From God, who is very tender of his worship, and will not suffer the profaners of it go unpunished! whose wrath is called simply wrath by way of eminency, as the most terrible kind of wrath.

## II

Orders concerning the camp,

1. A general order, ver. 1, 2.
2. Particular directions for posting each of the tribes, in four squadrons. In the vanguard, on the east, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, ver. 3-9. In the right wing, southward, Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, ver. 10-16. The tabernacle in the midst, ver. 17. In the rear, westward, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, ver. 18-24. In the left wing, northward, Daniel, Asher, and Naphtali, ver. 25-31. The conclusion of the appointment, ver. 32-34.

2. His own standard - It is manifest there were four great standards or ensigns, which here follow, distinguished by their colours or figures; also there were other particular ensigns belonging to each of their fathers houses or families. Far off - Partly out of reverence to God and his worship, and the portion, allotted to it, and partly for caution, lest their vicinity to it might tempt them to make too near approaches to it. It is supposed they Were at 2000 cubits distance from it, which was the space between the people and the ark; and it is not improbable, because the Levites encamped

round about it, between them and the tabernacle. It is observable, those tribes were placed together, that were nearest of kin to each other. Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun were the three youngest sons of Leah, and Issachar and Zebulun would not grudge to be under Judah, their elder brother. Reuben and Simeon would not be content with their place. Therefore Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, is chief of the next squadron. Simeon doubtless is willing to be under him. And Gad, the son of Leah's handmaid, is fitly added to him, in Levi's room. Ephraim Manasseh, and Benjamin are all the posterity of Rachel. Daniel the eldest son of Bilhah leads the rest; to them are added the two younger sons of the handmaids. So much of the wisdom of God appears even in these smaller circumstances!

3. Judah - This tribe was in the first post, and in their marches led the van, not only because it was the most numerous, but chiefly because Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, was to descend from it: Yea, from the loins of Nahshon, who is here appointed the chief captain of it.

17. In the midst - This is not to be understood strictly, but largely; for in their march they were divided, and part of that tribe marched next after Judah, chap. x, 17, and the other part exactly in the midst of the camp.

18. Ephraim - Who is here preferred before his brother, according to the prophecy, Gen. xlviii, 19, 20.

31. The Camp of Daniel - The strongest camp next after Judah, and therefore he comes in the rear, as Judah marched in the front, that the tabernacle might be best guarded where there was most danger.

## III

In this chapter we have an account,

1. Of the priests, ver. 1-4.
2. The work of the Levites, taken instead of the first-born, ver. 5- 13.
3. Of the number, place and charge of each family; the Gershonites, ver. 14-26. The Kohathites, ver. 27-32. The Merarites, ver. 33-39.
4. Of the first-born, ver. 40-51.

1. These - Which follow in this chapter. The generations - The kindred or family. Moses his family and children are here included under the general name of the Amramites, ver. 27, which includes all the children and grand-children of Amram, the persons only of Aaron and Moses being excepted. And the generations of Moses are thus obscurely mentioned, because they were but common Levites, the priesthood being given solely to Aaron's posterity, whence Aaron is here put before Moses, who elsewhere is commonly named after him. In Sinai - Nadab and Abihu, were then alive, though dead at the time of taking this account.

4. In the sight of Aaron - Under his inspection and direction, and as their father's servants or ministers in the priest's office.

6. Present them - Offer them to the Lord for his special service. This was promised to them before, and now actually conferred.

7. His charge - That is, Aaron's, or those things which are committed principally to Aaron's care and oversight. Of the congregation - That is, of all the sacrifices and services which are due to the Lord from all the people, because the people might not perform them, in their own persons, therefore they were to be performed by some particular persons in their stead; formerly by the first-born, chap. viii, 16, and now by the Levites. Before the tabernacle - Not within the tabernacle, for the care of the things within the holy place was appropriated to the priests, as the care of the most holy place was to the high-priest.

8. Of the children of Israel - Those things which all the children of Israel are in their several places and stations obliged to take care of, though not in their persons, yet by others in their stead.

9. Given to him - To attend upon him and observe his orders, and ease him of his burden.

10. The stranger - That is, every one who is of another family than Aaron's; yea, though he be a Levite. That cometh nigh - To execute any part of the priest's office.

12. The first-born - Who were God's property, Exod. xiii, 12, and to whom the administration of holy things was formerly committed, which now was taken away from them, either because they had forfeited this privilege by joining with the rest of their brethren in the idolatrous worship of the calf, or because they were to be mainly concerned in the distribution and management of the inheritances which now they were going to possess, and therefore could not be at leisure to attend upon the service of the sanctuary: and God would not commit it to some other persons in each tribe, which might be an occasion of idolatry, confusion, division, and contempt of sacred things, but to one distinct tribe, which might be entirely devoted to that service, and particularly to the tribe of Levi; partly out of his respect to Moses and Aaron, branches of this tribe; partly as a recompence of their zeal for God against idolaters, and partly because it was the smallest of the tribes, and therefore most likely to find both employment in, and maintenance for the work.

15. From a month old - Because at that time the first-born, in whose stead the Levites came, were offered to God. And from that time the Levites were consecrated to God, and were, as soon as capable, instructed in their work. Elsewhere they are numbered from twenty-five years old, when they were entered as novices into part of their work, chap. viii, 24, and from thirty years old, when they were admitted to their whole office.

25. The tabernacle - Not the boards, which belonged to Merari, ver. 36, but the ten curtains. The tent - The curtains of goats hair. The coverings - That is, the coverings of rams-skins and badgers- skins.

26. The cords - By which the tabernacle was fastened to the pins, and stretched out, Exod. xxxv, 18.

27. Of Kohath - This family had many privileges above the others: of that were Moses and Aaron, and all the priests: they had the chief place about the tabernacle, and the care of the most holy things here, and in the land of Canaan they had twenty three cities, which were almost as many as both their brethren received. Yet the posterity of Moses were not at all dignified or distinguished from other Levites. So far was he from seeking any advantage or honour for his own family.

28. Keeping - That is, appointed for that work, as soon as they were capable of it. Of the sanctuary - That is, of the holy things contained in or belonging to the sanctuary.

31. The hanging - Which covered the most holy place, for all other hangings belonged to the Gershonites. The service - That is, all the other furniture belonging to it.

32. Chief - Next under the high-priest; whence he is called the second priest, 2 Kings xxv, 18, and in case of the high-priest's absence by sickness or other necessary occasions, he was to perform

his work, and he had a superiority over all the rest of the priests and Levites. The chief of the Levites - That is, over those three persons, who were each the chief of their several families, ver. 24, 31, 34.

38. For the charge - Either in their stead, that charge which they were obliged to keep, if God had not committed it to those: or for their benefit; for their preservation, as the word may be rendered.

39. Two and twenty thousand - If the particular numbers mentioned ver. 22, 28, 34, be put together, they make 22,300. But the odd 300 are omitted here, either according to the use of the holy scripture, where in so great numbers small sums are commonly neglected, or, because they were the first-born of the Levites, and therefore belonged to God already, and so could not be given to him again instead of the other first-born. If this number of first- born seem small to come from 22,000 Levites, it must be considered, that only such first-born are here named as were males, and such as continued in their parents families, not such as had erected new families of their own. Add to this, that God so ordered things by his wise providence for divers weighty reasons, that this tribe should be much the least of all the tribes, as is evident by comparing the numbers of the other tribes, from twenty years old, chap. i, 3-49, with the number of this from a month old; and therefore it is not strange if the number of their first-born be less than in other tribes.

41. Instead of the first-born - Such as are now alive of them, but those which should be born of them hereafter are otherwise disposed. Of the Levites - Not that they were to be taken from the Levites, or to be sacrificed to God, any more than the Levites themselves were; but they together with the Levites were to be presented before the Lord by way of acknowledgment, that the Levites might be set apart for God's service, and their cattle for themselves as God's ministers, and for their support in God's work.

46. For those that are to be redeemed - 'Tis probable, in the exchange they began with the eldest of the first-born, and so downwards, so that those were to be redeemed, who were the two hundred, seventy three youngest of them.

47. Five shekels - Which was the price paid for the redemption of a first-born a month old.

## IV

A command to number the Levites from thirty to fifty years old, ver. 1-3. The charge of the Kohathites, ver. 4-20. Of the Gershonites, ver. 21-28. Of the Merarites, ver. 29-33. The number of each, ver. 34-45. Of all in general, ver. 46-49.

3. From thirty - This age was prescribed, as the age of full strength of body, and therefore most proper for their labourious work of carrying the parts and vessels of the tabernacle, and of maturity of judgment, which is necessary for the right management of holy services. Whence even John and Christ entered not upon their ministry till that age. Indeed their first entrance upon their work was at their 25th year, when they began as learners, and acted under the inspection and direction of their brethren; but in their 30th year they were compleatly admitted to a full discharge of their whole office. But David, being a prophet, and particularly directed by God in the affairs of the temple, made a change in this matter, because the magnificence of the temple, and the great multitude of

sacred utensils and sacrifices, required a greater number of attendants than formerly was necessary. Until fifty - When they were exempted from the toilsome work of carrying burdens, but not discharged from the honourable and easy work done within the tabernacle, chap. viii, 26. All that enter - That is, that do and may enter, having no defect, nor other impediment.

5. They shall take down - For upon this necessary occasion the inferior priests are allowed to come into the holy of holies, which otherwise was peculiar to the high-priest. The covering veil - The second veil, wherewith the ark was covered while the tabernacle stood, Exod. xl, 3. Cover the ark - Because the Levites, who were to carry the ark, might neither see, nor immediately touch it.

6. Badgers-skins - Whereby the ark was secured from the injuries of the weather.

7. The dishes - Upon which the shew-bread was put. Continual bread - So called because it was continually to be there, even in the wilderness; where though they had only manna for themselves, yet they reserved corn for the weekly making of these loaves, which they might with no great difficulty procure from some of the people bordering upon the wilderness.

11. The golden altar - All covered with plates of gold.

12. The instruments of ministry - The sacred garments used by the priests in their holy ministrations. Cover them - All these coverings were designed,

1. For safety, that these holy things might not be filled by rain, or tarnished by the sun.
2. For decency, most of them had a cloth of blue, or purple, or scarlet over them; the ark, a cloth wholly of blue, perhaps an emblem of the azure skies, which are spread between us and the Majesty on high;
3. For concealment. It was a fit sign of the darkness of that dispensation. The holy things were then covered. But Christ hath now destroyed the face of the covering.

13. The altar - Hence we may conclude, that they did offer sacrifices at other times, though not so constantly and diligently, as they did in Canaan. Moreover the taking away of the ashes only doth sufficiently imply that the fire was preserved, which as it came down from heaven, Lev. ix, 24. So it was by God's command to be continually fed, and kept burning, and therefore doubtless was put into some vessel, which might be either fastened to the altar and put within this covering, or carried by some person appointed thereunto.

15. Bear it - Upon their shoulders. Afterward the priests themselves, being multiplied, carried these things, though the Levites also were not excluded. They shall not touch - Before they are covered.

16. Eleazar - He himself is to carry these things, and not to commit them to the sons of Kohath. The oversight - The care that all the things above mentioned be carried by the persons and in the manner expressed.

18. Cut not off - Do not by your neglect provoke God to cut them off for touching the holy things.

19. To his service - To that which is peculiarly allotted to him, the services, and burdens being equally distributed among them.

25. The curtains - The curtains or covering of goats-hair. The tabernacle - The ten curtains which covered the boards of the tabernacle; for the boards themselves were carried by the Merarites. His covering - The covering of rams-skins which was put next over those ten curtains.

26. Which is round about - Which court compassed both the tabernacle and the altar.

28. Under the hand - Under his conduct and direction.

31. The sockets - Which were as the feet upon which the pillars stood.

32. Ye shall reckon - Every part and parcel shall be put in an inventory; which is required here rather than in the fore-going particulars; because these were much more numerous than the former; because being meaner things, they might otherwise have been neglected; and also to teach us, that God esteems nothing small in his service, and that he expects his will should be observed in the minutest circumstances. The death of the saints is represented us the taking down of the tabernacle. The immortal soul, like the most holy things, is first covered and taken away, carried by angels unseen, and care is taken also of the body, the skin and flesh, which are as the curtains, the bones and sinews, which are as the bars and pillars. None of these shall be lost. Commandment is given concerning the bones, a covenant made with the dust. They are in safe custody, and shall be produced in the great day, when this tabernacle shall be set up again, and these vile bodies made like the glorious body of Jesus Christ.

44. Three thousand - Here appears the wisdom of Divine Providence, that whereas in the Kohathites and Gershonites, whose burdens were fewer and easier, there were but about a third part of them fit for service; the Merarites, whose burdens were more and heavier, had above half of them fit for this work.

## V

A command to remove the unclean out of the camp, ver. 1-4. Laws concerning restitution, ver. 5-10. The law concerning a woman suspected of adultery, ver. 11-31.

3. That they defile not the camp - By which God would intimate the danger of being made guilty by other mens sins, and the duty of avoiding intimate converse with wicked men. I dwell - By my special and gracious presence.

6. Any sin that men commit - Hebrew. any sins of men, that is, sins against men, as deceits or wrongs, whereby other men are injured, of which he manifestly speaks. Against the Lord - Which words may be added, to shew that such injuries done to men are also sins against God, who hath commanded justice to men, as well as religion to himself. Guilty - That is, shall be sensible of his guilt, convicted in his conscience.

7. They shall confess their sin - They shall not continue in the denial of the fact, but give glory to God, and take shame to themselves by acknowledging it. The principal - That is, the thing he took away, or what is equivalent to it. And add - Both as a compensation to the injured person for the want of his goods so long, and as a penalty upon the injurious dealer, to discourage others from such attempts.

8. No kinsman - This supposes the person injured to be dead or gone, into some unknown place, and the person injured to be known to the injurer. To the priest - Whom God appointed as his deputy to receive his dues, and take them to his own use, that so he might more chearfully and entirely devote himself to the ministration of holy things. This is an additional explication to that law, Lev. vi, 2, and for the sake thereof it seems here to be repeated.

9. Unto the priest - To offer by his hands.

10. Every man's hallowed things - Understand this not of the sacrifices, because these were not the priest's peculiar, but part of them was offered to God, and the remainder was eaten by the offerer as well as by the priest; but of such other things as were devoted to God, and could not be offered in sacrifice; as suppose a man consecrated an house to the Lord, this was to be the priest's.

12. If a man's wife - This law was given partly to deter wives from adulterous practices, and partly to secure wives against the rage of their hard-hearted husbands, who otherwise might upon mere suspicions destroy them, or at least put them away. There was not like fear of inconveniences to the husband from the jealousy, of the wife, who had not that authority and power, and opportunity for the putting away or killing the husband, as the husband had over the wife. Go aside - From the way of religion and justice, and that either in truth, or in her husband's opinion.

15. The man shall bring her to the priest - Who first strove to persuade her to own the truth. If she did, she was not put to death, (which must have been, if it had been proved against her) but only was divorced and lost her dowry. Her offering - By way of solemn appeal to God, whom hereby she desired to judge between her and her husband, and by way of atonement to appease God, who had for her sins stirred up her husband against her. He shall pour no oil - Both because it was a kind of sin-offering, from which these were excluded, and because she came thither as a delinquent, or suspected of delinquency, unpleasing both to God and men; as one that wanted that grace and amiableness and joy which oil signified, and that acceptance with God which frankincense denoted, Psalm 1xli, 2. Bringing iniquity to remembrance - Both to God before whom she appeared as a sinner, and to her own conscience, if she was guilty; and, if she were not guilty of this, yet it reminded her of her other sins, for which this might be a punishment.

16. Before the Lord - That is, before the sanctuary where the ark was.

17. Holy water - Water of purification appointed for such uses. This was used, that if she were guilty, she might be afraid to add profaneness to her other crime. An earthen vessel - Because, after this use, it was to be broken in pieces, that the remembrance of it might be blotted out as far as was possible. Dust - An emblem of vileness and misery. From the floor of the tabernacle - Which made it holy dust, and struck the greater terror into the woman, if she were guilty.

18. Before the Lord - Before the tabernacle with her face towards the ark. Uncover her head - Partly that she might be made sensible how manifest she and all her ways were to God; partly in token of her sorrow for her sin, or at least for any cause of suspicion which she had given. In her hands - That she herself might offer it, and thereby call God to be witness of her innocency. Bitter - So called either from the bitter taste which the dust gave it, or from the bitter effects of it upon her, if she were guilty. That causeth the curse - Not by any natural power, but by a supernatural efficacy.

19. By an oath - To answer truly to his question, or to declare whether she be guilty or no, and after such oath shall say as follows.

21. An oath - That is, a form of cursing, that when they would curse a person, they may wish that they may be as miserable as thou wast. Thy thigh - A modest expression, used both in scripture, as Gen. xlvi, 26, Exod. i, 5, and other authors. To rot - Hebrew. to fall, that is, to die or waste away. To swell - Suddenly and violently till it burst, which the Jews note was frequent in this case. And it was a clear evidence of the truth of their religion.

22. Amen, amen - That is, so let it be if I be guilty. The word is doubled by her as an evidence of her innocency, and ardent desire that God would deal with her according to her desert.

23. In a book - That is, in a scroll of parchment, which the Hebrews commonly call a book. Blot them out - Or scrape them out and cast them into the bitter water. Whereby it was signified, that if she was innocent, the curses should be blotted out and come to nothing; and, if she were guilty, she should find in her the effects of this water which she drank, after the words of this curse had been scraped and put in.

24. To drink - That is, after the jealousy-offering was offered.

28. Conceive seed - That is, shall bring forth children, as the Jews say, in case of her innocency, she infallibly did, yea though she was barren before.

31. Guiltless - Which he should not have been, if he had either indulged her in so great a wickedness, and not endeavoured to bring her to repentance or punishment, or cherished suspicions in his breast, and thereupon proceeded to hate her or cast her off. Whereas now, whatsoever the consequence is, the husband shall not be censured for bringing such curses upon her, or for defaming her, if she appear to be innocent. Her iniquity - That is, the punishment of her iniquity, whether she was false to her husband, or by any light carriage gave him occasion to suspect her.

## VI

The law of the Nazarites. What they were to abstain from, ver. 1-8. How to be cleansed from casual uncleanness, ver. 9-12. How to be discharged from their vow, ver. 13-21. The form of blessing the people, ver. 22-27.

2. Man or woman - For both sexes might make this vow, if they were free and at their own disposal: otherwise their parents or husbands could disannul the vow. A vow of a Nazarite - Whereby they sequestered themselves from worldly employments and enjoyments, that they might entirely consecrate themselves to God's service, and this either for their whole lifetime, or for a less and limited space of time.

3. Nor eat grapes - Which was forbidden him for greater caution to keep him at the farther distance from wine.

4. All the days of his separation - Which were sometimes more, sometimes fewer, as he thought fit to appoint.

5. No razor - Nor scissors, or other instrument to cut off any part of his hair. This was appointed, partly as a sign of his mortification to worldly delights and outward beauty; partly as a testimony of that purity which hereby he professed, because the cutting off the hair was a sign of uncleanness, as appears from ver. 9, partly that by the length of his hair he might be constantly minded of his vow; and partly that he might reserve his hair entirely for God, to whom it was to be offered. Holy - That is, wholly consecrated to God and his service, whereby he shews that inward holiness was the great thing which God required and valued in these, and consequently in other rites and ceremonies.

7. His father - Wherein he was equal to the high-priest, being, in some sort, as eminent a type of Christ, and therefore justly required to prefer the service of God, to which he had so fully given

himself, before the expressions of his affections to his dearest and nearest relations. The consecration - That is, the token of his consecration, namely, his long hair.

9. He shall shave his head - Because his whole body, and especially his hair was defiled by such an accident, which he ought to impute either to his own heedlessness, or to God's providence so ordering the matter, possibly for the punishment of his other sins, or for the quickening him to more purity and detestation of all dead works, whereby he would be defiled.

11. A sin-offering - Because such a pollution was, though not his sin, yet the chastisement of his sin. He sinned - That is, contracted a ceremonial uncleanness, which is called sinning, because it was a type of sin, and a violation of a law, tho' through ignorance and inadvertency. Hallow - Begin again to hallow or consecrate it.

12. The days of his separation - As many days as he had before vowed to God. Lost - Hebrew. fall, to the ground, that is, be void or of none effect.

14. A sin-offering - Whereby he confessed his miscarriages, notwithstanding the strictness of his vow and all the diligence which he could use, and consequently acknowledged his need of the grace of God in Christ Jesus the true Nazarite. For peace- offerings - For thankfulness to God, who had given him grace to make and in some measure to keep such a vow. So he offered all the three sorts of offerings, that he might so far fulfil all righteousness and profess his obligation to observe the will of God in all things.

15. Their meal-offering - Such as generally accompanied the sacrifices.

18. At the door - Publickly, that it might be known that his vow was ended, and therefore he was at liberty as to those things from which he had restrained himself for a season, otherwise some might have been scandalized at his use of his liberty. The fire - Upon which the flesh of the peace-offerings was boiled.

19. The shoulder - The left-shoulder, as it appears from ver. 20, where this is joined with the heave-shoulder, which was the right- shoulder, and which was the priests due in all sacrifices, Lev. vii, 32, and in this also. But here the other shoulder was added to it, as a special token of thankfulness from the Nazarites for God's singular favours vouchsafed unto them. The hands - That he may give them to the priest, as his peculiar gift.

20. May drink wine - And return to his former manner of living.

21. That his hand shall get - Besides what he shall voluntarily give according to his ability.

23. On this wise - Hebrew. Thus, or in these words: yet they were not tied to these very words; because after this we have examples of Moses and David and Solomon, blessing the people in other words.

24. Bless thee - Bestow upon you all manner of blessings, temporal and spiritual. Keep thee - That is, continue his blessings to thee, and preserve thee in and to the use of them; keep thee from sin and its bitter effects.

25. Shine upon thee - Alluding to the shining of the sun upon the earth, to enlighten, and warm, and renew the face of it. The Lord love thee, and make thee know that he loves thee. We cannot but be happy, if we have God's love; and we cannot but be easy, if we know that we have it.

26. Lift up his countenance - That is, look upon thee with a chearful and pleasant countenance, as one that is well pleased with thee and thy services. Peace - Peace with God, with thy own conscience, and with all men; all prosperity is comprehended under this word.

27. Put my name - Shall call them by my name, shall recommend them to me as my own people, and bless them and pray unto me for them as such; which is a powerful argument to prevail with God for them.

## VII

The offerings of the princes upon the dedication of the tabernacle, ver. 1-9. Upon the dedication of the altar, ver. 10-88, Which God graciously accepts, ver. 89.

1. On the day - It seems day is for time, and on the day, for about the time. For all the princes did not offer these things upon one and the same day, but on several days, as here it follows. And so this chapter comes in its proper place, and those things were done in the second month of the second year after the tabernacle and altar, and all other instruments thereof were anointed, as is here expressed; and after the Levites were separated to the service of the tabernacle, and appointed to their several works, which was done about a month after the tabernacle was erected, and after the numbering of the people, chap. i, 2-49, when the princes here employed in the offerings were first constituted; and after the disposal of the tribes about the tabernacle, the order of which is here observed in the time of their offerings.

2. Offered - In the manner and days hereafter mentioned.

3. Waggons - For the more convenient and safe carriage of such things as were most cumbersome.

5. According to his service - More or fewer, as the nature of their service and of the things to be carried required.

9. Upon their shoulders - Because of the greater worth and holiness of the things which they carried.

10. The altar - Of burnt-offerings, and incense too, as appears from the matter of their offerings. Not for the first dedication of them, for it is apparent they were dedicated or consecrated before this time by Moses and Aaron: but for a farther dedication of them, these being the first offerings that were made for any particular persons or tribes. In the day - That is, about the time, as soon as it was anointed.

11. On his day - And in this offering they followed the order of their camp, and not of their birth.

13. Charger - A large dish or platter; to be employed about the altar of burnt-offering, or in the court; not in the sanctuary, for all its vessels were of gold.

17. Peace-offerings - Which are more numerous because the princes and priests, and some of the people made a feast before the Lord out of them.

87. Their meal-offering - Which was not mentioned before, because it was sufficiently understood from the law which required it.

88. After it was anointed - Which words are very conveniently added to explain in what sense he had so oft said, that this was done in the day when it was anointed, namely, not exactly, but in a latitude, a little after that it was anointed.

89. To speak with him - To consult God upon occasion. The mercy-seat - Which Moses standing without the veil could easily hear. And this seems to be added in this place, to shew that when men had done their part, God was not wanting in the performance of his part, and promise. God's speaking thus to Moses by an audible voice, as if he had been cloathed with a body, was an earnest of the incarnation of the Son of God, when in the fulness of time the Word should be made flesh, and speak in the language of the sons of men. That he who spake to Moses was the Eternal Word, was the belief of many of the ancients. For all God's communion with man is by his Son, who is the same yesterday, today and for ever.

## VIII

Directions concerning the lamps, ver. 1-4. Concerning cleansing the Levites, ver. 5-8. Concerning the presenting them to God, ver. 9-22. Concerning their age and service, ver. 23-26.

2. When thou lightest the lamps - The priests lighted the middle lamp from the fire of the altar; and the rest one from another; signifying that all light and knowledge comes from Christ, who has the seven spirits of God, figured by the seven lamps of fire. Over against the candlestick - On that part which is before the candlestick, Hebrew. over against the face of the candlestick - That is, in that place towards which the candlestick looked, or where the candlestick stood in full view, that is, upon the north- side, where the table of shew-bread stood, as appears from hence, because the candlestick stood close to the boards of the sanctuary on the south-side, Exod. xxvi, 35. And thus the lights were on both sides of the sanctuary, which was necessary, because it was dark in itself, and had no window.

4. Of beaten gold - Not hollow, but solid gold, beaten out of one piece, not of several pieces joined or soldered together.

7. Of purifying - Hebrew. of sin, that is, for the expiation of sin. This water was mixed with the ashes of a red heifer, chap. xix, 9, which therefore may seem to have been prescribed before, though it be mentioned after; such kind of transplacings of passages being frequent in scripture. Shave all their flesh - This external rite signified the cutting off their inordinate desire of earthly things and that singular purity of heart and life which is required in the ministers of God.

8. A young bullock - The same sacrifice which was offered for a sin-offering for the whole congregation, because the Levites came in the stead of all the first-born, who did in a manner represent the whole congregation.

10. The children of Israel - Not all of them, which was impossible, but some in the name of all the princes or chiefs of each tribe, who used to transact things in the name of their tribes. Put their hands - Whereby they signified their transferring that right of ministering to God from the first-born in whose hands it formerly was, to the Levites, and their entire resignation and dedication of them to God's service.

11. For an offering - Hebrew. for a wave-offering. Not that Aaron did so wave them, which he could not do, but that he caused them to imitate that motion, and to wave themselves toward the

several parts of the world: whereby they might signify their readiness to serve God, according to their capacity wheresoever they should be.

12. Lay their hands - To signify that they were offered by them and for them.

13. Set the Levites before Aaron - Give the Levites to them, or to their service. Unto the Lord - For to him they were first properly offered, and by him given to the priests in order to his service.

15. Go in - Into the court, where they were to wait upon the priests at the altar of burnt-offering; and, at present, into the tabernacle, to take it down and set it up.

19. To do the service of Israel - To serve God in their stead, to do what otherwise they had been obliged to do in their own persons. To make an atonement - Not by offering sacrifices, which the priests alone might do, but by assisting the priests in that expiatory work, and by a diligent performance of all the parts of their office, whereby God was pleased both with them and with the people. That there be no plague - This is added as a reason why God appointed them to serve in the tabernacle, that they might guard it, and not suffer any of the people to come near it, or meddle with holy things, which if they did, it would certainly bring a plague upon them.

26. In the tabernacle - By way of advice, and assistance in lesser and easier works.

## IX

Orders concerning eating the passover on the 14th day of the first month, ver. 1-5. On the 14th day of the second month, by those who had been hindered, ver. 8-12. Concerning the negligent and the stranger, ver. 13, 14. Concerning the pillar of cloud and fire, ver. 15-23

1. In the first month - And therefore before the numbering of the people, which was not till the second month, chap. i, 1, 2. But it is placed after it, because of a special case relating to the passover, which happened after it, upon occasion whereof he mentions the command of God for keeping the passover in the wilderness, which was done but once, and without this command they had not been obliged to keep it at all, till they came to the land of Canaan.

6. They came - For resolution of their difficulty.

7. An offering - Which if we neglect, we must be cut off, and if we keep it in these circumstances, we must also be cut off. What shall we do?

10. Unclean or in a journey - Under these two instances the Hebrews think that other hindrances of like nature are comprehended; as if one be hindered by a disease, or by any other such kind of uncleanness; which may seem probable both from the nature of the thing, and the reason of the law which is the same in other cases.

14. A stranger - Who is a proselyte.

15. Namely, the tent of the testimony - Or, the tabernacle above the tent of the testimony, that is, that part of the tabernacle in which was the testimony, or the ark of the testimony; for there the cloudy pillar stood. This was an evident token of God's special presence with, and providence over them. And this cloud was easily distinguished from other clouds, both by its peculiar figure and by its constant residence in that place. Fire - That they might better discern it and direct themselves and their journeys or stations by it. Had it been a cloud only, it had scarce been visible by night:

And had it been a fire only, it would have been scarce discernable by day. But God was pleased to give them sensible demonstrations, that he kept them night and day.

17. Was taken up - Or, ascended on high, above its ordinary place, by which it became more visible to all the camp.

18. The motion or stay of the cloud is fitly called the command of God, because it was a signification of God's will and their duty.

19. The charge - That is, the command of God, that they should stay as long as the cloud stayed.

21. When the cloud abode - This is repeated again and again, because it was a constant miracle, and because it is a matter we should take particular notice of, as highly significant and instructive. It is mentioned long after by David, Psalm cv, 39, and by the people of God after their captivity, Neh. ix, 19. And the guidance of this cloud is spoken of, as signifying the guidance of the Blessed Spirit, Isaiah lxiii, 14. The Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest, and so didst thou lead the people. And thus, in effect, does he guide, all those, who commit their ways unto the Lord. So that they may well say, Father, thy will be done! Dispose of me and mine as thou pleasest. Here I am, waiting on my God, to journey and rest at the commandment of the Lord. What thou wilt, and where thou wilt: only let me be thine, and always in the way of my duty.

## X

Orders concerning the silver trumpets, ver. 1-10. The removal of the Israelites to Paran, ver. 11-28. The treaty of Moses with Hobab, ver. 29-32. His prayer at the removal and resting of the ark, ver. 33-36.

2. Two trumpets - For Aaron's two sons: though afterwards the number of the trumpets was much increased, as the number of the priests also was. These trumpets were ordained, both for signification of the great duty of ministers, to preach the word; and for use, as here follows.

6. For their journeys - As a sign for them to march forward, and consequently for the rest to follow them.

9. Ye shall be saved - If you use this ordinance of God with trust and dependance upon God for help.

10. In the days of your gladness - Days appointed for rejoicing and thanksgiving to God for former mercies, or deliverances. Your solemn days - Your stated festivals. For a memorial - That God may remember you for good to accept and bless you. God then takes pleasure in our religious exercises, when we take pleasure in them. Holy work should be done with holy joy.

12. Paran - From which they travelled to other places, and then returned into it again, chap. xii, 16.

21. The others - The Gershonites, and Merarites, who therefore marched after the first camp, a good distance from, and before the Kohathites, that they might prepare the tabernacle for the reception of its utensils, which the Kohathites brought some time after them.

29. Raguel - Called also Reuel, Exod. ii, 18, who seems to be the same with Jethro; it being usual in scripture for one person to have two or three names. And therefore this Hobab is not Jethro,

but his son, which may seem more probable, because Jethro was old and unfit to travel, and desirous, as may well be thought, to die in his own country, whither he returned, Exod. xviii, 27, but Hobab was young and fitter for these journeys, and therefore entreated by Moses to stay and bear them company.

30. I will not go - So he might sincerely say, though afterward he was overcome by the persuasions of Moses.

31. Thou mayest be to us instead of eyes - To direct and guide us: for though the cloud determined them to a general place, yet many particulars might be unknown to Moses, wherein Hobab, having long lived in those parts, might be able to advise him, as concerning the conveniences of water for their cattle, concerning the safety or danger of the several parts, by reason of serpents or wild-beasts, or enemies, in the parts adjoining to them, that so they might guard themselves better against them. Or, this is to be understood of his directing them not so much in their way. as about great and difficult matters, wherein the counsel he had from God did not exclude the advice of men, as we see in Hobab's father Jethro, Exod. xviii, 19-27. And it is probable, this was the wise son of a wise father.

33. Three days - With continued journeys; only it seems probable, that the cloud made little pauses that they might have time for sleep and necessary refreshments. The ark went before them - Altho' in their stations it was in the middle, yet in their marches it went before them; and the cloud was constantly over the ark whether it stood or went; therefore the ark is said to go before and direct them, not as if the ark could be seen of all the camps, which being carried only upon mens shoulders was impossible; but because the cloud, which always attended upon the ark, and did, together with the ark, constitute, in a manner, one sign of God's presence, did lead and direct them. To search out - A metaphorical expression, for discovering to them; for the ark could not search, and God, who knew all places and things, needed not to search.

34. By day - And by night too, as was expressed before. So we must learn to compare places of scripture, and to supply the defects of one out of another, as we do in all authors.

36. Return - Or, give rest, that is, a safe and quiet place, free from enemies and dangers.

## XI

The punishment of the murmurers stopt by the prayer of Moses, ver. 1-3. The fresh murmuring of the people, ver. 4-6. The description of manna, ver. 7-9. The murmuring of Moses, ver. 10- 16. God's answer, ver. 16-23. The appointment of the seventy elders, ver. 24-30. Quails sent with a plague, ver. 31-35.

1. Complained - Or, murmured, the occasion whereof seems to be their last three days journey in a vast howling wilderness, and thereupon the remembrance of their long abode in the wilderness, and the fear of many other tedious journeys, whereby they were like to be long delayed from coming to the land of milk and honey, which they thirsted after. The fire of the Lord - A fire sent from God in an extraordinary manner, possibly from the pillar of cloud and fire, or from heaven. The uttermost parts - Either because the sin began there among the mixed multitude, or in mercy to the people,

whom he would rather awaken to repentance than destroy; and therefore he sent it into the skirts and not the midst of the camp.

2. The people - The murmurers, being penitent; or others for fear.

3. Taberah - This fire; as it was called Kibroth-hattaavah from another occasion, ver. 34, 35, and chap. xxxiii, 16. It is no new thing in scripture for persons and places to have two names. Both these names were imposed as monuments of the peoples sin and of God's just judgment.

4. Israel also - Whose special relation and obligation to God should have restrained them from such carriage. Flesh - This word is here taken generally so as to include fish, as the next words shew. They had indeed cattle which they brought out of Egypt, but these were reserved for breed to be carried into Canaan, and were so few that they would scarce have served them for a month.

5. Freely - Either without price, for fish was very plentiful, and fishing was there free, or with a very small price. And this is the more probable because the Egyptians might not taste of fish, nor of the leeks and onions, which they worshipped for Gods, and therefore the Israelites, might have them upon cheap terms.

6. Our soul - Either our life, as the soul signifies, Gen. ix, 5, or our body, which is often signified by the soul. Dried away - Is withered and pines away; which possibly might be true, through envy and discontent, and inordinate appetite.

7. As coriander-seed - Not for colour, for that is black, but for shape and figure. Bdellium - Is either the gum of a tree, of a white and bright colour, or rather a gem or precious stone, as the Hebrew doctors take it; and particularly a pearl wherewith the Manna manifestly agrees both in its colour, which is white, Exod. xvi, 14, and in its figure which is round.

8. Fresh oil - Or, of the most excellent oil; or of cakes made with the best oil, the word cakes being easily supplied out of the foregoing member of the verse; or, which is not much differing, like wafers made with honey, as it is said Exod. xvi, 31. The nature and use of Manna is here thus particularly described, to shew the greatness of their sin in despising such excellent food.

10. In the door of his tent - To note they were not ashamed of their sin.

11. Not found favour - Why didst thou not hear my prayer, when I desired thou wouldest excuse me, and commit the care of this unruly people to some other person.

12. Have I begotten them? - Are they my children, that I should be obliged to provide food and all things for their necessity and desire?

14. To bear - The burden of providing for and satisfying them. Alone - Others were only assistant to him in smaller matters; but the harder and greater affairs, such as this unquestionably was, were brought to Moses and determined by him alone.

15. My wretchedness - Hebrew. my evil, my torment, arising from the insuperable difficulty of my office and work of ruling this people, and from the dread of their utter extirpation, and the dishonour which thence will accrue to God and to religion, as if, not I only, but God also were an impostor.

16. To be elders - Whom thou by experience discernest to be elders not only in years, and name, but also in wisdom and authority with the people. And according to this constitution, the Sanhedrim, or great council of the Jews, which in after-ages sat at Jerusalem, and was the highest court of the judgment among them, consisted of seventy men.

17. I will come down - By my powerful presence and operation. I will put it on them - That is, I will give the same spirit to them which I have given to thee. But as the spirit was not conveyed to them from or through Moses, but immediately from God, so the spirit or its gifts were not by

this means impaired in Moses. The spirit is here put for the gifts of the spirit, and particularly for the spirit of prophecy, whereby they were enabled, as Moses had been and still was, to discern hidden and future things, and resolve doubtful and difficult cases, which made them fit for government. It is observable, that God would not, and therefore men should not, call any persons to any office for which they were not sufficiently qualified.

18. Sanctify themselves - Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, in the way of his judgments. Prepare yourselves by true repentance, that you may either obtain some mitigation of the plague, or, whilst your bodies are destroyed by the flesh you desire and eat, your souls may be saved from the wrath of God. Sanctifying is often used for preparing, as Jer. vi, 4; xii, 3. In the ears of the Lord - Not secretly in your closets, but openly and impudently in the doors of your tents, calling heaven and earth to witness.

20. At your nostrils - Which meat violently vomited up frequently doth. Thus God destroys them by granting their desires, and turns even their blessings into curses. Ye have despised the Lord - You have lightly esteemed his bounty and manifold blessings, you have slighted and distrusted his promises and providence after so long and large experience of it. Who is among you - Who is present and resident with you to observe all your carriage, and to punish your offenses. This is added as a great aggravation of the crime, to sin in the presence of the judge. Why came we forth out of Egypt? - Why did God do us such an injury? Why did we so foolishly obey him in coming forth?

21. Six hundred thousand footmen - Fit for war, besides women and children. That Moses speaks this as distrusting God's word is evident; and that Moses was not remarkably punished for this as he was afterward for the same sin, chap. xx, 12, may be imputed to the different circumstances of this and that sin: this was the first offense of the kind, and therefore more easily passed by; that was after warning and against more light and experience. This seems to have been spoken secretly: that openly before the people; and therefore it was fit to be openly and severely punished to prevent the contagion of that example.

24. Moses went out - Out of the tabernacle, into which he entered to receive God's answers from the mercy-seat. The seventy men - They are called seventy from the stated number, though two of them were lacking, as the Apostles are called the twelve, Matt. xxvi, 20, when one of that number was absent. Round the tabernacle - Partly that the awe of God might be imprinted upon their hearts, that they might more seriously undertake and more faithfully manage their high employment, but principally, because that was the place where God manifested himself, and therefore there he would bestow his spirit upon them.

25. Rested on them - Not only moved them for a time, but took up his settled abode with them, because the use and end of this gift was perpetual. They prophesied - Discoursed of the word and works of God in a marvelous manner, as the prophets did. So this word is used, 1 Sam. x, 5, 6 Joel ii, 28; 1 Cor. xiv, 3. Yet were they not hereby constituted teachers, but civil magistrates, who together with the spirit of government, received also the spirit of prophesy, as a sign and seal both to themselves and to the people, that God had called them to that employment. They did not cease - Either for that day, they continued in that exercise all that day, and, it may be, all the night too, as it is said of Saul, 1 Sam. xix, 24, or, afterwards also, to note that this was a continued gift conferred upon them to enable them the better to discharge their magistracy; which was more expedient for them than for the rulers of other people, because the Jews were under a theocracy or the government

of God, and even their civil controversies were decided out of that word of God which the prophets expounded.

26. In the camp - Not going to the tabernacle, as the rest did, either not having seasonable notice to repair thither: or, being detained in the camp by sickness, or some urgent occasion, not without God's special providence, that so the miracle might be more evident. Were written - In a book or paper by Moses, who by God's direction nominated the fittest persons.

27. Told Moses - Fearing lest his authority should be diminished by their prophesying; and thereby taking authority to themselves without his consent.

28. One of his young men - Or, one of his choice ministers, which may be emphatically added, to note that even great and good men may mistake about the works of God. Forbid them - He feared either schism, or sedition, or that by their usurpation of authority, independently upon Moses, his power and esteem might be lessened.

29. Enviest thou for my sake - Art thou grieved because the gifts and graces of God are imparted to others besides me? Prophets - He saith prophets, not rulers, for that he knew was absurd and impossible. So we ought to be pleased, that God is glorified and good done, tho' to the lessening of our own honour.

30. Into the camp - Among the people, to exercise the gifts and authority now received.

31. A wind from the Lord - An extraordinary and miraculous wind both for its vehemency and for its effects. Quails - God gave them quails once before, Exod. xvi, 13, but neither in the same quantity, nor with the same design and effect as now. From the sea - Principally from the Red-sea, and both sides of it where, by the reports of ancient Heathen writers, they were then in great numbers, and, no doubt, were wonderfully increased by God's special providence for this very occasion. Two cubits high - Not as if the quails did cover all the ground two cubits high for a day's journey on each side of the camp, for then there had been no place left where they could spread them all abroad round about the camp; but the meaning is, that the quails came and fell down round about the camp for a whole day's journey on each side of it, and that in all that space they lay here and there in great heaps, which were often two cubits high.

32. Stood up - Or rather rose up, which word is often used for beginning to do any business. All that night - Some at one time, and some at the other, and some, through greediness or diffidence, at both times. Ten homers - That is, ten ass loads: which if it seem incredible, you must consider,

1. That the gatherers here were not all the people, which could not be without great inconveniences, but some on the behalf of all, while the rest were exercised about other necessary things. So the meaning is not, that every Israelite had so much for his share, but that every collector gathered so much for the family, or others by whom he was intrusted.
2. That the people did not gather for their present use only, but for a good while to come, and being greedy and distrustful of God's goodness, it is not strange if they gathered much more than they needed.
3. That the word, rendered homers, may signify heaps, as it doth, Exod. viii, 14 Judg. xv, 16 Hab. iii, 15, and ten, is often put for many, and so the sense is, that every one gathered several heaps. If yet the number seems incredible, it must be farther known,
4. That Heathen and other authors affirm, in those eastern and southern countries quails are innumerable, so that in one part of Italy, within the compass of five

miles, there were taken about an hundred thousand of them every day for a month together. And Atheneus relates, that in Egypt, a country prodigiously populous, they were in such plenty, that all those vast numbers of people could not consume them, but were forced to salt and keep them for future use. They spread them - That so they might dry, salt and preserve them for future use, according to what they had seen in Egypt.

33. Chewed - Hebrew. cut off, namely from their mouths. A very great plague - Probably the pestilence. But the sense is, before they had done eating their quails, which lasted for a month. Why did God so sorely punish the peoples murmuring for flesh here, when he spared them after the same sin, Exod. xvi, 12. Because this was a far greater sin, and aggravated with worse circumstances; proceeding not from necessity, as that did, when as yet they had no food, but from mere wantonness, when they had Manna constantly given them; committed after large experience of God's care and kindness, after God had pardoned their former sins, and after God had in a solemn and terrible manner made known his laws to them.

34. Kibroth-hattaavah - Hebrew. the graves of lust, that is, of the men that lusted, as it here follows. And it notes that the plague did not seize upon all that eat of the quails, for then all had been destroyed, but only upon those who were inordinate both in the desire and use of them.

## XII

Miriam and Aaron murmur against Moses, ver. 1-3. God calls them to an account for it, ver. 4-9. Miriam becoming leprous, Aaron humbles himself, and Moses prays for her, ver. 10-13. She is healed, but shut out of the camp for seven days, ver. 14-16.

1. Miriam - Miriam seems to be first named, because she was the first mover of the sedition; wherefore she is more eminently punished. The Ethiopian - Either,

1. Zipporah, who is here called an Ethiopian, in the Hebrew a Cushite, because she was a Midianite: the word Cush being generally used in scripture, not for Ethiopia properly so called below Egypt, but for Arabia. If she be meant, probably they did not quarrel with him for marrying her, because that was done long since, but for being swayed by her and her relations, by whom they might think he was persuaded to chose seventy rulers, by which co-partnership in government they thought their authority and reputation diminished. And because they durst not accuse God, they charge Moses, his instrument, as the manner of men is. Or,
2. some other woman, whom he married either whilst Zipporah lived, or rather because she was now dead, though that, as many other things, be not recorded. For, as the quarrel seems to be about his marrying a stranger, it is probable it was a fresh occasion about which they contended. And it was lawful for him as well as any other to marry an Ethiopian or Arabian woman, provided she were, a sincere proselyte.

2. By us - Are not we prophets as well as he? so Aaron was made, Exod. iv, 15, 16, and so Miriam is called, Exod. xv, 20. And Moses hath debased and mixed the holy seed, which we have not done. Why then should he take all power to himself, and make rulers as he pleaseth, without consulting us. The Lord heard - Observed their words and carriage to Moses.

3. Meek - This is added as the reason why Moses took no notice of their reproach, and why God did so severely plead his cause. Thus was he fitted for the work he was called to, which required all the meekness he had. And this is often more tried by the unkindness of our friends, than by the malice of our enemies. Probably this commendation was added, as some other clauses were, by some succeeding prophet. How was Moses so meek, when we often read of his anger? But this only proves, that the law made nothing perfect.

4. Suddenly - To stifle the beginnings of the sedition, that this example might not spread amongst the people. Come out - Out of your private dwellings, that you may know my pleasure and your own doom.

5. In the door - While they stood without, not being admitted into the tabernacle, as Aaron used to be; a sign of God's displeasure.

6. Among you - if you be prophets, yet know there is a difference among prophets, nor do I put equal honour upon all of them.

7. In all my house - That is, whom I have set over all my house, my church and people, and therefore over you; and who hath discharged his office faithfully, and not partially as you falsely accuse him.

8. Mouth to mouth - That is, distinctly, by an articulate voice; immediately, not by an interpreter, nor by shadows and representations in his fancy, as it is in visions and dreams; and familiarly. Apparently - Plainly and certainly. Dark speeches - Not in parables, similitudes, dark resemblances; as by shewing a boiling pot, an almond tree, &c. to Jeremiah, a chariot with wheels, &c. to Ezekiel. The similitude - Not the face or essence of God, which no man can see and live, Exod. xxxiii, 20, but some singular manifestation of his glorious presence, as Exod. xxxiii, 11, 20. Yea the Son of God appeared to him in an human shape, which he took up for a time, that he might give him a foretaste of his future incarnation. My servant - Who is so in such an eminent and extraordinary manner.

9. He departed - From the door of the tabernacle, in token of his great displeasure, not waiting for their answer. The removal of God~s presence from us, is the saddest token of his displeasure. And he never departs, till we by our sin and folly drive him from us.

10. From the tabernacle - Not from the whole tabernacle, but from that part, whither it was come, to that part which was directly over the mercy-seat, where it constantly abode. Leprous - She, and not Aaron, either because she was chief in the transgression or because God would not have his worship interrupted or dishonoured, which it must have been if Aaron had been leprous. White - This kind of leprosy was the most virulent and incurable of all. It is true, when the leprosy began in a particular part, and thence spread itself over all the flesh by degrees, and at last made it all white, that was an evidence of the cure of the leprosy, Lev. xiii, 12, 13. But it was otherwise when one was suddenly smitten with this universal whiteness.

11. Lay not the sin - Let not the guilt and punishment of this sin rest upon us, upon her in this kind, upon me in any other kind, but pray to God for the pardon and removal of it.

12. As one dead - Because part of her flesh was putrefied and dead, and not to be restored but by the mighty power of God. Like a still-born child, that hath been for some time dead in the womb, which when it comes forth, is putrefied, and part of it consumed.

14. Spit in her face - That is, expressed some eminent token of indignation and contempt, which was this, Job xxx, 10 Isaiah l, 6. Ashamed - And withdraw herself, from her father's presence, as Jonathan did upon a like occasion, 1 Sam. xx, 34. So though God healed her according to Moses's request, yet he would have her publickly bear the shame of her sin, and be a warning to others to keep them from the same transgression.

15. Journeyed not - Which was a testimony of respect to her both from God and from the people, God so ordering it, partly lest she should be overwhelmed by such a publick rebuke from God, and partly lest, she being a prophetess, the gift of prophesy should come into contempt.

16. Paran - That is, in another part of the same wilderness.

## XIII

The sending of the spies into Canaan, ver. 1-17. The instructions given them, ver. 18-20. Their journey and return, ver. 21-25. Their report, ver. 26-33.

1. Speak unto Moses - In answer to the peoples petition about it, as is evident from Deut. i, 22. And it is probable, the people desired it out of diffidence of God's promise.

2. A ruler - A person of wisdom and authority.

8. Oshea - Called also Joshua, ver. 16.

11. Of Joseph - The name of Joseph is elsewhere appropriated to Ephraim, here to Manasseh; possibly to aggravate the sin of the ruler of this tribe, who did so basely degenerate from his noble ancestor.

16. Jehoshua - Oshea notes a desire of salvation, signifying, Save we pray thee; but Jehoshua, or Joshua, includes a promise of salvation, He will save. So this was a prophecy of his succession to Moses in the government, and of the success of his arms. Josh. is the same name with Jesus, of whom Joshua was a type. He was the saviour of God's people from the powers of Canaan, Christ from the powers of hell.

17. Southward - Into the southern part of Canaan, which was the nearest part, and the worst too, being dry and desert, and therefore fit for them to enter and pass through with less observation. Into the mountain - Into the mountainous country, and thence into the valleys, and so take a survey of the whole land.

18. What it is - Both for largeness, and for nature and quality.

19. In tents - As the Arabians did; or in unwalled villages, which, like tents, are exposed to an enemy.

20. Fat - Rich and fertile.

21. Zin - In the south of Canaan, differing from the wilderness of Sin, which was nigh unto Egypt. To Hamath - From the south they passed through the whole land to the northern parts of it; Rehob was a city in the northwest part, Hamath, a city in the northeast.

22. By the south - Moses having described their progress from south to north, more particularly relates some memorable places and passages. They came - Hebrew. He came, namely, Caleb, as appears from Josh. xiv, 9, 12, 14. For the spies distributed their work among them, and went either severally, or by pairs; and it seems the survey of this part was left to Caleb. Anak - A famous giant, whole children these are called, either more generally, as all giants sometimes were, or rather more specially because Arbah, from whom Hebron was called Kiriath-arbah, was the father of Anak, Josh. xv, 13. And this circumstance is mentioned as an evidence of the goodness of that land, because the giants chose it for their habitation. Before Zoan - This seems to be noted to confront the Egyptians, who vainly boasted of the antiquity of their city Zoan above all places.

23. Upon a staff - Either for the weight of it, considering the, length of the way they were to carry it, or for the preservation of it whole and entire. In those eastern and southern countries there are vines and grapes of an extraordinary bigness as Strabo and Pliny affirm.

24. Eschol - That is, a cluster of grapes.

25. They returned after forty days - 'Tis a wonder the people had patience to stay forty days, when they were just ready to enter Canaan, under all the assurances of success they could have from the Divine power, proved by a constant series of miracles, that had hitherto attended them. But they distrusted God, and chose to be held in suspence by their own counsels, rather than to rest upon God's promise! How much do we stand in our own light by unbelief?

26. Kadesh - Kadesh-barnea, which some confound with Kadesh in the wilderness of Sin, into which they came not 'till the fortieth year after their coming out of Egypt, as appears from chap. xxxiii, 37, 38, whereas they were in this Kadesh in the second year, and before they received the sentence of their forty years abode in the wilderness.

27. They told him - In the audience of the people.

29. The Amalekites in the south - Where we are to enter the land, and they who were so fierce against us that they came into the wilderness to fight with us, will, without doubt, oppose us when we come close by their land, the rather, to revenge themselves for their former loss. Therefore they mention them, though they were not Canaanites. In the mountains -In the mountainous country, in the southeast part of the land, so that you cannot enter there without great difficulty, both because of the noted strength and valour of those people, and because of the advantage they have from the mountains. By the sea - Not the mid-land sea, which is commonly understood by that expression, but the salt or dead sea, as appears,

1. Because it is that sea which is next to Jordan,
2. Because the Canaanites dwelt principally in those parts, and not near the mid-land sea. So these guard the entrance on the east- side, as the others do on the south.

30. Caleb - Together with Joshua, as is manifest from chap. xiv, 6, 7, 30, but Caleb alone is here mentioned, possibly because he spake first and most, which he might better do, because he might be presumed to be more impartial than Joshua, who being Moses's minister might be thought to speak only what he knew his master would like. Stilled the people -Which implies either that they had began to murmur, or that by their looks and carriage, they discovered the anger which boiled in their breasts. Before Moses - Or, towards Moses, against whom they were incensed, as the man who had brought them into such sad circumstances. Let us go up and possess it - He does not say, Let us go up and conquer it. He looks on that to be as good as done already: but, Let us go up and possess it! There is nothing to be done, but to enter without delay, and take the possession

which our great Lord is now ready to give us! Thus difficulties that lie in the way of salvation, vanish away before a lively faith.

31. The men - All of them, Joshua excepted. Stronger - Both in stature of body and numbers of people. Thus they question the power, and truth, and goodness of God, of all which they had such ample testimonies.

32. Eateth up its inhabitants - Not so much by civil wars, for that was likely to make their conquest more easy; but rather by the unwholesomeness of the air and place, which they guessed from the many funerals, which, as some Hebrew writers, not without probability affirm, they observed in their travels through it: though that came to pass from another cause, even from the singular providence of God, which, to facilitate the Israelites conquest, cut off vast numbers of the Canaanites either by a plague, or by the hornet sent before them, as is expressed, Josh. xxiv, 12.

## XIV

The murmuring of the people against Moses and Aaron, ver. 1-4. Their fruitless endeavour to still them, ver. 5-10. God's threatening utterly to destroy them, ver. 11-12. The intercession of Moses, ver. 13-19. The decree that all that generation should die in the wilderness, ver. 20-35. The immediate death of the spies, ver. 36-39. The ill success of those who would go up notwithstanding, ver. 40-45.

2. Against Moses and Aaron - As the instruments and occasions of their present calamity. That we had died in this wilderness - It was not long before they had their desire, and did die in the wilderness.

3. The Lord - From instruments they rise higher, and strike at God the cause and author of their journey: by which we see the prodigious growth and progress of sin when it is not resisted. A prey - To the Canaanites whose land we were made to believe we should possess.

4. A captain - Instead of Moses, one who will be more faithful to our interest than he. Into Egypt - Stupendous madness! Whence should they have protection against the hazards, and provision against all the wants of the wilderness? Could they expect either God's cloud to cover and guide them, or Manna from heaven to feed them? Who could conduct them over the Red-sea? Or, if they went another way, who should defend them against those nations whose borders they were to pass? What entertainment could they expect from the Egyptians, whom they had deserted and brought to so much ruin?

5. Fell on their faces - As humble and earnest suppliants to God, the only refuge to which Moses resorted in all such straits, and who alone was able to govern this stiff-necked people. Before all the assembly -That they might awake to apprehend their sin and danger, when they saw Moses at his prayers, whom God never failed to defend, even with the destruction of his enemies.

6. Rent their clothes - To testify their hearty grief for the peoples blasphemy against God and sedition against Moses, and that dreadful judgment which they easily foresaw this must bring upon the congregation.

8. Delight in us - If by our rebellion and ingratitude we do not provoke God to leave and forsake us.

9. Bread - We shall destroy them as easily as we eat our bread. Their defense - Their conduct and courage, and especially God, who was pleased to afford them his protection 'till their iniquities were full, is utterly departed from them, and hath given them up as a prey to us. With us - By his special grace and almighty power, to save us from them and all our enemies. Only rebel not against the Lord - Nothing can ruin sinners but their own rebellion. If God leaves them, 'tis because they drive him from them, and they die, because they will die.

10. Appeared - Now in the extremity of danger to rescue his faithful servants, and to stop the rage of the people. In the tabernacle - Upon or above the tabernacle, where the cloud usually resided, in which the glory of God appeared now in a more illustrious manner. When they reflected upon God, his glory appeared not, to silence their blasphemies: but when they threatened Caleb and Joshua, they touched the apple of his eye, and his glory appeared immediately. They who faithfully expose themselves for God, are sure of his special provision.

12. I will smite them - This was not an absolute determination, but a commination, like that of Nineveh's destruction, with a condition implied, except there be speedy repentance, or powerful intercession.

16. Not able - His power was quite spent in bringing them out of Egypt, and could not finish the work he had begun and had sworn to do.

17. Be great - That is appear to be great, discover its greatness: namely, the power of his grace and mercy, or the greatness of his mercy, in pardoning this and their other sins: for to this the following words manifestly restrain it, where the pardon of their sins is the only instance of this power both described in God's titles, ver. 18, and prayed for by Moses ver. 19, and granted by God in answer to him, xiv, 20. Nor is it strange that the pardon of sin, especially such great sins, is spoken of as an act of power in God, because undoubtedly it is an act of omnipotent and infinite goodness.

18. Visiting the iniquity - These words may seem to be improperly mentioned, as being a powerful argument to move God to destroy this wicked people, and not to pardon them. It may be answered, that Moses useth these words together with the rest, because he would not sever what God had put together. But the truer answer seems to be, that these words are to be translated otherwise, And in destroying he will not utterly destroy, though he visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation.

20. I have pardoned - So far as not utterly to destroy them.

21. With the glory of the Lord - With the report of the glorious and righteous acts of God in punishing this rebellious people.

22. My glory - That is, my glorious appearances in the cloud, and in the tabernacle. Ten times - That is, many times. A certain number for an uncertain.

24. Caleb - Josh. is not named, because he was not now among the people, but a constant attendant upon Moses, nor was he to be reckoned as one of them, any more than Moses and Aaron were, because he was to be their chief commander. He had another spirit - Was a man of another temper, faithful and courageous, not acted by that evil spirit of cowardice, unbelief, disobedience, which ruled in his brethren but by the spirit of God. Fully - Universally and constantly, through difficulties and dangers, which made his partners halt. Whereinto he went - In general, Canaan, and particularly Hebron, and the adjacent parts, Josh. xiv, 9.

25. In the valley - Beyond the mountain, at the foot whereof they now were, ver. 40. And this clause is added, either

1. As an aggravation of Israel's misery and punishment, that being now ready to enter and take possession of the land, they are forced to go back into the wilderness or
2. As an argument to oblige them more willingly to obey the following command of returning into the wilderness, because their enemies were very near them, and severed from them only by that Idumean mountain, and, if they did not speedily depart, their enemies would fall upon them, and so the evil which before they causelessly feared would come upon them; they, their wives and their children, would become a prey to the Amalekites and Canaanites, because God would not assist nor defend them. By the way of the Red-sea - That leadeth to the Red-sea, and to Egypt, the place whither you desire to return.

28. As ye have spoken - When you wickedly wished you might die in the wilderness.

30. You - Your nation; for God did not swear to do so to these particular persons.

32. Your carcases - See with what contempt they are spoken of, now they had by their sin made themselves vile! The mighty men of valour were but carcases, now the Spirit of the Lord was departed from them! It was very probably upon this occasion, that Moses wrote the ninetieth psalm.

33. Forty years - So long as to make up the time of your dwelling in the wilderness forty years; one whole year and part of another were past before this sin or judgment. Your whoredoms - The punishment of your whoredoms, of your apostacy from, and perfidiousness against your Lord, who was your husband, and had married you to himself.

34. Each day for a year - So there should have been forty years to come, but God was pleased mercifully to accept of the time past as a part of that time. Ye shall know my breach of promise - That as you have first broken the covenant between you and me, by breaking the conditions of it, so I will make it void on my part, by denying you the blessings promised in that covenant. So you shall see, that the breach of promise wherewith you charged me, lies at your door, and was forced from me by your perfidiousness.

37. By the plague - Either by the pestilence, or by some other sudden and extraordinary judgment, sent from the cloud in which God dwelt, and from whence he spake to Moses, and wherein his glory at this time appeared before all the people, ver. 10, who therefore were all, and these spies among the rest, before the Lord.

38. But Joshua and Caleb lived still - Death never misses his mark, nor takes any by oversight who are designed for life, tho' in the midst of those that are to die.

39. And the people mourned greatly - But it was now too late. There was now no place for repentance. Such mourning as this there is in hell; but the tears will not quench the flames.

40. Gat them up - Designed or prepared themselves to go up.

45. The Canaanites - Largely so called, but strictly the Amorites. Hormah - A place so called afterwards, ver. 3, from the slaughter or destruction of the lsraelites at this time.

## XV

Laws, concerning meal-offerings and drink offerings, ver. 1- 16. Concerning dough for heave-offerings, ver. 17-21. Sacrifices for sins of ignorance, ver. 22-29. Concerning presumptuous sinners, ver. 30, 31. An instance in the sabbath-breaker, ver. 32- 36. Concerning fringes on the borders of their garments, ver. 37- 41.

2. I give you - Will certainly give you, not withstanding this great provocation. And for their better assurance hereof he repeats and amplifies the laws of sacrifices, whereby through Christ he would be reconciled to them and theirs upon their repentance.

3. A sacrifice - A peace-offering.

4. A tenth deal - The tenth part of an Ephah, that is, about five pints. An hin contained about five quarts.

6. Two tenth-deals - Because this belonged to a better sacrifice than the former; and therefore in the next sacrifice of a bullock, there are three tenth deals. So the accessory sacrifice grows proportionably with the principal.

8. Peace-offerings - Such as were offered either freely or by command, which may be called peace-offerings or thank- offerings, by way of eminency, because such are offered purely by way of gratitude to God, and with single respect to his honour, whereas the peace-offerings made in performance of a vow were made and offered, with design of getting some advantage by them.

12. Their number - As many cattle as ye sacrifice, so many meal and drink-offerings ye shall offer.

15. Before the Lord - As to the worship of God: his sacrifices shall be offered in the same manner and accepted by God upon the same terms, as yours: which was a presage of the future calling of the Gentiles. And this is added by way of caution, to shew that strangers were not upon this pretense to partake of their civil privileges.

19. When ye eat - When you are about to eat it: for before they eat it, they were to offer this offering to God. The bread - That is, the bread-corn.

20. The threshing floor - That is, of the corn in the threshing floor, when you have gathered in your corn.

22. All these commandments - Those now spoken of, which concern the outward service of God, or the rites or ceremonies belonging to it. And herein principally this law may seem to differ from that Lev. iv, 13, which speaks of some positive miscarriage, or doing that which ought not to have been done, about the holy things of God; whereas this speaks only of an omission of something which ought to have been done about holy ceremonies.

30. Reproacheth the Lord - He sets God at defiance, and exposeth him to contempt, as if he were unable to punish transgressors.

32. On the sabbath-day - This seems to be added as an example of a presumptuous sin: for as the law of the sabbath was plain and positive, so this transgression of it must needs be a known and wilful sin.

33. To all the congregation - That is, to the rulers of the congregation.

34. They - That is, Moses and Aaron, and the seventy rulers. What should be done - That is, in what manner he was to be cut off, or by what kind of death he was to die, which therefore God here

particularly determines: otherwise it was known in general that sabbath-breakers were to be put to death.

38. Fringes - These were certain threads or ends, standing out a little further than the rest of their garments, lest there for this use. In the borders - That is, in the four borders or quarters, as it is, Deut. xxii, 12. Of their garments - Of their upper garments. This was practiced by the Pharisees in Christ's time, who are noted for making their borders larger than ordinary. A ribband - To make it more obvious to the sight, and consequently more serviceable to the use here mentioned. Of blue - Or, purple.

39. For a fringe - That is, the ribband, shall be unto you, shall serve you for a fringe, to render it more visible by its distinct colour, whereas the fringe without this was of the same piece and colour with the garment, and therefore less observeable. That ye seek not - Or, inquire not for other rules and ways of serving me than I have prescribed you. Your own heart, and eyes - Neither after the devices of your own hearts, as Nadab and Abihu did when they offered strange fire; nor after the examples of others which your eyes see, as you did when you were set upon worshipping a calf after the manner of Egypt. The phylacteries worn by the Pharisees in our Lord's time, were a different thing from these. Those were of their own invention: these were a divine institution.

40. Be ye holy - Purged from sin and sincerely devoted to God.

41. I am the Lord your God - Though I am justly displeased with you for your frequent rebellions, for which also I will keep you forty years in the wilderness, yet I will not utterly cast you off, but will continue to be your God.

## XVI

Korah, Dathan and Abiram, rise up against Moses, ver. 1-4. Moses reasons with them, ver. 5-11. Sends for Dathan and Abiram, who refuse to come, ver. 12-14. His proposal to Korah, ver. 15-19. The punishment of the rebels, ver. 20-35. Their censers preserved for a memorial, ver. 36-40. A new insurrection stopped by a plague, ver. 41-45. Aaron stays the plague, ver. 46- 50.

1. The son of Izhar - Amram's brother, Exod. vi, 18, therefore Moses and he were cousin germans. Moreover, Izhar was the second son of Kohath, whereas Elizaphan, whom Moses had preferred before him, and made prince or ruler of the Kohathites, chap. iii, 30, was the son of Uzziel, the fourth son of Kohath. This, the Jewish writers say, made him malcontent, which at last broke forth into sedition. Sons of Reuben - These are drawn into confederacy with Korah, partly because they were his next neighbours, both being encamped on the south-side, partly in hopes to recover their rights of primogeniture, in which the priesthood was comprehended, which was given away from their father.

2. Rose up - That is, conspired together, and put their design in execution. Before Moses - Not obscurely, but openly and boldly, not fearing nor regarding the presence of Moses.

3. They - Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and the rest, who were all together when Moses spake those words, ver. 5-7, but after that, Dathan and Abiram retired to their tents, and then Moses sent for Korah and the Levites, who had more colourable pretenses to the priesthood, and treats with

them apart, and speaks what is mentioned, ver. 8-11. Having dispatched them, he sends for Dathan and Abiram, ver. 12, that he might reason the case with them also apart. Against Aaron - To whom the priesthood was confined, and against Moses, both because this was done by his order, and because before Aaron's consecration Moses appropriated it to himself. For whatever they intended, they seem not now directly to strike at Moses for his supreme civil government, but only for his influence in the disposal of the priesthood. Ye take too much - By perpetuating the priesthood in yourselves and family, with the exclusion of all others from it. All are holy - A kingdom of priests, an holy nation, as they are called, Exod. xix, 6, a people separated to the service of God, and therefore no less fit to offer sacrifice and incense, than you are. Among them - By his tabernacle and cloud, the tokens of his gracious presence, and therefore ready to receive sacrifices from their own hands. Ye - Thou Moses, by prescribing what laws thou pleasest about the priesthood, and confining it to thy brother; and thou Aaron by usurping it as thy peculiar privilege.

4. On his face - Humbly begging that God would direct and vindicate him. Accordingly God answers his prayers, and strengthens him with new courage, and confidence of success.

5. Tomorrow - Hebrew. In the morning, the time appointed by men for administering justice, and chosen by God for that work. Some time is allowed, partly that Korah and his company might prepare themselves and their censers, and partly to give them space for consideration and repentance. He will cause him - He will by some evident token declare his approbation of him and his ministry.

8. Ye sons of Levi - They were of his own tribe, nay, they were of God's tribe. It was therefore the worse in them thus to mutiny against God and against him.

9. To minister to them - So they were the servants both of God and of the church, which was an high dignity, though not sufficient for their ambitious minds.

11. Against the Lord - Whose chosen servant Aaron is. You strike at God through Aaron's sides.

12. Dathan and Abiram - To treat with them and give them, as he had done Korah and his company, a timely admonition. Come up - To Moses's tabernacle, whither the people used to go up for judgment. Men are said in scripture phrase to go up to places of judgment.

14. These men - Of all the people who are of our mind: wilt thou make them blind, or persuade them that they do not see what is visible to all that have eyes, to wit, that thou hast deceived them, and broken thy faith and promise given to them?

15. Respect not their offering - Accept not their incense which they are now going to offer, but shew some eminent dislike of it. He calls it their offering, though it was offered by Korah and his companions, because it was offered in the name and by the consent of all the conspirators, for the decision of the present controversy between them and Moses. I have not hurt one of them - I have never injured them, nor used my power to defraud or oppress them, as I might have done; I have done them many good offices, but no hurt: therefore their crime is without any cause or provocation.

16. Before the Lord - Not in the tabernacle, which was not capable of so many persons severally offering incense, but at the door of the tabernacle, where they might offer it by Moses's direction upon this extraordinary occasion. This work could not be done in that place, which alone was allowed for the offering up of incense; not only for its smallness, but also because none but priests might enter to do this work. Here also the people, who were to be instructed by this experiment, might see the proof and success of it.

18. Fire - Taken from the altar which stood in that place, for Aaron might not use other fire. And it is likely the rememberance of the death of Nadab and Abihu deterred them from offering any strange fire.

19. Against them - That they might be witnesses of the event, and, upon their success, which they doubted not of, might fall upon Moses and Aaron. And it seems by this that the people were generally incensed against Moses, and inclined to Korah's side. The glory appeared -In the cloud, which then shone with greater brightness and majesty, as a token of God's approach and presence.

22. The spirits - And this is no empty title here, but very emphatical. Thou art the maker of spirits, destroy not thy own workmanship! O thou who art the preserver of men, and of their spirits, the Lord of spirits, Job xii, 10, who as thou mayst justly destroy this people, so thou canst preserve whom thou pleasest: the father of spirits, the souls. Deal mercifully with thy own children: the searcher of spirits, thou canst distinguish between those who have maliciously railed this tumult, and those whose ignorance and simple credulity hath made them a prey to crafty seducers. Of all flesh - Of all mankind: the word flesh is often put for men. One man - Korah, the ringleader of this sedition.

24. The congregation - Whom for your sakes I will spare upon the condition following.

25. Unto Dathan - Because they refused to come to him. The elders - The seventy rulers, whom he carried with him for the greater solemnity of the action, and to encourage them in their work, notwithstanding the obstinate and untractable nature of the people they were to govern.

27. Stood in the door - An argument of their foolish confidence, obstinacy and impenitency, whereby they declared that they neither feared God, nor reverenced man.

28. All these works - As the bringing of the people out of Egypt; the conducting of them through the wilderness; the exercising authority among them; and giving laws to them concerning the priesthood.

29. The death of all men - By a natural death. The visitation of all men - By plague, or sword, or some usual judgment. The Lord hath not sent me - I am content that you take me for an imposter, falsely pretending to be sent of God.

32. All that appertained unto Korah - That is, all his family which were there, women, children, and servants; but his sons, who were spared, chap. xxvi, 11, 58; 1 Chron. vi, 22, 37, were absent either upon some service of the tabernacle, or upon some other occasion, God so ordering it by his providence either because they disliked their fathers act, or upon Moses's intercession for them. This expression may intimate, that Korah himself was not here, but that he continued with his two hundred and fifty men before the Lord, where they were waiting for God's decision of the controversy. Nor is it probable that their chief captain would desert them, and leave them standing there without an head, especially, when Aaron his great adversary, abode there still, and did not go with Moses to Dathan. And Korah may seem to have been consumed with those two hundred and fifty. And so much is intimated, ver. 40, that no stranger come near to offer incense before the Lord, that he be not as Korah, and as his company, that is, destroyed, as they were, by fire from the Lord. And when the Psalmist relates this history, Psalm cvi, 17-18, the earth's swallowing them up is confined to Dathan and Abiram, Psalm cvi, 17, and for all the rest of that conspiracy it is added, Psalm cvi, 18. And a fire was kindled in their company, the flame burnt up the wicked.

33. Into the pit - Into the earth, which first opened itself to receive them, and then shut itself to destroy them.

35. From the Lord - From the cloud, wherein the glory of the Lord appeared.

37. To Eleazer - Rather than to Aaron, partly because the troublesome part of the work was more proper for him, and partly lest Aaron should be polluted by going amongst those dead carcasses; for it is probable this fire consumed them, as lightning sometimes doth, others, by taking away their

lives, and leaving their bodies dead upon the place. Out of the burning - From among the dead bodies of those men who were burnt. Yonder - Far from the altar and sanctuary, into an unclean place, where the ashes were wont to be cast: by which God shews his rejection on of their services. They are hallowed - By God's appointment, because they were presented before the Lord by his express order, ver. 16, 17.

38. Their own souls - That is, their own lives: who were the authors of their own destruction. The altar - Of burnt-offerings, which was made of wood, but covered with brass before this time, Exod. xxvii, 1, 2, to which this other covering was added for farther ornament, and security against the fire, continually burning upon it. A sign - A warning to all strangers to take heed of invading the priesthood.

40. To him - To Eleazer. These words belong to ver. 38, the meaning is, that Eleazer did as God bade him.

41. On the morrow - Prodigious wickedness and madness so soon to forget such a terrible instance of Divine vengeance! The people of the Lord - So they call those wicked wretches, and rebels against God! Tho' they were but newly saved from sharing in the same punishment, and the survivors were as brands plucked out of the burning, yet they fly in the face of Moses and Aaron, to whose intercession they owe their preservation.

42. They - Moses and Aaron, who in all their distresses made God their refuge.

43. Moses and Aaron came - To hear what God, who now appeared, would say to them.

45. They fell upon their faces - To beg mercy for the people; thus rendering Good for Evil.

46. Incense - Which was a sign of intercession, and was to be accompanied with it. Go unto the congregation - He went with the incense, to stir up the people to repentance and prayer, to prevent their utter ruin. This he might do upon this extraordinary occasion, having God's command for his warrant, though ordinarily incense was to be offered only in the tabernacle.

48. The living - Whereby it may seem that this plague, like that fire, chap. xi, 1, began in the uttermost parts of the congregation, and so proceeded destroying one after another in an orderly manner, which gave Aaron occasion and direction so to place himself, as a mediator to God on their behalf.

## XVII

The blossoming of Aaron's rod, ver. 1-9. It is laid up for a memorial, ver. 10, 11. The people are terrified, ver. 12, 13.

2. Of every one - Not of every person, but of every tribe. A rod - That staff, or rod, which the princes carried in their hands as tokens of their dignity and authority. Every man's name - Every prince's: for they being the first-born, and the chief of their tribes might above all others pretend to the priesthood, if it was communicable to any of their tribes, and besides each prince represented all his tribe: so that this was a full decision of the question. And this place seems to confirm, that not only Korah and the Levites, but also those of other tribes contested with Moses and Aaron about the priesthood, as that which belonged to all the congregation they being all holy.

3. Aaron's name - Rather than Levi's, for that would have left the controversy undecided between Aaron and the other Levites, whereas this would justify the appropriation of the priesthood to Aaron's family. One rod - There shall be in this, as there is in all the other tribes, only one rod, and that for the head of their tribe, who is Aaron in this tribe: whereas it might have been expected that there should have been two rods, one for Aaron, and another for his competitors of the same tribe. But Aaron's name was sufficient to determine both the tribe, and that branch or family of the tribe, to whom this dignity should be affixed.

4. Before the testimony - That is, before the ark of the testimony, close by the ark. I will meet with you - And manifest my mind to you, for the ending of this dispute.

6. Among their rods - Was laid up with the rest, being either one of the twelve, as the Hebrew affirm, or the thirteenth, as others think.

8. Into the tabernacle - Into the most holy place, which he might safely do under the protection of God's command, though otherwise none but the high-priest might enter there, and that once in a year.

10. To be kept for a token - it is probable, the buds and blossoms and fruit, all which could never have grown together, but by miracle, continued fresh, the same which produced them in a night preserving them for ages.

12. We perish - Words of consternation, arising from the remembrance of these severe and repeated judgments, from the threatening of death upon any succeeding murmurings, and from the sense of their own guilt and weakness, which made them fear lest they should relapse into the same miscarriages, and thereby bring the vengeance of God upon themselves.

13. Near - Nearer than he should do; an error which we may easily commit. Will God proceed with us according to his strict justice, till all the people be cut off?

## XVIII

The Work of the priests and Levites, ver. 1-7. The maintenance of the priests, ver. 8-20. Of the Levites, ver. 21-24. The portion they are to pay to the priests, ver. 25-32.

1. Shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary - Shall suffer the punishment of all the usurpations, or pollutions of the sanctuary, or the holy things, by the Levites, or any of the people, because you have power from me to keep them all within their bounds. Thus the people are in good measure secured against their fears. Also they are informed that Aaron's high dignity was attended with great burdens, having not only his own, but the people's sins to answer for; and therefore they had no such reason to envy him, if the benefits and dangers were equally considered. The iniquity of your priesthood - That is, Of all the errors committed by yourselves, or by you permitted in others in things, belonging to your priesthood.

2. Unto thee - About sacrifices and offerings and other things, according to the rules I have prescribed them. The Levites are said to minister to Aaron here, to the church, chap. xvi, 9, and to God, Deut. x, 8. They shall not contend with thee for superiority, as they have done, but shall be subordinate to thee. Thy sons with thee - Or, both to thee, and to thy sons with thee: Which translation

may seem to be favoured by the following words, before the tabernacle, which was the proper place where the Levites ministered. Besides, both the foregoing words, and the two following verses, entirely speak of the ministry of the Levites, and the ministry of the priests is distinctly spoken of, ver. 5.

3. They charge - That is, that which thou shalt command them and commit unto them.

5. The sanctuary - Of the holy, and of the most holy place.

6. To you they are given as a gift - We are to value it as a great gift of the divine bounty, to have those joined to us, that will be helpful and serviceable to us, in the service of God.

7. The altar - Of burnt-offering. Within the veil - This phrase here comprehends both the holy and the most holy place. As a gift which I have freely conferred upon you, and upon you alone; and therefore let no man henceforth dare either to charge you with arrogance in appropriating this to yourselves, or to invade your office.

8. I have given them - Not only the charge, but the use of them for thyself and family. By reason of the anointing - That is, because thou art priest, and art to devote thyself wholly to my service.

9. Most holy - Such as were to be eaten only by the priests, and that in the sanctuary. Reserved - That is, such sacrifices or parts of sacrifices as were not burnt in the fire. Render unto me - By way of compensation for a trespass committed against me, in which case a ram was to be offered, which was a most holy thing, and may be particularly designed here.

10. In the most holy place - In the court of the priests, where there were places for this use, which is called the most holy place, not simply and absolutely, but in respect of the thing he speaks of because this was the most holy of all the places appointed for eating holy things, whereof some might be eaten in any clean place in the camp, or in their own house.

13. Whatsoever is first ripe - Not only the first-fruits of the oil and wine, and wheat now mentioned, but all other first-fruits of all other grains, and all fruit trees. Clean - And none else, because these were first offered to God, and by consequence given to priests; but for those which were immediately given to the priests, the clean and unclean might eat of them.

14. Devoted - Dedicated to God by vow or otherwise, provided it be such a thing as might be eaten: for the vessels or treasures of gold and silver which were dedicated by Joshua, David, or others, were not the priests, but appropriated to the uses of the temple.

15. Of men - Which were offered to God in his temple, and to his service and disposal.

16. Those that are to be redeemed - Namely, of men only, not of unclean beasts, as is manifest from the time and price of redemption here mentioned, both which agree to men; the time, ver. 16, the price, chap. iii, 46, 47, but neither agree to unclean beasts, which were to be redeemed with a sheep, Exod. xiii, 13, and that after it was eight days old.

17. Holy - Namely, in a peculiar manner, consecrated to an holy use, even to be sacrificed to God. Deut. xv, 19.

18. The flesh - All the flesh of them, and not only some parts, as in other sacrifices.

19. A covenant of salt - A durable and perpetual covenant; so called here and 2 Chron. xiii, 5, either, because salt is a sign of incorruption, as being of singular use to preserve things from corruption: or, because it is ratified on their part by salt, which is therefore called the salt of the covenant, for which the priests were obliged to take care, that it should never be lacking from any meat-offering, Lev. ii, 13. And this privilege conferred upon the priests is called a covenant because it is given them conditionally, upon condition of their service, and care about the worship of God.

20. In their land - In the land of the children of Israel. You shall not have a distinct portion of land, as the other tribes shall. The reason of this law, was, partly because God would have them wholly devoted to his service, and therefore free from worldly incumbrances; partly, because God had abundantly provided for them otherwise, by tithes and first-fruits and oblations; and partly that by this means being dispersed among the several tribes, they might have the better opportunity for teaching and watching over the people. I am thy part - I have appointed thee a liberal maintenance out of my oblations.

21. The tenth - For the tithes were all given to the Levites, and out of their tithes the tenth was given to the priests.

22. Nigh - So nigh as to do any proper act to the priests or Levites.

23. Their iniquity - The punishment due not only for their own, but also for the people's miscarriage, if it be committed through their connivance or negligence. And this was the reason why the priests withstood King Uzziah, when he would have burnt incense to the Lord.

24. An heave-offering - An acknowledgment that they have all their land and the fruits of it from God's bounty. Note the word heave-offering, which is for the most part understood of a particular kind of offerings heaved or lifted up to the Lord, is here used for any offering.

26. Ye shall offer up an heave-offering - They who are employed in assisting the devotions of others, must be sure to pay their own as an heave-offering. Prayers and praises, or rather the heart lifted up in them, are now our heave-offerings.

27. As though it were the corn - It shall be accepted of you as much as if you offered it out of your own lands and labours.

28. To Aaron - And to his children, who were all to have their share herein.

29. Your gifts - Not only out of your tithes, but out of the other gifts which you receive from the people, and out of those fields which shall belong to your cities. Offer - To the priest. As many gifts, so many heave-offerings; you shall reserve a part out of each of them for the priest. The hallowed part - the tenth part, which was the part or proportion that God hallowed or sanctified to himself as his proper portion.

31. Every place - In every clean place, and not in the holy place only.

32. Neither shall ye pollute the holy things - As you will do, if you abuse their holy offerings, by reserving that entirely to yourselves, which they offer to God to be disposed as he hath appointed, namely, part to you, and part to the priests.

## XIX

The manner of preparing the water of purification, ver. 1-10. Of using it, ver. 11-22.

2. Red - A fit colour to shadow forth the bloody nature of sin, and the blood of Christ, from which this water and all other rites had their purifying virtue. No blemish - A fit type of Christ. Upon which never came yoke - Whereby may be signified, either that Christ in himself was free from all the yoke or obligation of God's command, till for our sakes he put himself under the law;

or that Christ was not forced to undertake our burden and cross, but did voluntarily chuse it. He was bound and held with no other cords but those of his own love.

3. Eleazar - Who was the second priest, and in some cases, the deputy of the high-priest. To him, not to Aaron, because this service made him unclean for a season, and consequently unfit for holy ministrations, whereas the high-priest was, as far as possibly he could, to be preserved from all sorts of defilement, fit for his high and holy work. Without the camp -Partly because it was reputed an unclean and accursed thing, being laden with the sins of all the people; and partly to signify that Christ should suffer without the camp, in the place where malefactors suffered.

4. Before the tabernacle - Or, towards the tabernacle, standing at a good distance from it, even without the camp, yet turning and looking towards it. For here is no intimation that he went into the camp before this work was done, but rather the contrary is implied, ver. 7. And because being defiled by this work he could not come near the tabernacle, it was sufficient for him to turn and look towards it. This signified his presenting this blood before the Lord by way of atonement for his and the people's sins, and his expectation of acceptance and pardon only from God, and from his mercy-seat in the tabernacle. And this typified the satisfaction that was made to God, by the death of Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, and did as it were sprinkle his own blood before the sanctuary, when he said, Into thy hands I commend my spirit!

5. Burn the heifer - To signify the sharp and grievous sufferings of Christ for our sins. Her blood - All of it, but what was spent in sprinkling.

6. Cedar-wood, hyssop, scarlet - All which are here burnt, and as it were offered to God, that they might be sanctified to this holy use for the future; for of these kinds of things was the sprinkle made wherewith the unclean were sprinkled, Lev. xiv, 4.

7. Shall be unclean - Partly to teach us the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, in which the priest himself was defiled by some parts of his work, and partly to shew that Christ himself, though he had no sin of his own, yet was reputed by men, and judged by God, as a sinful person, by reason of our sins which were laid upon him.

9. For a water - Or, to the water, that is, to be put to the water, or mixed with it. Of separation - Appointed for the cleansing of them that are in a state of separation, who for their uncleanness are separated from the congregation. It is a purification for sin - Hebrew. a sin, that is, an offering for sin, or rather a mean for expiation or cleansing of sin. And this was a type of that purification for sin, which our Lord Jesus made by his death.

10. The stranger - A proselyte.

12. With it - With the water of separation. On the third day - To typify Christ's resurrection on that day by which we are cleansed or sanctified.

13. Whosoever toucheth - If this transgression be done presumptuously; for if it was done ignorantly, he was only to offer sacrifice. Defiled -By approaching to it in his uncleanness: for holy things or places were ceremonially defiled with the touch of any unclean person or thing. Is upon him - He continues in his guilt, not now to be washed away by this water, but to be punished by cutting off.

16. With a sword - Or by any other violent way.

17. Running water - Waters flowing from a spring or river, which are the purest. These manifestly signify God's spirit, which is oft compared to water, and by which alone true purification is obtained. Those who promise themselves benefit by the righteousness of Christ, while they submit not to the

influence of his spirit, do but deceive themselves; for they cannot be purified by the ashes, otherwise than in the running water.

20. That shall not purify himself - Shall contemptuously refuse to submit to this way of purification.

21. Shall wash his clothes - Because he is unclean. It is strange, that the same water should cleanse one person, and defile another. But God would have it so, to teach us that it did not cleanse by any virtue in itself, or in the work done, but only by virtue of God's appointment: to mind the laws of the imperfection of their priesthood, and their ritual purifications and expiations, and consequently of the necessity of a better priest and sacrifice and way of purifying; and to shew that the efficacy of God's ordinances doth not depend upon the person or quality of his ministers, because the same person who, was polluted himself could and did cleanse others. He that toucheth the water - Either by sprinkling of it, or by being sprinkled with it; for even he that was cleansed by it, was not fully cleansed as soon as he was sprinkled, but only at the even of that day.

22. The unclean person - Not he who is so only by touching the water of separation, ver. 21, but he who is so by the greater sort of uncleanness, which lasted seven days, and which was not removed without the use of this water of purification.

## XX

This chapter begins the history of the fortieth year of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness. Little is recorded of them from the beginning of their second year till this, which brought them to the borders of Canaan. Here is,

1. The death of Miriam, ver. 1.
2. The fetching water out of the rock, ver. 2-13.
3. The treaty with the Edomites, ver. 14-21.
4. The death of Aaron and installment of Eleazar, ver. 22-29.

1. Then - To wit, after many stations and long journeys here omitted, but particularly described, chap. xxxiii, 1-49. Zin - A place near the land of Edom, distinct and distant from that Sin, Exod. xvi, 1. The first month - Of the fortieth year, as is evident, because the next station to this was in mount Hor, where Aaron died, who died in the fifth month of the fortieth year, chap. xxxiii, 38. Moses doth not give us an exact journal of all occurrences in the wilderness, but only of those which were most remarkable, and especially of those which happened in the first and second, and in the fortieth year. Miriam died - Four months before Aaron, and but a few more before Moses.

2. No water - Which having followed them through all their former journeys, began to fail them here, because they were now come near countries, where waters might be had by ordinary means, and therefore God would not use extraordinary, lest he should seem to prostitute the honour of miracles. This story, though like that, Exod. xvii, 1-7, is different from it, as appears by divers circumstances. It is a great mercy, to have plenty of water; a mercy which if we found the want of, we should own the worth of.

3. Before the Lord - Suddenly, rather than to die such a lingering death. Their sin was much greater than that of their parents, because they should have taken warning by their miscarriages, and by the terrible effects of them, which their eyes had seen.

8. The rod - That which was laid up before the Lord in the tabernacle; whether it was Aaron's rod, which was laid up there, chap. xvii, 10, or Moses's rod by which he wrought so many miracles. For it is likely, that wonder-working rod, was laid up in some part of the tabernacle, though not in or near the ark, where Aaron's blossoming rod was put.

9. From before the Lord - Out of the tabernacle.

12. Ye believed me not - But shewed your infidelity: which they did, either by smiting the rock, and that twice, which is emphatically noted, as if he doubted whether once smiting would have done it, whereas he was not commanded to smite so much as once, but only to speak to it: or by the doubtfulness of these words, chap. xx, 10. Must we fetch water out of the rock? which implies a suspicion of it, whereas they should have spoken positively and confidently to the rock to give forth water. And yet they did not doubt of the power of God, but of his will, whether he would gratify these rebels with this farther miracle, after so many of the like kind. To sanctify me - To give me the glory of my power in doing this miracle, and of my truth in punctually fulfilling my promise, and of my goodness in doing it notwithstanding the peoples perverseness. In the eyes of Israel - This made their sin scandalous to the Israelites, who of themselves were too prone to infidelity; to prevent the contagion, God leaves a monument of his displeasure upon them, and inflicts a punishment as publick as their sin.

13. Meribah - That is, strife. In them - Or, among them, the children of Israel, by the demonstration of his omnipotency, veracity, and clemency towards the Israelites, and of his impartial holiness and severity against sin even in his greatest friends and favourites.

14. All the travel - All the wanderings and afflictions of our parents and of us their children, which doubtless have come to thine ears.

16. An Angel - The Angel of the Covenant, who first appeared to Moses in the bush, and afterward in the cloudy pillar, who conducted Moses and the people out of Egypt, and through the wilderness. For though Moses may be called an angel or messenger yet it is not probable that he is meant, partly because Moses was the person that sent this message; and partly because another angel above Moses conducted them, and the mention hereof to the Edomites, was likely to give more authority to their present message. In Kadesh - Near, the particle in being so often used.

17. The wells - Or, pits, which any of you have digged for your private use, not without paying for it, ver. 19, but only of the waters of common rivers, which are free to all passengers. No man's property ought to be invaded, under colour of religion. Dominion is founded in providence, not in Grace.

18. By me - Through my country: I will not suffer thee to do so: which was an act of policy, to secure themselves from so numerous an host.

19. Said - That is, their messengers replied what here follows.

23. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron - So these two dear brothers must part! Aaron must die first: but Moses is not likely to be long after him. So that it is only for a while, a little while, that they are separated.

24. Because they rebelled - This was one but not the only reason. God would not have Moses and Aaron to carry the people into Canaan, for this reason also, to signify the insufficiency of the

Mosaical law and Aaronical priesthood to make them perfectly happy, and the necessity of a better, and to keep the Israelites from resting in them, so as to be taken off from their expectation of Christ.

26. His garments - His priestly garments, in token of his resignation of his office. Put them on Eleazar - By way of admission and inauguration to his office.

27. In the sight of all the congregation - That their hearts might be more affected with their loss of so great a pillar, and that they all might be witnesses of the translation of the priesthood from Aaron to Eleazar.

28. And Moses stript Aaron - And Death will strip us. Naked we came into the world: naked we must go out. We shall see little reason to be proud of our cloaths, our ornaments, or marks of honour, if we consider how soon death will strip us of all our glory, and take the crown off from our head! Aaron died there - He died in Mosera, Deut. x, 6. Mosera was the general name of the place where that station was, and mount Hor a particular place in it. Presently after he was stript of his priestly garments, he laid him down and died. A good man would desire, if it were the will of God, not to outlive his usefulness. Why should we covet to continue any longer in this world, than while we may do God and our generation some service?

29. Saw - Understood by the relation of Moses and Eleazar, and by other signs. Thirty days - The time of publick and solemn mourning for great persons.

## XXI

The defect of Arad, ver. 1-3. The people murmur and are plagued with fiery serpents, ver. 4-6. They are healed by looking on the brazen serpent, ver. 7-9. They journey forward, ver. 10-20. Conquer Sihon, ver. 21-31. And Og, ver. 33-35.

1. King Arad - Or rather, the Canaanite King of Arad: for Arad is not the name of a man, but of a city or territory. And he seems to be called a Canaanite in a general sense, as the Amorites and others. The south - Of Canaan, towards the east, and near the dead sea. Of the spies - Not of those spies which Moses sent to spy the land, for that was done thirty eight years before this, and they went so privately, that the Canaanites took no notice of them, nor knew which way they came or went; but of the spies which he himself sent out to observe the marches and motions of the Israelites. Took some of them prisoners - Which God permitted for Israel's humiliation, and to teach them not to expect the conquest of that land from their own wisdom or valour.

2. I will utterly destroy them - I will reserve no person or thing for my own use, but devote them all to total destruction.

3. They utterly destroyed them - Neither Moses nor the whole body of the people did this but a select number sent out to punish that king and people, who were so fierce and malicious that they came out of their own country to fight with the Israelites in the wilderness; and these, when they had done this work, returned to their brethren into the wilderness. But why did they not all now go into Canaan, and pursue this victory? Because God would not permit it, there being several works yet to be done, other people must be conquered, the Israelites must be farther humbled and tried and purged, Moses must die, and then they shall enter, and that in a more glorious manner, even

over Jordan, which shall be miraculously dried up, to give them passage. Hormah - That is, utter destruction.

4. By way of the Red-sea - Which leadeth to the Red-sea, as they must needs do to compass the land of Edom. Because of the way - By reason of this journey, which was long and troublesome, and unexpected, because the successful entrance and victorious progress which some of them had made in the borders of Canaan, made them think they might have speedily gone in and taken possession of it, and so have saved the tedious travels and farther difficulties, into which Moses had again brought them.

5. Against God - Against Christ, their chief conductor, whom they tempted, 1 Cor. x, 19. Thus contemptuously did they speak of Manna, whereas it appears it yielded excellent nourishment, because in the strength of it they were able to go so many and such tedious journeys.

6. Fiery serpents - There were many such in this wilderness, which having been hitherto restrained by God, are now let loose and sent among them. They are called fiery from their effects, because their poison caused an intolerable heat and burning and thirst, which was aggravated with this circumstance of the place, that here was no water, ver. 5.

8. A fiery serpent - That is, the figure of a serpent in brass, which is of a fiery colour. This would require some time: God would not speedily take off the judgment, because he saw they were not throughly humbled. Upon a pole - That the people might see it from all parts of the camp, and therefore the pole must be high, and the serpent large. When he looketh -This method of cure was prescribed, that it might appear to be God's own work, and not the effect of nature or art: and that it might be an eminent type of our salvation by Christ. The serpent signified Christ, who was in the likeness of sinful flesh, though without sin, as this brazen serpent had the outward shape, but not the inward poison, of the other serpents: the pole resembled the cross upon which Christ was lifted up for our salvation: and looking up to it designed our believing in Christ.

9. He lived - He was delivered from death, and cured of his disease.

10. In Oboth - Not immediately, but after two other stations mentioned, chap. xxxiii, 43, 44.

12. The valley of Zared - Or rather, by the brook of Zared, which ran into the dead sea.

13. On the other side - Or rather, on this side of Arnon, for so it now was to the Israelites, who had not yet passed over it. Between Moab and the Amorites - Though formerly it and the land beyond it belonged to Moab, yet afterwards it had been taken from them by Sihon. This is added to reconcile two seemingly contrary commands of God, the one that of not meddling with the land of the Moabites, Deut. ii, 9, the other that of going over Arnon and taking possession of the land beyond it, Deut. ii, 24, because, saith he, it is not now the land of the Moabites, but of the Amorites.

14. The book of the wars of the Lord - This seems to have been some poem or narration of the wars and victories of the Lord, either by: or relating to the Israelites: which may be asserted without any prejudice to the integrity of the holy scripture, because this book doth not appear to have been written by a prophet, er to be designed for a part of the canon, which yet Moses might quote, as St. Paul doth some of the heathen poets. And as St. Luke assures us, that many did write an history of the things done, and said by Christ, Luke i, 1, whose writings were never received as canonical, the like may be conceived concerning this and some few other books mentioned in the old testament. The brooks - The brook, the plural number for the singular, as the plural number rivers is used concerning Jordan, Psalm 7iv, 15, and concerning Tigris, Nahum ii, 6, and concerning Euphrates, Psalm 1xxxvii, 1, all which may be to called because of the several little streams into which they were divided.

15. Ar - A chief city in Moab.

16. Beer - This place and Mattanah, Nahaliel, and Bamoth named here, ver. 19, are not mentioned among those places where they pitched or encamped, chap. xxxiii, 1-49. Probably they did not pitch or encamp in these places, but only pass by or through them. I will give them water - In a miraculous manner. Before they prayed, God granted, and prevented them with the blessings of goodness. And as the brasen serpent was the figure of Christ, so is this well a figure of the spirit, who is poured forth for our comfort, and from him flow rivers of living waters.

17. Spring up - Hebrew. ascend, that is, let thy waters, which now lie hid below in the earth, ascend for our use. It is either a prediction that it should spring up, or a prayer that it might.

18. With their staves - Probably as Moses smote the rock with his rod, so they struck the earth with their staves, as a sign that God would cause the water to flow out of the earth where they smote it, as he did before out of the rock. Perhaps they made holes with their staves in the sandy ground, and God caused the water immediately to spring up.

20. Pisgah - This was the top of those high hills of Abarim.

21. Sent messengers - By God's allowance, that so Sihon's malice might be the more evident and inexcusable, and their title to his country more clear in the judgment of all men, as being gotten by a just war, into which they were forced for their own defense.

22. Let me pass - They spoke what they seriously intended and would have done, if he had given them quiet passage.

24. From Arnon - Or, which reached from Arnon; and so here is a description or limitation of Sihon's conquest and kingdom, that is, extended only from Arnon, unto the children of Ammon; and then the following words, for the border of the children of Ammon was strong, come in very fitly, not as a reason why the Israelites did not conquer the Ammonites, for they were absolutely forbidden to meddle with them, Deut. iii, 8, but as a reason why Sihon could not enlarge his conquests to the Ammonites, as he had done to the Moabites. Jabbok - A river by which the countries of Ammon and Moab were in part bounded and divided. Strong - Either by the advantage of the river, or by their strong holds in their frontiers.

26. Was the city of Sihon - This is added as a reason why Israel took possession of this land, because it was not now the land of the Moabites, but in the possession of the Amorites. The former king -The predecessor of Balak, who was the present king. See the wisdom of providence, which prepares long before, for the accomplishing God's purposes in their season! This country being designed for Israel, is before-hand put into the hand of the Amorites, who little think they have it but as trustees, till Israel comes of age. We understand not the vast reaches of providence: but known unto God are all his works!

27. In Proverbs - The poets or other ingenious persons, of the Amorites or Canaanites, who made this following song of triumph over the vanquished Moabites: which is here brought in, as a proof that this was now Sihon's land, and as an evidence of the just judgment of God in spoiling the spoilers, and subduing those who insulted over their conquered enemies. Come into Heshbon - These are the words either of Sihon speaking to his people, or of the people exhorting one another to come and possess the city which they had taken. Of Sihon - That which once was the royal city of the king of Moab, but now is the city of Sihon.

28. A fire - The fury of war, which is fitly compared to fire. Out of Heshbon - That city which before was a refuge and defense to all the country, now is turned into a great annoyance. It hath consumed Ar -This may be understood not of the city Ar, but of the people or the country subject

or belonging to that great and royal city. The lords of the high places - The princes or governors of the strong holds, which were frequently in high places, especially in that mountainous country, and which were in divers parts all along the river Arnon. So the Amorites triumphed over the vanquished Moabites. But the triumphing of the wicked is short!

29. People of Chemosh - The worshippers of Chemosh: so the God of the Moabites was called. He, that is, their God, hath delivered up his own people to his and their enemies; nor could he secure even those that had escaped the sword, but suffered them to be carried into captivity. The words of this and the following verse seem to be not a part of that triumphant song made, by some Amoritish poet, which seems to be concluded, ver. 28, but of the Israelites making their observation upon it. And here they scoff at the impotency not only of the Moabites, but of their God also, who could not save his people from the sword of Sihon and the Amorites.

30. Though you feeble Moabites, and your God too, could not resist Sihon, we Israelites, by the help of our God, have shot, with success and victory, at them, at Sihon and his Amorites. Heshbon - The royal city of Sihon, and by him lately repaired, Is perished - Is taken away from Sihon, and so is all his country, even as far as Dibon.

32. Jaazer - One of the cities of Moab formerly taken from them by Sihon, and now taken from him by the Israelites.

33. Og - Who also was a king of the Amorites. And it may seem that Sihon and Og were the leaders or captains of two great colonies which came out of Canaan, and drove out the former inhabitants of these places. Bashan - A rich country, famous for its pastures and breed of cattle, and for its oaks.

## XXII

Balak's fear of Israel, ver. 1-4. His message to Balaam, who refuses to come, ver. 5-14. On the second message he goes, ver. 15-21. He is rebuked by an angel, ver. 22-35. His interview with Balak, ver. 36-41.

1. The plains of Moab - Which still retained their ancient title, though they had been taken away from the Moabites by Sihon, and from him by the Israelites. By Jericho - That is, over against Jericho.

3. Sore afraid - As it was foretold both in general of all nations, Deut. ii, 25, and particularly concerning Moab, Exod. xv, 15.

4. The elders - Called the kings of Midian, chap. xxxi, 8, and princes of Midian, Josh. xiii, 21, who though divided into their kingdoms yet were now united upon the approach of the Israelites their common enemy, and being, as it seems, a potent and crafty people, and neighbours to the Moabites, these seek confederacy with them. We read of Midianites near mount Sinai, Exod. ii, and iii, which seem to have been a colony of this people, that went out to seek new quarters, as the manner of those times was, but the body of that people were seated in those parts. Lick up - That is, consume and utterly destroy, in which sense the fire is said to lick up the water and sacrifices,

1 Kings xviii, 38. All that are round about us - All our people, who live in the country adjoining to each city, where the princes reside.

5. Balaam - Who is called a prophet, 2Pet ii, 16, because God was pleased to inspire and direct him to speak the following prophecies. Indeed many of the Jewish writers say, that Balaam had been a great prophet, who for the accomplishment of his predictions, and the answers of his prayers, had been looked upon justly as a man of great interest with God. However it is certain, that afterwards for his covetousness, God departed from him. Beor - Or, Bosor, 2Pet ii, 15, for he had two names, as many others had. Pethor - A city in Mesopotamia. By the river - By Euphrates, which is called the river, by way of eminency, and here the river of Balaam's land or country, to wit, of Mesopotamia.

6. Curse them for my sake and benefit; use thy utmost power, which thou hast with thy Gods, to blast and ruin them. We may smite them - Thou by thy imprecations, and I by my sword.

8. This night - The night was the time when God used to reveal his mind by dreams. The Lord - Hebrew. Jehovah, the true God, whom he here mentions, either for his own greater reputation, as if he consulted not with inferior spirits, but with the supreme God; or rather because this was Israel's God, and the only possible way of ruining them was by engaging their God against them: as the Roman and other Heathens, when they went to besiege any city, used enchantments to call forth that God under whose peculiar protection they were. Of Moab - And of Midian too.

9. What men are these - He asks this that Balaam by repeating the thing in God's presence might be convinced and ashamed of his sin and folly, in offering his service in such a business: and for a foundation to the following answer.

20. If the men come - On this condition he was to go.

22. Because he went - Because he went of his own accord, with the princes of Moab, and did not wait till they came to call him, which was the sign and condition of God's permission, but rather himself rose and called them. The apostle describes Balaam's sin here to be, that he ran greedily into an error for reward, Jude i, 11. For an adversary - To oppose, if not to kill him. His servants with him - The rest of the company being probably gone before them. For in those ancient times there was more of simplicity, and less of ceremony, and therefore it is not strange that Balaam came at some distance, after the rest, and attended only by his own servants.

28. Opened the mouth - Conferred upon her the power of speech and reasoning for that time.

29. Balaam said - Balaam was not much terrified with the ass's speaking, because perhaps he was accustomed to converse with evil spirits, who appeared to him and discoursed with him in the shape of such creatures. Perhaps he was so blinded by passion, that he did not consider the strangeness of the thing.

31. On his face - In token of reverence and submission.

32. Thy way is perverse - Springing from covetousness.

33. I had slain thee - I had slain thee alone, and not her, therefore her turning aside and falling down was wholly for thy benefit, not for her own, and thy anger against her was unjust and unreasonable.

35. Go with the men - I allow thee to go, upon the following terms.

36. In the utmost coast - Not far from the camp of the Israelites, whom he desired him to curse.

40. The princes - Whom the king had left to attend him.

41. The high places of Baal - Consecrated to the worship of Baal, that is, of Baal Peor, who was their Baal or God. The utmost part - That is, all that people, even to the utmost and remotest

of them, as appears by comparing this with, chap. xxiii, 13. He hoped that the sight of such a numerous host ready to break in upon his country would stir up his passion.

## XXIII

Balaam's first attempt to curse Israel, turned into a blessing, ver. 1-10. His second attempt with like success, ver. 11-24. The preparation for a third attempt, ver. 25-30.

1. Build seven altars - To the true God, otherwise he would not have mentioned it to God, as an argument why he should grant his requests, as he doth, ver. 4. And though Balak was averse from God and his worship, yet he would be easily overruled by Balaam, who doubtless told him that it was in vain to make an address to any other than the God of Israel, who alone was able either to bless or curse them as he pleased. Seven - This being the solemn and usual number in sacrifices.

3. Stand by thy burnt-offering - As in God's presence, as one that offers thyself as well as thy sacrifices to obtain his favour. I will go - To some solitary and convenient place, where I may prevail with God to appear to me. Sheweth me - Reveals to me, either by word or sign. An high place - Or, into the plain, as that word properly signifies.

7. His parable - That is, his oracular and prophetical speech; which he calls a parable, because of the weightiness of the matter, and the liveliness of the expressions which is usual in parables. Jacob - The posterity of Jacob.

9. The rocks - Upon which I now stand. I see him - I see the people, according to thy desire, ver. 41, but cannot improve that sight to the end for which thou didst design it, to curse them. The people shall dwell alone - This people are of a distinct kind from others, God's peculiar people, separated from all other nations, as in religion and laws, so also in divine protection; and therefore enchantments cannot have that power against them which they have against other persons and people.

10. The dust - The numberless people of Jacob or Israel, who according to God's promise, are now become as the dust of the earth. Of the righteous - Of this righteous and holy people. The sense is, they are not only happy above other nations in this life, and therefore in vain should I curse them, but they have this peculiar privilege, that they are happy after death: their happiness begins where the happiness of other people ends; and therefore I heartily wish that my soul may have its portion with theirs when I die. Was not God now again striving with him, not only for the sake of Israel, but of his own soul?

12. Must I not - Ought I not? Is it not my duty? Canst thou blame me for it?

13. Thou shalt not see them all - Perhaps he thought the sight of all them might discourage him, or as it did before, raise his fancy to an admiration of the multitude and felicity of the people.

15. While I meet the Lord - To consult him, and to receive an answer from him.

18. Rise up - This word implies the diligent attention required; rouse up thyself and carefully mind what I say.

19. That he should lie - Break his promises made to his people for their preservation and benediction. Repent - Change his counsels or purposes; unless he see iniquity in Jacob.

21. Iniquity - Not such as in the Canaanites: Such as he will punish with a curse, with utter destruction. The Lord is with him - He hath a favour for this people, and will defend and save them. The shout of a king - That is, such joyful and triumphant shouts as those wherewith a people congratulate the approach and presence of their King: when he appears among them upon some solemn occasion, or when he returns from battle with victory. This expression implies God's being their King and ruler, and their abundant security and confidence in him.

22. Out of Egypt - Namely, by a strong hand, and in spite of all their enemies, and therefore it is in vain to seek or hope to overcome them. He - Israel, whom God brought out of Egypt, such change of numbers being very common in the Hebrew language. The sense is, Israel is not now what he was in Egypt, a poor, weak, dispirited, unarmed people, but high and strong and invincible. An unicorn - The word may mean either a rhinoceros, or a strong and fierce kind of wild goat. But such a creature as an unicorn, as commonly painted, has no existence in nature.

23. Against Jacob - Nor against any that truly believe in Christ. What hath God wrought - How wonderful and glorious are those works which God is now about to do for Israel! These things will be a matter of discourse and admiration to all ages.

24. As a great Lion - As a lion rouseth up himself to fight, or to go out to the prey, so shall Israel stir up themselves to warlike attempts against their enemies. He shall not lie down - Not rest or cease from fighting and pursuing.

28. Peor - An high place called Beth-peor, Deut. iii, 29. That is, the house or temple of Peor, because there they worshipped Baal- peor.

## XXIV

Balaam inspired by God, blesses Israel again, ver. 1-9. Answers Balak's reproof, ver. 10-13. Utters several prophecies, ver. 14-24 Goes home, ver. 25.

1. At other times - In former times. Toward the wilderness - Where Israel lay encamped, expecting what God of his own accord would suggest to him concerning this matter.

2. Came upon him - Inspired him to speak the following words.

3. Whose eyes are open - Hebrew. Who had his eyes shut, but now open. The eyes of his mind, which God had opened in a peculiar and prophetical manner, whence prophets are called Seers, 1 Sam. ix, 9. It implies that before he was blind and stupid, having eyes, but not seeing nor understanding.

4. The vision - So called properly, because he was awake when this was revealed to him: A trance - Or, extasy, fainting and falling upon the ground, as the prophets used to do.

6. As the valleys - Which often from a small beginning are spread forth far and wide. As gardens - Pleasant and fruitful and secured by a fence. As lign-aloes - An Arabian and Indian tree of a sweet smell, yielding shade and shelter both to man and beast; such is Israel, not only safe themselves, but yielding shelter to all that join themselves to them. Which the Lord hath planted - Nature, not art.

7. He shall pour the water - That is. God will abundantly water the valleys, gardens, and trees, which represent the Israelites; he will wonderfully bless his people, not only with outward blessings, of which a chief one in those parts was plenty of water, but also with higher gifts and graces, with his word and spirit, which are often signified by water, and at last with eternal life, the contemplation whereof made Balaam desire to die the death of the righteous. His seed shall be in many waters - This also may be literally understood of their seed, which shall be sown in waterish ground, and therefore bring forth a better increase. His King - That is, the King of Israel, or their chief governor. Than Agag - Than the King of the Amalekites, which King and people were famous and potent in that age, as may be guessed by their bold attempt upon so numerous a people as Israel. And it is probable, that Agag was the common name of the Amalekitish Kings, as Abimelech was of the Philistines, and Pharaoh of the Egyptians, and Caesar of the Romans.

9. He lay down - Having conquered his enemies the Canaanites, and their land, he shall quietly rest and settle himself there.

11. The Lord - Whose commands thou hast preferred before my desires and interest; and therefore seek thy recompence from him, and not from me.

17. I shall see him - Or, I have seen, or do see the star, and scepter as it here follows, that is, a great and eminent prince, which was to come out of Israel's loins, the Messiah, as both Jewish and Christian interpreters expound it, who most eminently and fully performed what is here said, in destroying the enemies of Israel or of God's church, here described under the names of the nearest and fiercest enemies of Israel: And to him alone agrees the foregoing verb properly, I shall see him, in my own person, as every eye shall see him, when he comes to judgment. Not now - Not yet, but after many ages. A star - A title often given to, princes and eminent persons, and particularly to the Messiah, Rev. ii, 28; xxii, 16. A scepter - That is, a scepter-bearer, a king or ruler, even that scepter mentioned Gen. xlix, 10. The corners - The borders, which are often used in scripture for the whole country to which they belong. Of Sheth - This seems to be the name of some then eminent, though now unknown place or prince in Moab; there being innumerable instances of such places or persons sometime famous, but now utterly lost as to all monuments and remembrances of them.

18. A possession - Which was also foretold, Gen. xxv, 23, and in part fulfilled, 2 Sam. viii, 14; 1 Chron. xviii, 13, but more fully by Christ, Amos ix, 12 Obad. i, 18, who shall subdue and possess all his enemies; here signified by the name of Edom, as Jacob or Israel, his brother, signifies all his church and people. Seir - A part and, mountain of Edom.

19. Out of Jacob - Out of Jacob's loins. He that shall have dominion - David, and especially Christ. Of the city - Or from or out of this city, that is, the cities, the singular number for the plural. He shall not subdue those Moabites and Edomites which meet him in the field, but he shall pursue them even to their strongest holds and cities.

20. He looked on Amalek - From the top of Pisgah, which was exceeding high, and gave him the prospect of part of all these kingdoms. The first - Hebrew. the firstfruits; so called either, because they were the first of all the neighbouring nations which were embodied together in one government: or, because he was the first who fought against Israel and was vanquished by them. That victory was an earnest and first-fruit of the large harvest of victories which the Israelites should in due time get over all their enemies. He shall perish for ever - He began with God and with Israel, but God will end with him, and the firm purpose of God is, that he shall be utterly destroyed; so that Saul lost his kingdom for not executing this decree, and God's command pursuant thereunto.

21. The Kenites - The posterity or kindred of Jethro; not that part of them which dwelt among the Israelites, to whom the following words do not agree, but those of them who were mingled with the Amalekites and Midianites. Thy nest - Thy dwelling-place, so called, either because it was in an high place, as nests commonly are: or in allusion to their name, for ken in Hebrew signifies a nest.

22. The Kenite - Hebrew. Kain, that is, the Kenite, so called, either by a transposition of letters, which is very usual in the Hebrew tongue; or from the name of some eminent place where they lived, or person from whom they were descended, though now the memory of them be utterly lost, as it hath fared with innumerable other places and persons, famous in their generations, mentioned in ancient Heathen writers. Shall be wasted - Shall be by degrees diminished by the incursions of divers enemies, till at last the Assyrian comes to compleat the work and carries them into captivity. For the Kenites who lived partly among the ten tribes, and partly with the two tribes, were carried captive with them, part by Salmaneser, the King of Assyria, and part by Nebuchadnezzar, who also is called an Assyrian, Ezra vi, 22 Isaiah lii, 4.

23. Who shall live - How calamitous and miserable will the state of the world be, when the Assyrian, and after him the Chaldean, shall over-turn all these parts of the world? Who will be able to keep his heart from fainting under such grievous pressures? Nay, how few will escape the destroying sword?

24. Chittim - A place or people so called from Chittim the son of Javan, Gen. x, 4, whose posterity were very numerous, and were first seated in the lesser Asia, and from thence sent forth colonies into the islands of the Aegean sea, and into Cyprus, afterwards into Macedonia and other parts of Greece, and then into Italy. Whence it comes to pass that by this name is understood sometimes Macedonia, as 1 Maccabees. i. 1, and 1 Maccabees. viii. 5, sometimes Italy, as Dan. xi, 29, 30, and sometimes both, as in this place: for he speaks here of the scourge that God hath appointed for the Assyrian after he had done God's work in punishing of his people and the bordering nations. Now although the Assyrian and Chaldean empire was subdued by the Medes and Persians, yet the chief afflictions of that people came from two hands, both beyond the sea and brought to them by ships; first from the Grecians under Alexander and his successors, by whom that people were grievously oppressed and wasted; then from the Romans, who subdued all the Grecian empire, one great part whereof were the Assyrians largely so called. Eber - The posterity of Eber, the Hebrew, who were the chief and flower of Eber's children. He also - Not the Hebrew: they shall have a better end; all Israel shall be saved; but the afflicter or scourge of Ashur and Eber, namely, the Grecian and Roman empire. Thus Balaam, instead of cursing the church, curses Amalek, the first, and Rome, the last enemy of it!

25. To his place - To Mesopotamia; tho' afterwards he returned to the Midianites, and gave them that devilish counsel which was put in practice, chap. xxv, 16-18.

## XXV

The sin of Israel, ver. 1-3. Their punishment, ver. 4, 5. The zeal of Phinehas, with the promise annext to it, ver. 6-15. The command to slay the Midianites, ver. 16-18.

1. Shittim - And this was their last station, from whence they passed immediately into Canaan. This is noted as a great aggravation of their sin, that they committed it, when God was going to put them into the possession of their long-expected land. The people - Many of them. Whoredom - Either because they prostituted themselves to them upon condition of worshipping their God: or because their filthy God was worshipped by such filthy acts, as Priapus and Venus were. The daughters of Moab - And of Midian too; for both these people being confederated in this wicked design, the one is put for the other, and the daughters of Moab may be named, either because they began the transgression, or because they were the chief persons, possibly, the relations or courtiers of Balak.

2. They - The Moabites being now neighbours to the Israelites, and finding themselves unable to effect their design by war and witchcraft, fell another way to work, by contracting familiarity with them, and, perceiving their evil inclinations, they, that is, their daughters, invited them. Unto the sacrifices - Unto the feasts which were made of their parts of the sacrifices, after the manner of the Jews and Gentiles too, the participation whereof, was reckoned a participation in the worship of that God to whom the sacrifices were offered. Of their gods - Of their God, Baal-peor, the plural Elohim being here used, as commonly it is, for one God.

3. Joined himself - The word implies a forsaking God to whom they were joined and a turning to, and strict conjunction with, this false God. Baal-peor - Called Baal, by the name common to many false Gods, and especially to those that represented any of the heavenly bodies, and Peor, either from the hill Peor, where he was worshipped, chap. xxiii, 28, rather from a verb signifying to open and uncover, because of the obscene posture in which the idol was set, as Priapus was: or because of the filthiness which was exercised in his worship.

4. Take all the heads - Take, that is, apprehend, all the heads, that is, the chief, of the people, such as were chief in this transgression, and in place and power, who are singled out to this exemplary punishment for their concurrence with others in this wickedness, which was more odious and mischievous in them. Hang them up before the Lord - To the vindication of God's honour and justice. Against the sun - Publickly, as their sin was publick and scandalous, and speedily, before the sun go down.

5. Every one his men - Those under his charge, for as these seventy were chosen to assist Moses in the government, so doubtless the care and management of the people was distributed among them by just and equal proportions.

6. One came - This was done, when Moses had given the charge to the Judges, and, as it may seem, before the execution of it; otherwise it is probable he would not have been so foolish to have run upon certain ruin, when the examples were frequent before his eyes. To his brethren - Into the camp of the Israelites. In the sight of Moses - An argument of intolerable impudence and contempt of God and of Moses. Weeping - Bewailing the wickedness of the people, and the dreadful judgments of God, and imploring God's mercy and favour.

8. Thrust them thro' - Phineas was himself a man in great authority, and did this after the command given by Moses to the rulers to slay these transgressors, and in the very sight, and no doubt by the consent of Moses himself, and also by the special direction of God's spirit.

9. Twenty four thousand - St. Paul says twenty three thousand, 1 Cor. x, 8. The odd thousand here added were slain by the Judges according to the order of Moses, the rest by the immediate hand of God, but both sorts died of the plague, the word being used, as often it is, for the sword, or hand, or stroke of God.

12. My covenant of peace - That is, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, as it is expounded, ver. 13, which is called a covenant of peace, partly with respect to the happy effect of this heroical action of his, whereby he made peace between God and his people; and partly with regard to the principal end of the priestly office, which was constantly to do that which Phinehas now did, even to meditate between God and men, to obtain and preserve his own and Israel's peace and reconciliation with God, by offering up sacrifices and incense, and prayers, to God on their behalf, as also by turning them away from iniquity, which is the only peace- breaker, and by teaching and pressing the observation of that law, which is the only bond of their peace.

13. At everlasting priesthood - To continue as long as the law and common-wealth of the Jews did. But this promise was conditional, and therefore might be made void, by the miscarriages of Phinehas's sons, as it seems it was, and thereupon a like promise was made to Eli of the line of Ithamar, that he and his should walk before the Lord, namely, in the office of high- priest, for ever, which also for his and their sins was made void, 1 Sam. ii, 30. And the the priesthood returned to Phinehas's line in the time of Solomon, 1 Kings ii, 26, 27, 34.

17. The Midianites - And why not the Moabites. It is probable the Midianites were most guilty, as in persuading Balak to send for Balaam, chap. xxii, 4, 7. So in the reception of Balaam after Balak had dismissed him, chap. xxxi, 8, and in farther consultation with him, and in contriving the means for the executing of this wicked plot.

18. With their wiles - For under pretense of kindred and friendship and leagues, which they offered to them, instead of that war which the Israelites expected, they sought only an opportunity to insinuate themselves into their familiarity, and execute their hellish plot of bringing that curse upon the Israelites, which they had in vain attempted to bring another way.

## XXVI

Orders for numbering the people, ver. 1-4. Their families and number, ver. 5-51. Directions for dividing the land between them, ver. 52-55. The families and number of the Levites, ver. 56- 62. Notice taken of the death of them that were first numbered, ver. 62-65.

2. Take the sum - They were numbered twice before, Exod. xxx, 11, 12 chap. i, 1, 2. Now they are numbered a third time, to demonstrate the faithfulness of God, both in cutting all those off whom he had threatened to cut off, chap. xiv, 29, and in a stupendous increase of the people according to his promise, notwithstanding all their sins, and the sweeping judgments inflicted upon them; and to prepare the way for the equal division of the land, which they were now going to possess.

7. Families - The chief houses, which were subdivided into divers lesser families. Forty three thousand seven hundred and thirty - Whereas in their last numbering they were forty six thousand five hundred; for Korah's conspiracy, as well as other provocations of theirs, had cut off many of them.

10. With Korah - According to this translation Korah was not consumed by fire with his two hundred and fifty men, but swallowed up by the earth. But others rather think he was devoured by

the fire, and render these words, and the things of Korah, or belonging to Korah, namely, his tent and goods, and family, children excepted, as here follows. A sign - God made them a monument or example, to warn others not to rebel against God, or magistracy, nor to usurp the priestly office.

11. Died not - God being pleased to spare them, because they disowned their father's fact, and separated themselves both from his tent and company. Hence the sons of Korah are mentioned, 1 Chron. vi, 22, 38, and often in the book of Psalms.

12. Jachin - Called also Jarib, 1 Chron. iv, 24. And such names might be either added or changed upon some special occasion not recorded in scripture.

14. Twenty two thousand and two hundred - No tribe decreased so much as Simeon's. From fifty nine thousand and three hundred it sunk to twenty two thousand and two hundred, little more than a third part of what it was. One whole family of that tribe, (Ohad mentioned Exod. vi, 15) was extinct in the wilderness. Some think most of the twenty four thousand, cut off by the plague for the iniquity of Peor, were of that tribe. For Zimri, a ring-leader in that iniquity, was a prince of that tribe. Simeon is not mentioned in Moses's blessing, Deut. xxxiii, 1-29. And the lot of that tribe in Canaan was inconsiderable, only a canton out of Judah's lot, Josh. xix, 9.

18. Children of Gad - Fewer by above five thousand than there were in their last numbering.

22. The families of Judah - About two thousand more than they were, chap. i, 27, whereas the foregoing tribes were all diminished.

34. Fifty two thousand and seven hundred - Whereas they were but thirty two thousand and two hundred, in chap. i, 35. So they are now increased above twenty thousand, according to that prophecy, Gen. xlix, 22.

38. The sons of Benjamin - Who were ten, Gen. xlvi, 21, whereof only five are here mentioned, the rest probably, together with their families, being extinct.

43. Threescore and four thousand and four hundred - All from one son and family, whereas of Benjamin who had ten sons, and five families, there were only forty five thousand and six hundred, to shew that the increase of families depends singly upon God's blessing and good pleasure.

51. These were the numbered - Very nigh as many as there were before, chap. i, 46. So wisely and marvelously did God at the same time manifest his justice in cutting off so vast a number; his mercy in giving such a speedy and numerous supply; and his truth in both.

53. The land shall be divided - The land was divided into nine parts and an half, respect being had in such division to the goodness as well as to the largeness of the several portions, and the lot gave each tribe their part. Of names - Of persons, the share of each tribe was divided amongst the several families, to some more, to some less, according to the number of the persons of each family. And withal, if one of the portions proved too large or too little for the families and persons of that tribe, they might give part of their portion to another tribe, (as Simeon and Daniel had part of Judah's share) or take away a part from the portion belonging to another tribe.

55. By lot - For the tribes, not for the several families; for the distribution of it to them was left to the rulers wisdom according to the rule now given.

56. Many and few - That share, which shall by lot fall to each tribe, shall be distributed to the several families and persons in such proportions as their numbers shall require.

65. Not left a man - Only of the Levites, who being not guilty of that sin did not partake of their judgment.

## XXVII

The case of Zelophehad's daughters determined, ver. 1-11. Notice given to Moses of his death, ver. 12-14. His successor provided. ver. 15-23.

2. By the door of the tabernacle - Nigh unto which it seems was the place where Moses and the chief rulers assembled for the administration of publick affairs, which also was very convenient, because they had frequent occasion of recourse to God for his direction.

3. In his own sin - For his own personal sins. It was a truth, and that believed by the Jews that death was a punishment for mens own sins.

4. Be done away - As it will be, if it be not preserved by an inheritance given to us in his name and for his sake. Hence some gather, that the first son of each of these heiresses was called by their father's name, by virtue of that law, Deut. xxv, 6, whereby the brother's first son was to bear the name of his elder brother, whose widow he married. Give us a possession - In the land of Canaan upon the division of it, which though not yet conquered, they concluded would certainly be so, and thereby gave glory to God.

10. No brethren - Nor sisters, as appears from ver. 8.

11. A statute of judgment - A statute or rule, by which the magistrates shall give judgment in such cases.

12. Abarim - The whole tract of mountains was called Abarim, whereof one of the highest was called Nebo, and the top of that Pisgah.

13. Thou shalt be gathered unto thy people - Moses must die: but death does not cut him off; it only gathers him to his people, brings him to rest with the holy patriarchs that were gone before him. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were his people, the people of his choice, and to them death gathered him.

15. And Moses spake unto the Lord - Concerning his successor. We should concern ourselves both in our prayers and in our endeavours for the rising generation, that God's kingdom may be advanced among men, when we are in our graves.

16. The Lord of the spirits of all flesh - God of all men: the searcher of spirits, that knowest who is fit for this great employment; the father and giver and governor of spirits, who canst raise and suit the spirits of men to the highest and hardest works.

17. Go out before them - That is, who may wisely conduct them in all their affairs, both when they go forth to war, or upon other occasions, and when they return home and live in peace. A metaphor from shepherds, who in those places used not to go behind their sheep, as ours now do, but before them, and to lead them forth to their pasture, and in due time to lead them home again.

18. The spirit - The spirit of government, of wisdom, and of the fear of the Lord. Lay thy hand - By which ceremony Moses did both design the person and confer the power, and by his prayers, which accompanied that rite, obtain from God all the spiritual gifts and graces necessary for his future employment.

19. Before all the congregation - That they may be witnesses of the whole action, and may acknowledge him for their supreme ruler. Give him charge - Thou shalt give him counsels and instructions for the right management of that great trust.

20. Put some of thine honour - Thou shalt not now use him as a servant, but as a brother and thy partner in the government, that the people being used to obey him while Moses lived, might do it afterward the more chearfully.

21. Who shall ask counsel for him - When he requires him to do so, and in important and difficult matters. Of Urim - Urim is put for both Urim and Thummim. Before the Lord - Ordinarily in the tabernacle near the second veil setting his face to the ark. At his word - The word of the Lord, delivered to him by the high priest.

22. And Moses did as the Lord commanded him - It had been little to resign his honour to a son of his own. But with his own hands, first to ordain Eleazar high-priest, and now Joshua chief ruler, while his own children had no preferment at all, but were left in the rank of common Levites: this was more to his glory than the highest advancement of his family could have been. This shews him to have had a principle which raised him above all other lawgivers, who always took care to establish their families in some share of the greatness themselves possessed.

## XXVIII

Laws concerning the daily, ver. 1-8. Weekly, ver. 9-10. Monthly, ver. 11-15. Yearly sacrifices, ver. 16-31.

2. Command the children of Israel - God here repeats some of the former laws about sacrifices, not without great reason, partly because they had been generally discontinued for thirty eight years together; partly because the generation to which the former laws had been given about these things was wholly dead, and it was fit the new generation should be instructed about them, as their parents were; partly to renew their testimonies of God's grace and mercy, notwithstanding their frequent forfeitures thereof by their rebellion: and principally because they were now ready to enter into that land, in which they were obliged to put these things in practice.

7. In the holy place - Upon the altar of burnt offerings, which was in the court of the priests, nigh to the entrance into the sanctuary.

17. The feast - Namely, of unleavened bread.

23. In the morning - And that in the evening too, as is evident from other scriptures; but the morning-sacrifice alone is mentioned, because the celebration of the feast began with it, and principally because this alone was doubtful, whether this might not be omitted when so many other sacrifices were offered in that morning, whereas there was no question but the evening sacrifice should be offered, when there were none other to be offered.

26. The day of the first fruits - In the feast of pentecost, Acts ii, 1. Your weeks - The seven weeks which you are to number from the passover.

## XXIX

Offerings to be made in the seventh month,
1. At the feast of trumpets, ver. 1-6.
2. In the day of atonement, ver. 7-11.
3. At the feast of tabernacles, ver. 12-40.

6. Of the month - Belonging to every new moon.

7. Afflict your souls - Yourselves, by fasting and abstinence from all delightful things, and by compunction for your sins, and the judgments of God, either deserved by you or inflicted upon you.

12. Seven days - Not by abstaining so long from all servile work, but by offering extraordinary sacrifices each day. This was the Feast of Tabernacles. And all the days of their dwelling in booths, they must offer sacrifices. While we are in these tabernacles, 'tis our interest as well as duty, to keep up our communion with God. Nor will the unsettledness of our outward condition, excuse our neglect of God's worship.

## XXX

A general rule, vows must be performed, ver. 1-3. Particular exceptions, of the vow of a daughter, not allowed by the father, ver. 3-5. And the vow of a wife, not allowed by her husband, 6- 16.

5. In the days - Speedily, or without delay, allowing only convenient time for deliberation. And it is hereby intimated, that the day or time he had for disallowing her vow, was not to be reckoned from her vowing, but from his knowledge of her vow. The Lord shall forgive - Or, will forgive her not performing it. But this should be understood only of vows which could not be performed without invading the father's right; for if one should vow to forbear such, or such a sin, and all occasions or means leading to it, and to perform such, or such duties, when he had opportunity, no father can discharge him from such vows. If this law does not extend to children's marrying without the parent's consent, so far as to put it in the power of the parent, to disannul the marriage, (which some think it does) yet certainly it proves the sinfulness of such marriages, and obliges those children to repent and humble themselves before God and their parents.

9. Widow or divorced - Though she be in her father's house, whither such persons often returned.

10. If she vowed - If she that now a widow, or divorced, made that vow while her husband lived with her; as suppose she then vowed, that if she was a widow, she would give such a proportion of her estate to pious or charitable uses, of which vow she might repent when she came to be a widow, and might believe or repented she was free from it, because that vow was made in her husband's lifetime; this is granted, in case her husband then disallowed it; but denied, in case by silence, or otherwise he consented to it.

13. To afflict her soul - Herself by fasting, by watching, or the like. And these words are added to shew that the husband had this power not only in those vows which concerned himself or his

estate, but also in those which might seem only to concern her own person, or body, and the reason is, because the wife's person or body being the husband's right; she might not do any thing to the injury of her body without his consent.

15. After he hath heard - And approved them by his silence from day to day, if after that time he shall hinder it, which he ought not to do: her non-performance of her vow shall be imputed to him, not to her.

## XXXI

God commands Moses to avenge Israel of the Midianites, ver. 1, 2. Moses sends them to the war, ver. 3-6. They slay the Midianites, ver. 7-12. He reproves them for sparing the women, ver. 13-18. Directions for purifying themselves, ver. 19-24. The distribution of the spirit, ver. 25-47. The free-will-offering of the officers, ver. 48-54.

3. Avenge ye the Lord - For the affront which they offered to God, by their own idolatry and lewdness, and by seducing God's people into rebellion against him. God's great care was to avenge the Israelites, ver. 2, and Moses's chief desire was to avenge God rather than himself or the people.

5. Twelve thousand - God would send no more, though it is apparent the Midianites were numerous and strong, because he would exercise their trust in him, and give them an earnest of their Canaanitish conquests.

6. Them and Phinehas - Who had the charge not of the army, as general, (an office never committed to a priest in all the Old Testament) but of the holy instruments, and was sent to encourage, and quicken, them in their enterprize. The holy instruments - The holy breast-plate, wherein was the Urim and Thummim, which was easily carried, and very useful in war upon many emergent occasions.

7. All the males - Namely all who lived in those parts, for colonies of them, were sent forth to remoter places, which therefore had no hand either in their former sin, or in this present ruling. And herein they did according to God's own order concerning such people, Deut. xx, 13, only their fault was, that they did not consider the special reason which they had to involve the women in the destruction.

13. Without the camp - Partly to put respect upon them, and congratulate with them for their happy success; and partly to prevent the pollution of the camp by the untimely entrance of the warriors into it.

17. The little ones - Which they were forbidden to do to other people, Deut. xx, 14, except the Canaanites, to whom this people had equaled themselves by their horrid crimes, and therefore it is not strange, nor unjust, that God, the supreme Lord of all mens lives, who as he gives them, so may take them away when he pleaseth, did equal them in the punishment. Every woman -Partly for punishment, because the guilt was general, and though some of them only did prostitute themselves to the Israelites, yet the rest made themselves accessary by their consent or approbation; and partly, for prevention of the like mischief from such an adulterous generation.

20. Your raiment - Namely, your spoil and prey. All work - All which had contracted some ceremonial uncleanness either from the dead bodies which wore them, or the tents or houses where they were, in which such dead bodies lay, or from the touch of the Israelitish soldiers, who were legally defiled by the slaughters they made.

27. Two parts - The congregation hath some share, because the warriors went in the name of all, and because all having been injured by the Midianites, all were to have some share in the reparations: but the warriors who were but 12000, have a far greater share than their brethren, because they underwent greater pains and dangers.

29. An heave-offering - In thankfulness to God for their preservation and good success.

30. One of fifty - Whereas the former part was one of five hundred; the reason of the difference is, partly, because this was taken out of the peoples portion, whose hazards being less than the others, their gains also in all reason were to be less: partly because this was to be distributed into more hands, the Levites being now numerous, whereas the priests were but few.

50. An atonement - For their error noted, ver. 14, 15, 16, and withal for a memorial, or by way of gratitude for such a stupendous assistance and deliverance. We should never take any thing to ourselves in war or trade, of which we cannot in faith consecrate a part to God, who hates robbery for burnt-offerings. But when God has remarkably preserved and succeeded us, he expects we should make some particular return of gratitude to him.

## XXXII

The request of Reuben and Gad for an inheritance on this side Jordan, ver. 1-5. Moses's misconstruction of it, ver. 6-15. Their explication of it, ver. 16-19. The grant of their petition, ver. 20-42.

1. Jazer - A city and country of the Amorites; Gilead - A mountainous country, famous for pasturage

6. Ye sit here - In ease and peace, while your brethren are engaged in a bloody war.

12. The Kenezite - So called from Kenaz, his grand-father.

15. All this people - Who being moved by your counsel and example, will refuse to go over Jordan.

17. We ourselves - Either all, or as many as shall be thought necessary, leaving only so many as may be necessary to provide for the sustenance and defense of our wives and children here.

20. Before the Lord - Before the ark, which was the token of God's presence. He alludes either to the order of the tribes in their march, whereby Reuben and Gad marched immediately before the ark, or to the manner of their passage over Jordan, wherein the ark went first into Jordan, and stood there while all the tribes marched over Jordan by and before it, and these amongst the rest, as is expressly noted in these very words, that they passed over before the Lord, Josh. iv, 13.

22. Before the Lord - By his presence and gracious and powerful assistance.

23. Your sin - The punishment of your sin. Sin will certainly find out the sinner sooner or later. It concerns us therefore to find our sins out, that we may repent of them and forsake them, lest our sins find us out, to our confusion and destruction.

30. They shall have possession - They shall forfeit their possessions in Gilead, and be constrained to go over Jordan, and to seek possessions there among their brethren.

31. As the Lord hath said - Either at this time by thy mouth: or formerly, where he commanded us, as well as our brethren to go into Canaan and possess it.

34. Built - Repaired and fortified. For they neither had need nor leisure as yet to do more, the old cities not being burnt and ruined, as divers in Canaan were.

38. Their names changed - Either because conquerers of places used to do so: or because the names of other Gods (which Nebo and Baal-meon unquestionably were) were not to be mentioned, Exod. xxiii, 13.

40. Machir - Not to Machir himself, who doubtless was long since dead, but the family or posterity of Machir.

42. Nobah - Who, though not else where named, was doubtless an eminent person of the tribe of Manasseh. 'Tis observable, that these tribes, as they were placed before the other tribes, so they were displaced before them. They were carried captive by the king of Assyria, some years before the other tribes. Such a proportion does providence frequently observe, in balancing prosperity and adversity.

## XXXIII

An account of the marches and encampments of the Israelites, from Egypt to Canaan, ver. 1-49. A strict command to drive out all the Canaanites.

2. And Moses wrote their goings out - When they set out, God ordered him to keep a journal of all the remarkable occurrences in the way, that it might be a satisfaction to himself and an instruction to others. It may be of use to Christians, to preserve an account of the providences of God concerning them, the constant series of mercies they have experienced, and especially those turns which have made some days of their lives more remarkable.

4. On their gods - Their false gods, namely those beasts which the brutish Egyptians worshipped as gods, which were killed with the rest, for the first-born both of men and beasts were then killed. Probably their images likewise were thrown down, as Dagon afterward before the ark.

10. By the Red-sea - By another part of that sea which they passed over.

48. Shittim - The place where the people sinned in the matter of Peor, is here called Abel-Shittim - Abel signifies mourning; and probably this place was so called, from the mourning of Israel for that sin, and the heavy punishment inflicted on the sinners.

52. Drive out - Not by banishing, but by destroying them. Pictures - Which seem to have been stones curiously engraven, and set up for worship. High Places - Chapels, altars, groves, or other means of worship there set up.

## XXXIV

Directions concerning the bounds of Canaan, ver. 1-15. Concerning the division of it, ver. 16-29.

2. Coasts - Or limits or bounds, to wit, of the land beyond Jordan. Which are here particularly described,

1. to direct and bound them in their wars and conquests, that they might not seek the enlargement of their empire, after the manner of other nations, but be contented with their own portion.
2. To encourage them in their attempt upon Canaan, and assure them of their success. There was a much larger possession promised them, if they were obedient, even to the river Euphrates. But this, which is properly Canaan, lay in a very little compass. 'Tis but about an hundred and fifty miles in length, and about fifty in breadth. This was that little spot of ground, in which alone for many ages God was known! But its littleness was abundantly compensated by its fruitfulness: otherwise it could not have sustained so numerous a nation. See, how little a share of the world God often gives to his own people! But they that have their portion in heaven, can be content with a small pittance of this earth.

3. Your fourth quarter - Which is here described from east to west by divers windings and turnings, by reason of the mountains and rivers. The salt sea - So called from the salt and sulphurous taste of its waters. Eastward - That is, at the eastern part of that sea, where the eastern and southern borders meet.

4. From the south - Or, on the south, that is, proceeding onward towards the south. Azmon - Which is at the west-end of the mount of Edom.

5. The river of Egypt - Called Sihor, Josh. xiii, 3, which divided Egypt from Canaan. The sea - The midland sea, called the sea emphatically, whereas the other seas, as they are called, are indeed but lakes.

6. The great sea - This midland sea from the south to the north, so far as it runs parallel with mount Libanus.

7. Hor - Not that Hor where Aaron died, which was southward, and bordering upon Edom, but another mountain, and, as it is conceived, the mountain of Libanus, which is elsewhere mentioned as the northern border of the land, and which, in regard of divers parts, or by divers people, is called by divers names, and here Hor, which signifies a mountain, by way of eminency.

17. Eleazar - Who was to act in God's name, to cast lots, to prevent contentions, to consult with God in cases of difficulty, to transact the whole business in a solemn and religious manner.

19. Judah - The order of the tribes is here different from that, chap. i, 7, 26, and in other places, being conformed to the order of their several inheritances, which afterwards fell to them by lots. Which is an evident demonstration of the infinite wisdom of God's providence, and of his peculiar care over his people.

## XXXV

Forty eight cities assigned to the Levites, of which six were cities of refuge, ver. 1-15. In what cases it was not allowed to flee to these, ver. 16-21. In what cases it was allowed, ver. 22- 24. Laws concerning them, ver. 25-34.

3. For the cattle - For pasturage for their cattle: where they might not build houses, nor plant gardens, orchards or vineyards, no nor sow corn, for which they were abundantly provided out of the first-fruits. And these suburbs did not belong to the Levites in common, but were distributed to them in convenient proportions.

4. A thousand cubits - In the next verse it is two thousand. But this verse and the next do not speak to the same thing; this speaks of the space from whence the suburbs shall be measured, the next speaks of the space unto which that measure shall be extended; and the words may very well be read thus. And the suburbs - Shall be from the wall of the city and from without it, or, from the outward parts of it, even from a thousand cubits round about. Which are mentioned not as the thing measured, but as the space from which the measuring line should begin. And then it follows, ver. 5. And ye shall measure from without the city, (not from the wall of the city, as said before ver. 4, but from without it, that is, from the said outward space of a thousand cubits without the wall of the city round about) on the east side two thousand cubits. So in truth there were three thousand cubits from the wall of the city, whereof one thousand probably were for out-houses, stalls for cattle, gardens, vineyards and olive-yards, and the other two thousand for pasture, which are therefore called the field of the suburbs, Lev. xxv, 34, by way of distinction from the suburbs themselves, which consist of the first thousand cubits from the wall of the city.

6. Cities for refuge - Or, of escape for manslayers: And these cities are assigned among the Levites, partly because they might be presumed to be the most proper and impartial Judges between man-slayers, and wilful murderers; partly because their presence and authority would more effectually bridle the passions of the avenger of blood who might pursue him thither; and perhaps to signify, that it is only in Christ (whom the Levitical priests represented) that sinners find refuge and safety from the destroyer.

11. Unawares - Not wilfully, designedly or maliciously, but through mistake or indiscretion.

12. From the avenger - Hebrew. from the redeemer, or, from the next kinsman, to whom by the law belonged the right of redemption of the lands of; and vindication of the injury done to, the person deceased. Die not - Be not killed by the avenger meeting him in some other place. Before the congregation - Before the Judges or elders who were appointed in every city for the decision of criminal causes, who were to examine, and that publickly before the people, whether the murder was wilful or casual.

14. On this side Jordan - Because that land was as long as Canaan, though not so broad, and besides these might be convenient for many of them that lived in Canaan.

16. If he smite him - Wittingly and wilfully, though not with premeditated malice. He shall be put to death - Yea though he were fled into the city of refuge.

19. He shall slay him - Either by himself, as the following words shew; so it is a permission, that he may do it without offense to God or danger to himself: or by the magistrate, from whom he shall demand justice: so it is a command.

24. Then - If the man-slayer flee to to the city of refuge.

26. He shall abide in it - Be confined to it, partly to shew the hatefulness of murder in God's account by so severe a punishment, inflicted upon the very appearance of it, and partly for the security of the man-slayer, lest the presence of such a person, and his conversation among the kindred of the deceased, might occasion reproach and blood-shed. The death of the high- priest - Perhaps to shew that the death of Christ (the true High- priest, whom the others represented) is the only means whereby sins are pardoned and sinners set at liberty.

27. Not guilty - Not liable to punishment from men, though not free of guilt before God. This God ordained to oblige the man- slayer to abide in his city of refuge.

### XXXVI

An inconvenience if heiresses should marry into another tribe, ver. 1-4. An appointment that they should marry in their own tribe, ver. 5-9. Zelophehad's daughters marry their cousins, ver. 10-12. The conclusion, ver.13.

2. Our brother - Our kinsman.

6. To the family - They seem hereby to be confined not only to the same tribe, but also to the family of their tribe, as appears from the reason of the law, for God would have the inheritance of families as well as tribes kept entire and unmixed.

8. The inheritance of his fathers - This law was not general to forbid every woman to marry into another tribe, as may be reasonably concluded from the practice of so many patriarchs, kings, priests, and other holy men, who have married women of other tribes, yea sometimes of other nations, but restrained to heiresses, or such as were likely to be so. But if they had brethren, they were free to marry into any tribe, yet so that, if their brethren died, the inheritance went from them to the next a-kin of their father's tribe and family. And the principal reason why God was solicitous to preserve tribes and families unmixed was, that the tribe and family too, out of which the Messiah was to come, and by which he should be known, might be evident and unquestionable.

## NOTES ON THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES CALLED DEUTERONOMY

THE Greek interpreters call this book Deuteronomy, that is, The second law, or a second edition of the law, bccause it is a repetition of many of the laws, (as well as much of the history contained in the three foregoing books. They to whom the first law was given were all dead, and a new generation sprung up, to whom God would have it repeated by Moses himself, that it might make

the deeper impression upon them. It begins with a brief rehearsal of the most remarkable events, that had befallen them since they came from mount Sinai. In the fourth chapter begins a pathetic exhortation to obedience: From the 12th to the 27th are repeated many particular laws, inforced in the 27th and 28th with promises and threatnings, which are formed into a covenant, chap. 29, 30. Care is taken in chap. 31. to perpetuate the remembrance of these things among them, particularly by a song, chap. 32 concluded with a blessing, chap. 33. All this was delivered by Moses to Israel, in the last month of his life. See how busy this great and good Man was to do good, when he knew his time was short.

**I**

The preface, fixing the time and place, ver. 1-5. Israel commanded to march, ver. 6-8. Judges provided, ver. 9-1; 3. They come to Kadesh-barnea, ver. 19-21. Spies sent, their report, the people's murmuring, ver. 22-33. The sentence passed upon them, ver. 34-40. They are smitten by the Amorites, and remain at Kadesh, ver. 41-46.

1. All Israel - Namely, by the heads or elders of the several tribes, who were to communicate these discourses to all the people. In the wilderness - In the plain of Moab, as may appear by comparing this with ver. 5, and Num. xxii, 1, and chap. xxxiv, 8. The word Suph here used does not signify the Red-Sea, which is commonly called jam-suph, and which was at too great a distance, but some oiher place now unknown to us, (as also most of the following places are) so called from the reeds or flags, or rushes (which that word signifies) that grew in or near it. Paran - Not that Num. x, 12, which there and elsewhere is called the Wilderness of Paran, and which was too remote, but some other place called by the same name. Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab - These places seem to be the several bounds, not of the whole country of Moab, but of the plain of Moab, where Moses now was.

2. There are eleven days journey - This is added to shew that the reason why the Israelites, in so many years were advanced no farther from Horeb, than to these plains, was not the distance of the places but because of their rebellions. Kadesh-barnea - Which was not far from the borders of Canaan.

3. The eleventh month - Which was but a little before his death. All that the Lord had given him in commandment - Which shews not only that what he now delivered was in substance the same with what had formerly been commanded, but that God now commanded him to repeat it. He gave this rehearsal and exhortation by divine direction: God appointed him to leave this legacy to the church.

4. Og - His palace or mansion-house was at Astaroth, and he was slain at Edrei.

7. To the mount of the Amorites - That is, to the mountainous country where the Amorites dwelt, which is opposed to the plain, where others of them dwelt. And this is the first mentioned, because it was in the borders of the land.

8. Before you - Hebrew. Before your faces; it is open to your view, and to your possession; there is no impediment in the way.

9. At that time - That is, about that time, namely, a little before their coming to Horeb.

12. Your burden - The trouble of ruling and managing so perverse a people. Your strife - Your contentions among yourselves, for the determnination whereof the elders were appointed.

15. Officers - Inferior officers, that were to attend upon the superior magistrates, and to execute their decrees.

16. The stranger - That converseth or dealeth with himn. To Such God would have justice equally adtninistred as to his own people, partly for the honour of religion, and partly for the interest which every man hath in matters of common right.

17. Respect persons - Hebrew. Not know, or acknowledge faces, that is, not give sentence according to the outward qualities of the person, as he is poor or rich, your friend or enemy, but purely according to the merit of the cause. For which reason some of the Grecian law-givers ordered that the Judges should give sentence in the dark where they could not see mens faces. The judgment is God's - It is passed in the name of God, and by commission from him, by you as representing his person, and doing his work; who therefore will defend you therein against all your enemies, amid to whom you must give an exact account.

18. All the things which ye shall do - I delivered unto you, and especially unto your Judges, all the laws, statutes, and judgments revealed unto me by the Lord in Horeb.

24. Eshcol - That is, of grapes, so called from the goodly cluster of grapes which they brought from thence.

28. Greater - In number and strength and valour.

31. Bare thee - Or, carried thee, as a father carries his weak and tender child in his arms, through difficulties and dangers, gently leading you according as you are able to go, and sustaining you by his power and goodness.

32. Ye did not believe the Lord - So they could not enter in, because of unbelief. It was not any other sin shut them out of Canaan, but their disbelief of that promise, which was typical of gospel grace: to signify that no sin will ruin us but unbelief, which is a sin against the remedy; and therefore without remedy.

33. Your words - That is to say, your murmurings, your unthankful, impatient, distrustful and rebellious speeches.

36. Save Caleb - Under whom Josh. is comprehended, though not here expressed, because he was not now to be one of the people, but to be set over them as a chief governor.

37. For your sakes - Upon occasion of your wickedness and perverseness, by which you provoked me to speak unadvisedly.

38. Who standeth - Who is now thy servant.

44. As bees - As bees which being provoked come out of their hives in great numbers, and with great fury pursue their adversary and disturber.

## II

Their march from Kadesh-barnea, ver. 1-3. A charge not to trouble the Edomites, ver. 4-8. Nor the Moabites, ver. 9-12. (They pass the river Zered, ver. 13-16.) Nor the Ammonites, ver. 17-23. A command to attack Sihon, ver. 24-26. The conquest of his kingdom, ver. 27-37

1. Mount Seir - The mountainous country of Seir or Edom. Many days - Even for thirty eight years.

3. Northward - Towards the land of the Amorites and Canaanites.

6. Buy meat - For thongh the manna did yet rain upon them, they were not forbidden to buy other meats when they had opportunity, but only were forbidden greedily to hunger after them when they could not obtain them. Buy water - For water in those parts was scarce, and therefore private persons did severally dig pits for their particular use.

7. The Lord hath blessed thee - By God's blessing thou art able to buy thy conveniences, and therefore thy theft and rapine will be inexcusable, because without any pretense of necessity. He knoweth - Hebrew. He hath known, that is, observed, or regarded with care and kindness, which that word often notes. Which experience of God's singular goodness to thee, should make thee rely on him still, and not use any unjust practice to procure what thou wantest or desirest.

8. We turned - From our direct road which lay through Edom.

9. Ar - The chief city of the Moabites, here put for the whole country which depended upon it. The children of Lot - So called to signify that this preservation, was not for their sakes, for they were a wicked people, but for Lot's sake whose memory God yet honours.

10. The Emims - Men terrible for stature and strength, as their very name imparts, whose expulsion by the Moabites is here noted as a great encouragement to the Israelites, for whose sake he would much more drive out the wicked and accursed Canaanites.

12. Which the Lord gave - The past tense is here put for the future, will give after the manner of the prophets.

23. The Caphtorim - A people a-kin to the Philistines, Gen. x, 14, and confederate with them in this enterprize, and so dwelling together, and by degrees uniting together by marriages, they became one people. Caphtor - Which is by the learned thought to be Cappadocia: whither these people might make an expedition out of Egypt, either because of the report of the great riches of part of that country which drew others thither from places equally remote, or for some other reason now unknown.

25. Under heaven - The following words rest rain the sentence to those nations that heard of them.

28. On my feet - Or, with my company who are on foot: which is added significantly, because if their army had consisted as much of horsemen as many other armies did, their passage through his land might have been more mischievous and dangerous.

29. As the children of Esau did - They did permit them to pass quietly by the borders, though not through the heart of their land, and in their passage the people sold them meat and drink, being it seems more kind to them than their king would have had them; and therefore they here ascribe this favour not to the king, though they are now treating with a king, but to the people, the children of Esau.

30. Hardened his spirit - That is, suffered it to be hardened.

34. Utterly destroyed - By God's command, these being a part of those people who were devoted by the Lord of life and death, to utter destruction for their abominable wickedness.

37. Of Jabbok - That is, beyond Jabbok: for that was the border of the Ammomites.

## III

The conquest of Og and his country, ver. 1-11. The distribution of it to the two tribes and an half, ver. 12-17. On condition of assisting their brethren, ver. 18-20. Joshua encouraged, ver. 21-22. Moses prays that he may go into Canaan, v. 23-25. But is refused, yet permitted to see it, ver. 26-29.

8. On this side Jordan - So it was when Moses wrote this book; but afterward when Israel passed over Jordan it was called the land beyond Jordan.

9. Sirion - Elsewhere called Mount Gilead, and Lebanon, and here Shenir, and Sirion, which several names are given to this one mountain partly by several people, and partly in regard of several tops and parts of it.

10. All Gilead - Gilead is sometimes taken for all the Israelites possessions beyond Jordan, and so it comprehends Bashan; but here for that part of it which lies in and near mount Gilead, and so it is distinguished from Bashan and Argob.

11. In Rabbath - Where it might now be, either because the Ammonites in some former battle with Og, had taken it as a spoil: or because after Og's death, the Ammonites desired to have this monument of his greatness, and the Israelites permitted them to carry it away to their chief city. Nine cubits - So his bed was four yards and an half long, and two yards broad.

14. Unto this day - This must be put among those passages which were not written by Moses, but added by those holy men, who digested the books of Moses into this order, and inserted some few passages to accommodate things to their own time and people.

15. Gilead - That is, the half part of Gilead. To Machir - That is, unto the children of Machir, son of Manasseh, for Machir was now dead.

16. Half the valley - Or rather to the middle of the river: for the word rendered half signifies commonly middle, and the same Hebrew word means both a valley and a brook or river. And this sense is agreeable to the truth, that their land extended from Gilead unto Arnon, and, to speak exactly, to the middle of that river; for as that river was the border between them and others, so one half of it belonged to them, as the other half did to others, Josh. xii, 2. The same thing is expressed in the same words in the Hebrew which are here, though our translators render the self-same words there, from the middle of the river, which here they render, half of the valley. There the bounds of Sihon's kingdom, which was the same portion here mentioned as given to Reuben and Gad, are thus described, from Aroer, which is upon the bank of the river of Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon.

17. The plain - The low country towards Jordan. The sea of the plain - That is, that salt sea, which before that dreadful conflagration was a goodly plain.

18. You - Namely, the Reubenites and Gadites. All that are meet - In such number as your our brethren shall judge necessary. They were in all above an hundred thousand. Forty thousand of them went over Jordan before their brethren.

23. I besought the Lord - We should allow no desire in our hearts, which we cannot in faith offer unto God by prayer.

24. Thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness - Lord, perfect what thou hast begun. The more we see of God's glory in his works, the more we desire to see. And the more we are affected with what we have seen of God, the better we are prepared for farther discoveries.

25. Let me go over - For he supposed God's threatening might be conditional and reversible, as many others were. That goodly mountain -Which the Jews not improbably understood of that mountain on which the temple was to be built. This he seems to call that mountain, emphatically and eminently, that which was much in Moses's thoughts, though not in his eye.

28. He shall go over - It was not Moses, but Joshua or Jesus that was to give the people rest, Heb. iv, 8. 'Tis a comfort to those who love mankind, when they are dying and going off, to see God's work likely to be carried on by other hands, when they are silent in the dust.

## IV

An exhortation to obedience, ver. 1-13. A warning against idolatry, ver. 14-28. A promise upon repentance, ver. 29-40. Cities of refuge appointed, ver. 41-43. The place where Moses repeated the law, ver. 44-49.

1. The statutes - The laws which concern the worship and service of God. The judgments - The laws concerning your duties to men. So these two comprehend both tables, and the whole law of God.

6. In the sight of the nations - For though the generality of Heathens in the latter ages, did through inveterate prejudices condemn the laws of the Hebrew, yet it is certain, the wisest Heathens did highly approve of them, so that they made use of divers of them, and translated them into their own laws and constitutions; and Moses, the giver of these laws, hath been mentioned with great honour for his wisdom and learning by many of them. And particularly the old Heathen oracle expressly said, that the Chaldeans or Hebrew, who worshipped the uncreated God, were the only wise men.

7. So nigh - By glorious miracles, by the pledges of his special presence, by the operations of his grace, and particularly by his readiness to hear our prayers, and to give us those succors which we call upon him for.

8. So righteous - Whereby he implies that the true greatness of a nation doth not consist in pomp or power, or largeness of empire, as commonly men think, but in the righteousness of its laws.

10. Thou stoodest - Some of them stood there in their own persons, though then they were but young, the rest in the loins of their parents.

11. The midst of heaven - Flaming up into the air, which is often called heaven.

12. No similitude - No resemblance or representation of God, whereby either his essence, or properties, or actions were represented, such as were usual among the Heathens.

14. Statutes and judgments - The ceremonial and judicial laws which are here distinguished from the moral, or the ten commandments.

15. In Horeb - God, who in other places and times did appear in a similitude in the fashion of a man, now in this most solemn appearance, when he comes to give eternal laws for the direction

of the Israelites in the worship of God, and in their duty to men, purposely avoids all such representations, to shew that he abhors all worship of images, or of himself by images of what kind soever, because he is the invisible God, and cannot be represented by any visible image.

16. Lest ye corrupt yourselves - Your ways, by worshipping God in a corrupt manner.

19. Driven - Strongly inclined. Which the Lord hath divided unto all nations - Which are not Gods, but creatures, made not for the worship, but for the use of men; yea, of the meanest and most barbarous people under heaven, and therefore cannot without great absurdity be worshipped, especially by you who are so much advanced above other nations in wisdom and knowledge, and in this, that you are my peculiar people.

24. A consuming fire - A just and terrible God, who, notwithstanding his special relation to thee, will severely punish thee, if thou provoke him. A jealous God - Who being espoused to thee, will be highly incensed against thee, (if thou follow after other lovers, or commit whoredom with idols) and will bear no rival or partner.

28. Ye shall serve Gods - You shall be compelled by men, and given up by me to idolatry. So that very thing which was your choice, shall be your punishment: it being just and usual for God to punish one sin by giving men up to another.

29. If from thence thou seek the Lord - Whatever place we are in, we may from thence seek him. There is no part of the earth which has a gulf fixt between it and heaven.

30. In the latter days - In succeeding ages.

32. The one side of heaven - That is, of the earth under heaven. Ask all the inhabitants of the world.

33. And live - And was not overwhelmed and consumed by such a glorious appearance.

34. By temptations - Temptations is the general title, which is explained by the following particulars, signs, and wonders, &c. which are called temptations, because they were trials both to the Egyptians and Israelites, whether they would be induced to believe and obey God or no. By terrors - Raised in the minds of the Egyptians, or, by terrible things done among them.

37. In his sight - Keeping his eye fixed upon him, as the father doth on his beloved child.

44. This is the law - More punctually expressed in the following chapter, to which these words are a preface.

## V

The general intent of the Ten Commandments as a covenant between God and Israel, ver. 1-5. The Commandments, ver. 6-21. God writes them, and grants the people's request, that he would speak by Moses, ver. 22-28. Exhortations to obedience, ver. 29- 33.

1. All Israel - Namely by their elders, who were to impart it to the rest.

3. Not with our fathers - Only: but with us, who are all alive - He saith not, that all who made the covenant at Sinai are now alive, but this covenant was made with all that are now alive; which is most true, for it was made with the elders in their persons, and with the rest in their parents, who covenanted for them.

4. Face to face - Personally and immediately, not by the mouth or ministry of Moses; plainly and certainly, as when two men talk face to face; freely and familiarly, so as not to overwhelm and confound you.

5. Between the Lord and you - As a mediator between you, according to your desire. The word of the Lord - Not the ten commandments, which God himself uttered, but the following statutes and judgments.

7. There being little said, concerning the spiritual sense of the Ten Commandments, in the notes on the twentieth of Exodus, I think it needful to add a few questions here, which the reader may answer between God and his own soul. Thou shalt have none other gods before me - Hast thou worshipped God in spirit and in truth? Hast thou proposed to thyself no end besides him? Hath he been the end of all thy actions? Hast thou sought for any other happiness, than the knowledge and love of God? Dost thou experimentally know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? Dost thou love God? Dost thou love him with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; so as to love nothing else but in that manner and degree which tends to increase thy love of him? Hast thou found happiness in God? Is he the desire of thine eyes, the joy of thy heart? If not, thou hast other gods before him.

8. Thou shalt not make any graven image - Hast thou not formed any gross image of God in thy mind? Hast thou always thought of him as a pure spirit, whom no man hath seen, nor can see? And hast thou worshipped him with thy body, as well as with thy spirit, seeing both of them are God's?

11. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain - Hast thou never used the name of God, unless on solemn and weighty occasions? Hast thou then used it with the deepest awe? Hast thou duly honoured his word, his ordinances, his ministers? Hast thou considered all things as they stand in relation to him, and seen God in all? Hast thou looked upon heaven as God's throne? Up on earth as God's footstool? On every thing therein as belonging to the great king? On every creature as full of God?

12. Keep the sabbath-day, to sanctify it - Dost thou do no work on this day, which can be done as well on another? Art thou peculiarly careful on this day, to avoid all conversation, which does not tend to the knowledge and love of God? Dost thou watch narrowly over all that are within thy gates, that they too may keep it holy? And dost thou try every possible means, to bring all men, wherever you are, to do the same?

16. honour thy father and mother - Hast thou not been irreverent or undutiful to either? Hast thou not slighted their advice? Hast thou chearfully obeyed all their lawful commands? Hast thou loved and honoured their persons? Supplied their wants, and concealed their infirmities? Hast thou wrestled for them with God in prayer? Hast thou loved and honoured thy prince, and avoided as fire all speaking evil of the ruler of thy people? Have ye that are servants done all things as unto Christ? Not with eye-service, but in singleness of heart? Have ye who are masters, behaved as parents to your servants, with all gentleness and affection? Have ye all obeyed them that watch over your souls, and esteemed them highly in love for their work's sake?

17. Thou shalt not kill - Have you not tempted any one, to what might shorten his life? Have you tempted none to intemperance? Have you suffered none to be intemperate under your roof, or in your company? Have you done all you could in every place, to prevent intemperance of all kinds! Are you guilty of no degree of self-murder? Do you never eat or drink any thing because you like it, although you have reason to believe, it is prejudicial to your health? Have you constantly done

whatever you had reason to believe was conducive to it? Have you not hated your neighbour in your heart? Have you reproved him that committed sin in your sight? If not, you have in God's account hated him, seeing you suffered sin upon him. Have you loved all men as your own soul? As Christ loved us? Have you done unto all men, as in like circumstances, you would they should do to you? Have you done all in your power to help your neighbours, enemies as well as friends? Have you laboured to deliver every soul you could from sin and misery? Have you shewed that you loved all men as yourself, by a constant, earnest endeavour, to fill all places with holiness and happiness, with the knowledge and love of God?

18. Neither shalt thou commit adultery - If thou hast not been guilty of any act of uncleanness, hath thy heart conceived no unclean thought? Hast thou not looked on a woman so as to lust after her? Hast thou not betrayed thy own soul to temptation, by eating and drinking to the full, by needless familiarities, by foolish talking, by levity of dress or behaviour? Hast thou used all the means which scripture and reason suggest, to prevent every kind and degree of unchastity? Hast thou laboured, by watching, fasting, and prayer, to possess thy vessel in sanctification and honour?

19. Neither shalt thou steal - Have you seriously considered, that these houses, lands, money, or goods, which you are used to call your own, are not your own, but belong to another, even God? Have you ever considered, that God is the sole proprietor of heaven and earth? The true owner of every thing therein? Have you considered, that he has only lent them to you? That you are but a steward of your Lord's goods? And that he has told you expressly the uses and purposes for which he intrusts you with them? Namely, for the furnishing first yourselves, and then as many others as you can, with the things needful for life and godliness? Have you considered, that you have no right at all, to apply any part of them to any other purpose? And that if you do, you are as much a robber of God, as any can be a robber of you?

20. Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour - Have you not been guilty of evil-speaking? Of needlessly repeating the real fault of your neighbour? If I see a man do an evil thing, and tell it to another, unless from a full and clear conviction, that it is necessary to mention it just then, for the glory of God, the safety or good of some other person, or for the benefit of him that hath done amiss; and unless I then do it only so far, as is necessary to these ends, that is evil-speaking. O beware of this! It is scattering abroad arrows, fire-brands, and death.

21. Neither shalt thou covet any thing that is thy neighbour's - The plain meaning of this is, thou shalt not desire any thing that is not thy own, any thing which thou hast not. Indeed why shouldst thou? God hath given thee whatever tends to thy one end, holiness. Thou canst not deny it, without making him a liar: and: when any thing else will tend thereto, he will give thee that also. There is therefore no room to desire any thing which thou hast not. Thou hast already every thing that is really good for thee, wouldst thou have more money, more pleasure, more praise still? Why this is not good for thee. God has told thee so, by withholding it from thee. O give thyself up to his wise and gracious disposal!

22. Out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness - That was a dispensation of terror, designed to make the gospel of grace the more welcome, and to be a specimen of the terrors of the judgment-day. He added no more - He ceased for that time to speak immediately, and with that loud voice unto the people; for the rest were delivered to Moses, and by him communicated unto them. This he did to shew the preeminence of that law above the rest, and its everlasting obligation.

25. Why should we die? - For though God hath for this season kept us alive, yet we shall never be able to endure any farther discourse from him in such a terrible manner, but shall certainly sink under the burden of it.

26. Flesh - Is here put for man in his frail, corruptible, and mortal state.

29. O that there were such an heart in them! - A heart to fear God, and keep his commandments forever! The God of heaven is truly and earnestly desirous of the salvation of poor sinners. He has given abundant proof that he is so: he gives us time and space to repent; by his mercies invites us to repentance, and waiteth to be gracious: has sent his son to redeem us, published a general offer of pardon, promised his spirit to those that pray for him; and has said, yea and sworn, that he hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner!

## VI

A persuasive to obedience, ver. 1-3. The first truth, God is One, the first duty, to love him, ver. 4, 5. The means hereto, ver. 6-9. A caution not to forget God in prosperity, ver. 10-13. Not to worship idols, or tempt God, ver. 14-16. Exhortation to obedience, ver. 17-19. And to teach their children, ver. 20-25.

5. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart - And is this only an external commandment? Can any then say, that the Sinai - covenant was merely external? With all thy heart - With an entire love. He is One; therefore our hearts must be united in his love. And the whole stream of our affections must run toward Him. O that this love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts.

7. Teach them diligently - Hebrew. whet, or sharpen them, so as they may pierce deep into their hearts. This metaphor signifies the manner of instructing them, that it is to be done diligently, earnestly, frequently, discreetly.

8. Thou shalt bind them - Thou shalt give all diligence, and use all means to keep them in thy remembrance, as men often bind something upon their hands, or put it before their eyes to prevent forgetfulness of a thing which they much desire to remember.

13. Shalt swear by his name - When thou hast a call and just cause to swear, not by idols, or any creatures.

15. Among you - Hebrew. In the midst of you, to see and observe all your ways and your turnings aside to other Gods.

16. Ye shall not tempt - Not provoke him, as the following instance explains. Sinners, especially presumptuous sinners, are said to tempt God, that is, to make a trial of God, whether he be, so wise as to see their sins, so just and true and powerful as to take vengeance on them, concerning which they are very apt to doubt because of the present impunity and prosperity of many such persons.

17. Ye diligently keep - Negligence will ruin us: but we cannot be saved without diligence.

25. It shall be our righteousness - Hebrew. Righteousness shall be to us. We shall be owned and pronounced by God to be righteous and holy persons, if we sincerely obey him, otherwise we shall be declared to be unrighteous and ungodly. Or, mercy shall be to us, or with us. For as the

Hebrew word rendered righteousness is very often put for mercy, (as Psalm xxiv, 5; xxxvi, 10; li, 14 Prov. x, 2; xi, 4 Dan. ix, 16) so this sense seems best to agree both with the scripture use of this phrase, (in which righteousness, seldom or never, but grace or mercy frequently, is said to be to us or with us) and with the foregoing verse and argument God, saith he, chap. v, 24, commanded these things for our good, that he might preserve us alive, as it is this day. And, saith he in this verse, this is not all; for as he hath done us good, so he will go on to do us more and more good, and God's mercy shall be to us, or with us, in the remainder of our lives, and for ever, if we observe these commandments.

## VII

A command to destroy the Canaanites, with all pertaining to their idols, ver. 1-5. And to obey God, considering their relation to him, ver. 6-11. Promises to the obedient, ver. 12-15. A repetition of the command, utterly to destroy the Canaanites, with all the monuments of their idolatry, ver. 16-26.

1. Seven nations - There were ten in Gen. xv, 19-21. But this being some hundreds of years after, it is not strange if three of them were either destroyed by foreign or domestick wars, or by cohabitation and marriage united with, and swallowed up in the rest.

4. To serve other Gods - That is, there is manifest danger of apostacy and idolatry from such matches. Which reason doth both limit the law to such of these as are unconverted (otherwise Salmon married Rahab, Matt. i, 5) and enlarge it to other idolatrous nations, as appears from 1 Kings xi, 2 Ezra ix, 2 Neh. xiii, 23.

5. Their graves - Which idolaters planted about the temples and altars of their Gods. Hereby God designed to take away whatsoever might bring their idolatry to remembrance, or occasion the reviving of it.

7. The fewest - To wit, at that time when God first declared his choice of you for his peculiar people, which was done to Abraham. For Abraham had but one son concerned in this choice and covenant, namely, Isaac, and that was in his hundredth year; and Isaac was sixty years old ere he had a child, and then had only two children; and though Jacob had twelve sons, it was a long time before they made any considerable increase. Nor do we read of any great multiplication of them 'till after Joseph's death.

8. The Lord loved you - It was his free choice without any cause or motive on your part.

10. Them that hate him - Not only those who hate him directly and properly, (for so did few or none of the Israelites to whom he here speaks,) but those who hate him by construction and consequence; those who hate and oppose his people, and word, those who wilfully persist in the breach of God's commandments. To their face - That is, openly, and so as they shall see it, and not be able to avoid it. Slack - So as to delay it beyond the fit time or season for vengeance, yet withal he is long-suffering, and slow to anger.

12. The covenant and the mercy - That is, the covenant of mercy, which he out of his own mere grace made with them.

13. He will love thee - He will continue to love thee, and to manifest his love to thee.

15. The diseases of Egypt - Such as the Egyptians were infected with, either commonly, or miraculously. It seems to refer not only to the plagues of Egypt, but to some other epidemic disease, which they remembered to have prevailed among the Egyptians, and by which God had chastised them for their national sins. Diseases are God's servants, which go where he sends them, and do what he bids them.

19. The temptations - The trials and exercises of thy faith and obedience to my commands.

24. No man shall stand - This promise is made upon condition of their performance of their duty, which they neglecting, justly lose the benefit of it.

25. The silver or gold - Wherewith the idols are covered or adorned, nor consequently any other of their ornaments. This he commands to shew his utter detestation of idolatry, and to cut off all occasions of it.

## VIII

An exhortation to obedience, in consideration of past and promised mercies, ver. 1-9. A caution not to forget God in prosperity, ver. 10-18. A threatening, in case of apostacy, ver. 19, 20.

1. Live - Live comfortably and happily.

2. All the way - All the events which befel three in the way, the miraculous protections, deliverances, provisions, instructions which God gave thee; and withal the frequent and severe punishments of thy disobedience. To know - That thou mightest discover to thyself and others that infidelity, inconstancy, hypocrisy, and perverseness, which lay hid in thy heart; the discovery whereof was of singular use both to them, and to the church of God in all succeeding ages. It is good for us likewise to remember all the ways both of God's providence and grace, by which he has led us hitherto through the wilderness, that we may trust him, and chearfully serve him.

3. By every word - That is, by every or any thing which God appoints for this end, how unlikely so-ever it may seem to be for nourishment; seeing it is not the creature, but only God's command and blessing upon it, that makes it sufficient for the support of life.

5. As a man chastiseth his son - That is, unwillingly, being constrained by necessity; moderately, in judgment remembering mercy; and for thy reformation not thy destruction.

7. Depths - Deep wells or springs, or lakes, which were numerous and large.

9. Whose stones are iron - Where are mines of iron in a manner as plentiful as stones, and upon which travelers must tread, as in other parts they do upon stones.

10. Bless the Lord - Solemnly praise him for thy food; which is a debt both of gratitude and justice, because it is from his providence and favour that thou receivest both thy food and refreshment and strength by it. The more unworthy and absurd is that too common profaneness of them, who, professing to believe a God, from whom all their comforts come, grudge to own him at their meals, either by desiring his blessing before them, or by offering due praise to God after them.

14. Lifted up - As if thou didst receive and enjoy these things, either, by thy owns wisdom, and valour, and industry, or for thy own merit.

16. That he might humble thee - By keeping thee in a constant dependence upon him for every day's food, and convincing thee what an impotent, helpless creature thou art, having nothing whereon to subsist, and being supported wholly by the alms of divine goodness from day to day. The mercies of God, if duly considered, are as powerful a mean to humble us as the greatest afflictions, because they increase our debts to God, and manifest our dependance upon him, and by making God great, they make us little in our own eyes. To do thee good - That is, that after he hath purged and prepared thee by afflictions, thou mayest receive and enjoy his blessings with less disadvantage, whilst by the remembrance of former afflictions. thou art made thankful for them, and more cautious not to abuse them.

## IX

A promise of Canaan, ver. 1-3. A caution, not to ascribe this to their own merit, ver. 4-6. A rehearsal of their various rebellions, ver. 7-24. and of Moses's intercession for them, ver. 25-29.

1. Hear, O Israel - This seems to be a new discourse, delivered at some distance of time from the former, probably on the next sabbath-day. This day - That is, shortly, within a little time, the word day being often put for time. Nations - That is, the land of those nations. Mightier than thyself - This he adds, that they might not trust to their own strength, but rely upon God's help for the destroying them, and, after the work was done, might ascribe the glory of it to God alone, and not to themselves.

2. Who can stand - This seems to be a proverb used in those times.

5. Not for thy righteousness - Neither for thy upright heart, nor holy life, which are the two things which God above all things regards. And consequently he excludes all merit. And surely they who did not deserve this earthly Canaan, could not merit the kingdom of glory. To perform the word - To shew my faithfulness in accomplishing that promise which I graciously made and confirmed with my oath.

6. Stiff-necked - Rebellious and perverse, and so destitute of all pretense of righteousness. And thus our gaining possession of the heavenly Canaan, must be ascribed to God's power, not our own might, and to God's Grace, not our own merit. In him we must glory.

8. In Horeb - When your miraculous deliverance out of Egypt was fresh in memory; when God had but newly manifested himself to you in so stupendous and dreadful a manner, and had taken you into covenant with himself, when God was actually conferring farther mercies upon you.

10. With the finger of God - Immediately and miraculously, which was done not only to procure the greater reverence to the law, but also to signify, that it is the work of God alone to write this law upon the tables of men's hearts. In the day of the assembly - That is, when the people were gathered by God's command to the bottom of mount Sinai, to hear and receive God's ten commandments from his own mouth.

14. Let me alone! - Stop me not by thy intercession.

17. I brake them before your eyes - Not by an unbridled passion, but in zeal for God's honour, and by the direction of God's spirit, to signify to tine people, that the covenant between God and

them contained in those tables was broken and they were now cast out of God's favour, and could expect nothing from him but fiery indignation.

18. I fell down - In a way of humiliation and supplication, on your behalf.

21. Into the brook - That there might be no monument or remembrance of it left.

25. I fell down forty days - The same as were mentioned before, ver. 18, as appears by comparing this with Exodus, where this history is more fully related, and where this is said to be done twice only.

26. Through thy greatness - Through the greatness of thy power, which appeared most eminently in that work.

27. Thy servants - That is, the promise made and sworn to thy servants.

29. Thy people - Whom thou hast chosen to thyself out of all mankind, and publickly owned them for thine, and hast purchased and redeemed them from the Egyptians.

## X

God's mercy, in renewing the two tables, ver. 1-5. In leading Israel forward, and chusing the tribe of Levi for his own, ver. 6-9. In accepting the intercession as Moses, ver. 10-11. An exhortation to fear, love, and serve God, ver. 12-22.

2. I will write on the tables - Tho' the tables were broken, because they broke his commandment, they were now renewed, in proof that his wrath was turned away. And thus God's writing his law in our inward parts, is the surest proof of our reconciliation to him.

6. This following history comes in manifestly by way of parenthesis, as may appear from ver. 10, where he returns to his former discourse; and it seems to be here inserted as an evidence of God's gracious answer to Moses's prayers, and of his reconciliation to the people, notwithstanding their late and great provocation. For, saith he, after this they proceeded by God's guidance in their journeys, and though Aaron died in one of them, yet God made up that breach, and Eleazar came in his place, and ministered as priest, one branch of which office was to intercede for the people.

8. At that time - About that time, that is, when I was come down from the mount, as was said, ver. 5. To stand before the Lord - A phrase used concerning the prophets, 1 Kings xvii, 1; xviii, 15, this being the posture of ministers. Hence the angels are said to stand, 2Chr xviii, 18 Luke i, 19. To bless - The people, by performance of those holy ministrations for the people, and giving those instructions to them, to which God's blessing was promised; and this they did in God's name, that is, by command, and commission from him.

9. The Lord is his inheritance - That is, the Lord's portion, namely, tithes and offerings, which belong to God, are given by him to the Levites for their subsistence, from generation to generation.

11. Take thy journey before the people - 'Twas fit that he who had saved them from ruin by his intercession, should have the conduct and command of them. And herein he was a type of Christ, who, as he ever lives to make intercession for us, so has all power in heaven and in earth.

12. What doth he require - By way of duty and gratitude for such amazing mercies.

14. The heaven - The airy and starry heaven. The heaven of heavens - The highest or third heaven, called the heaven of heavens for its eminency. All that therein is - With all creatures and all men, which being all his, he might have chosen what nation he pleased to be his people.

15. To love them - He shews that God had no particular obligation to their fathers, any more than to other persons or people, all being equally his creatures, and that his choice of them out of and above all others, proceeded only from God's good pleasure.

16. Circumcise - Rest not in your bodily circumcision, but seriously set upon that substantial work which is signified thereby: cleanse your hearts from all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, fitly compared to the foreskin, which if not cut off, made persons profane, unclean and odious in the sight of God.

17. Regardeth not persons - Whether Jews or Gentiles, but deals justly and equally with all sorts of men; and as whosoever fears and obeys him shall be accepted, so all incorrigible transgressors shall be severely punished, and you no less than other people: therefore do not flatter yourselves as if God would bear with your sins because of his particular kindness to you or to your fathers.

18. He doth execute - That is, plead their cause, and give them right against their potent adversaries, and therefore he expects you should do so too.

20. To him shalt thou cleave - With firm confidence, true affection, and constant obedience.

21. Thy praise - The object and matter of thy praise, as Exod. xv, 2, whom thou shouldest ever praise.

## XI

Moses exhorts them to obedience by rehearsing God's works, ver. 1-7. By describing the goodness of the land, ver. 8-12. By promises and threats, ver. 13-17. An exhortation to teach their children, closed with a promise, ver. 18-25. A blessing and a curse, ver. 26-32.

2. Know - That is, acknowledge and consider it with diligence and thankfulness.

4. Unto this day - The effect of which destruction continueth to this day, in their weakness and fear, and our safety from their farther attempts against us.

7. Your eyes have seen - All of them had seen some, and some of them had seen all the great things done in Egypt and at the Red- sea, and in the Wilderness. What our eyes have seen, especially in our early days, should be improved by us long after.

10. With thy foot - That is, with great pains and labour of thy feet, partly by going up and down to fetch water and disperse it, and partly by digging furrows with thy foot, and using engines for distributing the water, which engines they thrust with their feet. For tho' the river Nile did once in a year overflow the grounds, and made them fruitful, yet often it failed them, at least in part, and then they were put to great pains about their ground. And when it did overflow sufficiently, and left its mud upon the earth, yet that mud was in a little time hardened, and needed another watering, and much digging and labour both of the hand and feet, especially in places more remote from that river; which inconvenience Canaan was free from.

11. Of hills and valleys - And therefore much more healthful than Egypt was, which as it was enriched, so it was annoyed with the Nile, which overflowed the land in summer time, and thereby made the country both unpleasant and unhealthful. And health being the greatest of all outward blessings, Canaan must therefore needs be a more desirable habitation than Egypt. The rain of heaven - Which is more easy, being given thee without thy charge or pains; more sweet and pleasant, not hindering thy going abroad upon thy occasions, as the overflow of the Nile did, whereby the Egyptians were confined in a great measure to their houses; more safe and healthful, being free from that mud which attends upon the waters of the Nile; and more certain too, the former and the latter rain being promised to be given to them in their several seasons, upon condition of their obedience, which condition, tho' it may seem a clog and inconvenience, yet indeed was a great benefit, that by their own necessities and interest they might be obliged to that obedience, upon which their happiness depended both for this life and the next.

12. Careth for - In a special manner watering it immediately as it were by his own hand, without man's help, and giving peculiar blessings to it, which Egypt enjoys not. To the end of the year - To give it the rain, and other blessings proper to the several seasons. But all these mercies, and the fruitfulness of the land consequent upon them, were suspended upon their disobedience. And therefore it is not at all strange that some later writers, describe the land of Canaan as a barren soil, which is, so far from affording ground to question the authority of the scriptures, that it doth much more confirm it, this, being an effect of that threatning that God would turn a fruitful land into barrenness for the wickedness of these that dwell in it, Psalm cvii, 34.

14. The ruin of your land - Which is, proper to your land, not common to Egypt, where, as all authors agree, there is little rain. The first rain fell in seed time, to make the corn spring, the other a little before harvest, to ripen it.

15. I will send grass in thy fields - So godliness has here the promise of the life which now is. But the favour of God puts gladness into the heart, more than the increase of corn, wine and oil.

17. Shut up the heaven - Which is compared sometimes to a great store-house wherein God lays up his treasures of rain, Job xxxviii, 22, the doors whereof God is said to open when he gives rain, and to shut when he witholds it.

18. Lay up - Let us all observe these three rules,

1. Let our hearts be filled with the word of God. Lay up these words in your hearts, as in a store-house, to be used upon all occasions.
2. Let our eyes be fixed upon the word of God: Bind them for a sign upon your hand, which is always in view, and as frontlets between your eyes, which you cannot avoid the sight of.
3. Let our tongues be employed about the word of God, especially with our children, who must be taught this, as far more needful than the rules of decency, or the calling they are to live by.

21. As the days of heaven - As long as the heaven keeps its place and continues its influences upon earth.

24. Every place - Not absolutely, as the Rabbins fondly conceit, but in the promised land, as it is restrained in the following words; either by possession, or by dominion, namely, upon condition of your obedience. The wilderness - Of Sin, on the south-side. To Lebanon - Which was on the north border. Euphrates - On the east. So far the right of dominion extended, but that their sins cut

them short: and so far Solomon extended his dominion. The uttermost sea - The western or midland sea.

26. I set before you - I propose them to your choice.

28. Which ye have not known - Which you have no acquaintance with, nor experience of their power, or wisdom, or goodness, as you have had of mine.

29. Put - Hebrew. Thou shalt give, that is, speak or pronounce, or cause to be pronounced. So the word to give is used, chap. xiii, 1, 2Job xxxvi, 3 Prov. ix, 9. This is, more particularly expressed, chap. xxvii, 12, 13.

30. Over against - Looking toward Gilgal, tho' at some considerable distance from it. Beside the plains of Moreh - This was one of the first places that Abram came to in Canaan. So that in sending them thither to hear the blessing and the curse, they were minded of the promise made to Abram in that very place, Gen. xii, 6, 7.

## XII

A command, to destroy all relicks of idolatry, ver. 1-3. To worship God in his own place, and according to his own appointment, ver. 4-14. A permission to eat flesh, but not blood, ver. 15, 16. Directions to eat the tithe in the holy place, and to take care of the Levite, ver. 17-19. A farther permission to eat flesh, but not blood, ver. 20-25. A direction to eat holy things in the holy place, ver. 26-28. Farther cautions against idolatry, ver. 20-32.

2. All the places - Temples, chapels, altars, groves, as appears from other scriptures. Green-tree - As the Gentiles consecrated divers trees to their false gods, so they worshipped these under them.

3. Pillars - Upon which their images were set. Names - That is, all the memorials of them, and the very names given to the places from the idols.

4. Not do so - That is, not worship him in several places, mountains, and groves.

5. To put his name there - That is, to set up his worship there, and which he shall call by his name, as his house, or his dwelling- place; namely, where the ark should be, the tabernacle, or temple: which was first Shiloh, and then Jerusalem. There is not one precept in all the law of Moses, so largely inculcated as this, to bring all their sacrifices to that one altar. And how significant is, that appointment? They must keep to one place, in token of their belief. That there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man. It not only served to keep up the notion of the unity of the godhead, but the one only way of approach to God and communion with him in and by his son.

6. Thither bring your burnt-offerings - Which were wisely appropriated to that one place, for the security of the true religion, and for the prevention of idolatry and superstition, which might otherwise more easily have crept in: and to signify that their sacrifices were not accepted for their own worth, but by God's gracious, appointment, and for the sake of God's altar, by which they were sanctified, and for the sake of Christ, whom the altar manifestly represented. Your heave-offerings - That is, your first- fruits, of corn, and wine, and oil, and other fruits. And these are called the heave-offerings of their hand, because the offerer was first to take these into his hands, and to heave them before the Lord, and then to give them to the priest. Your free-will-offerings - Even your

voluntary oblations, which were not due by my prescription, but only by your own choice: you may chuse what kind of offering you please to offer, but not the place where you shall offer them.

7. There - Not in the most holy place, wherein only the priests might eat, but in places allowed to the people for this, end in the holy city. Ye shall eat - Your part of the things mentioned, ver. 6. Before the Lord - In the place of God's presence, where God's sanctuary shall be.

8. Here - Where the inconveniency of the place, and the uncertainty of our abode, would not permit exact order in sacrifices and feasts and ceremonies, which therefore God was then pleased to dispense with; but, saith he, he will not do so there. Right in his own eyes - Not that universal liberty was given to all persons to worship how they listed; but in many things their unsettled condition gave opportunity to do so.

11. His name - His majesty and glory, his worship and service, his, special and gracious presence. Your choice vows - Hebrew. the choice of your vows, that is, your select or chosen vows; so called, because things offered for vows, were to be perfect, whereas defective creatures were accepted in free-will-offerings.

12. Your daughters - Hence it appears, that though the males only were obliged to appear before God in their solemn feasts, yet the women also were permitted to come.

13. Thy burnt-offerings - Nor the other things mentioned above, this one and most eminent kind being put for all the rest.

17. Within thy gates - That is, in your private habitations, here opposed to the place of God's worship.

20. Enlarge thy border - Which will make it impossible to bring all the cattle thou usest to the tabernacle.

21. If the place be too far - Being obliged to carry their sacrifices to the place of worship, they might think themselves obliged to carry their other cattle thither to be killed. They are therefore released from all such obligations, and left at liberty to kill them at home, whether they lived nearer that place, or farther from it; only the latter is here mentioned, as being the matter of the scruple. As I have commanded - In such a manner as the blood may be poured forth.

22. As the roe-buck - As common or unhallowed food, tho' they be of the same kind with the sacrifices which are offered to God. The unclean - Because there was, no holiness in such meat for which the unclean might be excluded from it.

27. The flesh - Excepting what shall be burned to God's, honour, and given to the priest according to his appointment.

30. By following them - By following the example they left, when their persons are destroyed.

## XIII

Enticers to idolatry to be stoned, ver. 1-11. Idolatrous cities to be entirely destroyed, ver. 12-18.

1. A dreamer of dreams - One that pretends God hath revealed himself to him by visions or dreams. Giveth a sign or wonder - That is, shall foretell some strange and wonderful thing.

3. Thou shalt not hearken to that prophet - Not receive his doctrine, though the sign come to pass. For although when such a sign or wonder foretold did not follow or come to pass, it was a sign of a false prophet, yet when it did come to pass, it was no sufficient sign of a true one, especially, in such a case. There are many things, which may be wrought by evil spirits, God so permitting it for wise and just reasons, not only for the trial of the good, but also for the punishment of ungodly men. Proveth you - That is, trieth your faith and love and obedience. To know - Namely, judicially, or in a publick manner, so as both you and others may know and see it, that so the justice of his judgments upon you may be more evident and glorious.

5. To thrust - This phrase notes the great force and power of seducers to corrupt men's minds. So shalt thou put the evil away - Thou shalt remove the guilt, by removing the guilty.

6. The son of thy mother - This is added, to restrain the signification of the word brother, which is often used generally for one near a-kin, and to express the nearness of the relation, the mother's, side being usually the ground of the most fervent affection. Thy daughter - Thy piety must overcome both thy affection, and thy compassion to the weaker sex. The father and mother are here omitted, because they are sufficiently contained in the former examples.

8. Conceal him - That is, smother his fault, hide or protect his person, but shalt accuse him to the magistrate, and demand justice upon him.

9. Thou shalt kill him - Not privately, which pretense would have opened the door to innumerable murders, but by procuring his death by the sentence of the magistrate. Thou shalt cast the first stone at him, as the witness was to do.

13. Children of Belial - It signifies properly persons without yoke, vile and wretched miscreants, lawless and rebellious, that will suffer no restraint, that neither fear God, nor reverence man. From among you - That is, from your church and religion. It notes a separation from them, not in place (as appears by their partnership with their fellow citizens both in the sin and punishment) but in heart, doctrine and worship.

14. Inquire - This is, meant of the magistrate, to whose office this properly belongs, and of whom he continues to speak in the same manner, thou, ver. 15, 16. The Jewish writers say, the defection of a city is to be tried by the great sanhedrim. If it appear, that they are thrust away to idolatry, they send two learned men, to admonish them. If they repent, all is well: is not, all Israel must go up and execute this sentence. Tho' we do not find this law put in execution, in all the history of the Jewish church, yet for neglecting the execution of it on inferior cities, God himself by the army of the Chaldeans, executed it on Jerusalem, the head city, which was utterly destroyed, and lay in ruins for seventy years.

15. The inhabitants - Namely, all that are guilty, not the innocent part, such as disowned this apostacy, who doubtless by choice, at least upon warning, would come out of so wicked a place. Utterly - The very same punishment which was, inflicted upon the cities of the cursed Canaanites, to whom having made themselves equal in sin, it is but just God should equal them in punishment.

16. For the Lord - For the satisfaction of God's justice, the maintainance of his honour and authority, and the pacification of his offended majesty. It shall not be built - It shall be an eternal monument of God's justice, and terror to after ages.

17. Multiply thee - So thou shalt have no loss of thy numbers by cutting off so many people.

## XIV

Directions, concerning mourning, ver. 1, 2. Concerning clean and unclean meats, ver. 3-21. Concerning tithes, ver. 29.

1. Of the Lord - Whom therefore you must not disparage by unworthy or unbecoming practices. Ye shall not cut yourselves - Which were the practices of idolaters, both in the worship of their idols, in their funerals, and upon occasion of public calamities. Is not this like a parent's charge to his little children, playing with knives, "Do not cut yourselves!" This is, the intention of those commands, which obliges us to deny ourselves. The meaning is, Do yourselves no harm! And as this also is, the design of cross providences, to remove from us those things by which we are in danger of doing ourselves harm.

3. Abominable - Unclean and forbidden by me, which therefore should be abominable to you.

22. All the increase - This is to be understood of the second tithes, which seem to be the same with the tithes of the first year, mentioned ver. 28.

25. In thine hand - That is, in a bag to be taken into thy hand and carried with thee.

27. Thou shalt not forsake him - Thou shalt give him a share in such tithes or in the product of them.

28. At the end of three years - That is, in the third year, as it is, expressed, chap. xxvi, 12. The same year - This is added to shew that he speaks of the third year, and not of the fourth year, as some might conjecture from the phrase, at the end of three years.

## XV

Orders concerning the release of debts every seventh year, ver. 1-6. Concerning lending, ver. 7-11. Concerning the release of servants, ver. 12-18. Concerning the firstlings, ver. 19-23.

1. At the end - That is, in the last year of the seven, as is, most evident from ver. 9. And this year of release, as it is, called below, ver. 9, is the same with the sabbatical year, Exod. xxiii, 11.

2. Every creditor - Here is, a law for poor, insolvent debtors. Every seventh year was a year of release, when among other acts of grace, this was one, that every Israelite, who had borrowed money, and had not been able to pay it before, should this year be released from it. And tho' if he was able, he was bound in conscience to pay it afterwards, yet it could not be recovered by law. His brother - This is added to limit the word neighbour, which is more general, unto a brother, in nation and religion, an Israelite. The Lord's release - Or, a release for the Lord, in obedience to his command, for his honour, and as an acknowledgment of his right in your estates, and of his kindness in giving and continuing them to you.

4. Save when there shall be no poor - The words may be rendered thus, as in the margin of our Bibles, To the end that there be no poor among you. And so they contain a reason of this law, namely, that none be impoverished and ruined by a rigid exaction of debts.

8. Open thine hand wide - That is, deal bountifully and liberally with him.

9. Beware - Suppress the first risings of such uncharitableness. It be sin - That is, it be charged upon thee as a sin.

10. Thine heart shall not be grieved - That is, thou shalt give, not only with an open hand, but with a willing and chearful mind, without which thy very charity is uncharitable, and not accepted by God.

11. The poor shall never cease - God by his providence will so order it, partly for the punishment of your disobedience, and partly for the trial and exercise of your obedience to him and charity to your brother.

12. If thy brother be sold - Either by himself, or his parents, or as a criminal. Six years - To be computed from the beginning of his servitude, which is every where limited to the space of six years.

15. The Lord redeemed thee - And brought thee out with riches, which because they would not, God gave thee as a just recompense for thy service; and therefore thou shalt follow his example, and send out thy servant furnished with all convenient provisions.

17. For ever - All the time of his life, or, at least, 'till the year of jubilee. Likewise - That is, either dismiss her with plenty, or engage her to perpetual servitude, in the same manner and by the same rites.

19. All the firstling males thou shalt sanctify - Giving them to God on the eighth day. And thou shalt do no work with the female firstlings of the cow, nor shear those of the sheep. Even these must be offered to God as peace-offerings, or used in a religious feast.

20. Year by year - Namely, in the solemn feasts which returned upon them every year.

## XVI

A repetition of the laws concerning the passover, ver. 1-8. The feast of pentecost, ver. 9-12 That of tabernacles, ver. 13-15. All the males are to attend them, ver. 16, 17. An appointment of Judges and officers, ver. 18-20. A caution against groves and images, ver. 21, 22.

1. Observe the month of Abib - Or of new fruits, which answers to part of March and part of April, and was by a special order from God made the beginning of their year, in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt. By night - In the night Pharaoh was forced to give them leave to depart, and accordingly they made preparation for their departure, and in the morning they perfected the work.

2. The passover - That is, the feast of the passover, and so the place may be rendered, thou shalt therefore observe the feast of the passover unto the Lord thy God, with sheep, and with oxen, as is prescribed, Num. xxviii, 18, &c.

3. With it - Or, in it, that is, during the time of the feast of the passover. Bread of affliction - Bread which is not usual nor pleasant, to put thee in mind both of thy miseries endured in Egypt; and of thy hasty coming out of it, which allowed thee no time to leaven or prepare thy bread.

4. Any of the flesh - That is, of the passover properly so called.

5. Of thy gates - That is, of thy cities.

6. There - Namely, in the court of the tabernacle or temple. This he prescribed, partly that this great work might be done with more solemnity in such manner as God required; partly, because it was not only a sacrament, but also a sacrifice, and because here was the sprinkling of blood, which is the essential part of a sacrifice; and partly to design the place where Christ, the true passover or lamb of God, was to be slain. At the season - About the time you were preparing yourselves for it.

7. In the morning - The morning after the seventh day. Thy tents - That is, thy dwellings, which he calls tents, as respecting their present state, and to put them in mind afterwards when they were settled in better habitations, that there was a time when they dwelt in tents.

8. Six days - Namely, besides the first day, on which the passover was killed.

9. To put the sickle - That is, to reap thy corn, thy barley, when the first-fruits were offered.

10. Of weeks - Of pentecost. Thou shalt give - Over and besides what was appointed.

17. Thou shalt rejoice - In God and the effects of his favour, praising him with a glad heart.

18. Judges - Chief magistrates to examine and determine causes and differences. Officers - Who were subordinate to the other to bring causes and persons before him, to acquaint people with the sentence of the Judges, and to execute their sentence. Thy gates - Thy cities, which he here calls gates, because there were seats of judgment set. Pursuant to this law, in every town which contained above an hundred and twenty families, there was a court of twenty three Judges; in the smaller towns, a court of three Judges.

19. Wrest judgment - Not give an unjust sentence. A gift doth blind the eyes - Biasseth his mind, that he cannot discern between right and wrong. The words - That is the sentence, of those Judges who are used to do righteous things, it makes them give wrong judgment.

20. That which is altogether just - Hebrew. righteousness, righteousness, that is, nothing but righteousness in all causes and times, and to all persons equally.

21. Thou shalt not plant - Because this was the practice of idolaters, and might be an occasion of reviving idolatry.

## XVII

A charge, concerning sacrifices, ver. 1. Concerning putting idolaters to death, ver. 2-7. Concerning the decision of cases by the sanhedrim, ver. 8-13. Concerning the choice and duty of a king, ver. 14-20.

1. Bullock or sheep - Either greater or smaller sacrifices, all being comprehended under the two most eminent kinds.

2. ln transressing his covenant - That is, in idolatry, as it is explained ver. 3, which is called a transgression of God's covenant made with Israel, both because it is a breach of their faith given

to God and of that law which they covenanted to keep; and because it is a dissolution of that matrimonial covenant with God, a renouncing of God and his worship, and a chusing other Gods.

3. The host of heaven - Those glorious creatures, which are to be admired as the wonderful works of God, but not to be set up in God's stead. By condemning the most specious of all idolaters, he intimates, how absurd a thing it is to worship stocks and stones, the works of men's hands. I have not commanded - That is, I have forbidden. Such negative expressions are emphatical.

6. Witnesses - Namely, credible and competent witnesses. The Jews rejected the testimonies of children, women, servants, familiar friends or enemies, persons of dissolute lives or evil fame.

7. First upon him - God thus ordered it, for the caution of witnesses, that, if they had thro' malice or wrath accused him falsely, they might now be afraid to imbrue their hands in innocent blood; and for the security and satisfaction of the people in the execution of this punishment.

8. For thee - He speaks to the inferior magistrates, who were erected in several cities. If thou hast not skill to determine, between blood and blood - That is, in capital causes. Between plea and plea - In civil causes, about words or estates. Between stroke and stroke - In criminal causes, concerning blows, or wounds inflicted by one man upon another. Matters of controversy - That is, such things being doubtful, and the magistrates divided in their opinions about it. Chuse - Namely to set up his tabernacle, or temple there; because there was the abode, both of their sanhedrim, which was constituted of priests and civil magistrates, and of the high-priests, who were to consult God by Urim, in matters which could not be decided otherwise.

9. Unto the priests - That is, unto the great council, which consisted chiefly of the priests and Levites, as being the best expositors of the laws of God, by which all those controversies were to be decided. And the high-priest was commonly one of that number, understood here under the priests, whereof be was the chief. The judge - Probably the high-priest, to whom it belonged to determine, some at least, of those controversies, and to expound the law of God. And he may be distinctly named, tho' he be one of the priests, because of his eminency, and to shew that amongst the priests, he especially was to be consulted in such cases. The sentence of judgment - Hebrew. The word, or matter of judgement, that is, the true state of the cause, and what judgment or sentence ought to be given in it.

10. Thou - Thou shalt pass sentence: he speaks to the inferior magistrates; who were to give sentence, and came hither to be advised about it.

11. Thou shalt do - In particular suits between man and man, altho' the judge be hereby confined to his rule in giving the sentence, yet it seems but fit and reasonable that people should be bound simply to acquiesce in the sentence of their last and highest judge, or else there would have been no end of strife.

12. Do presumptuously - That will proudly and obstinately oppose the sentence given against him. The evil - The evil thing, that scandal, that pernicious example.

13. When thou shalt - He only foresees and foretells what they would do, but doth not approve of it. Yea when they did this thing for this very reason, he declares his utter dislike of it, 1 Sam. viii, 7.

15. Thy God shall chuse - Approve of, or appoint. So it was in Saul and David. God reserved to himself the nomination both of the family, and of the person. Thy brethren - Of the same nation and religion; because such a person was most likely to maintain true religion, and to rule with righteousness, gentleness, and kindness to his subjects; and that he might be a fit type of Christ their supreme king, who was to be one of their brethren.

16. He shall not multiply horses - Tho' he might have horses for his own use, yet he was not to have many horses for his officers and guard, much less for war, lest he should trust in them. The multiplying horses is also forbidden, lest it should raise too great a correspondence with Egypt which furnished Canaan with them. The Lord hath said - The Lord hath now said to me, and I by his command declare it to you. Ye shall no more return that way - Into Egypt, lest ye be again infected with her idolatries.

17. Turn away - From God and his law.

18. He shall write - With his own hand, as the Jews say. Out of that - Out of the original, which was carefully kept by the priests in the sanctuary, that it might be a perfect copy, and that it might have the greater influence upon him, coming to him as from the hand and presence of God.

19. All the days of his life - 'Tis not enough to have Bibles, but we must use them, yea, use them daily. Our souls must have constant meals of that manna, which if well digested, will afford them true nourishment and strength.

20. If his heart be not lifted up - He intimates, that the scriptures diligently read, are a powerful means to keep him humble, because they shew him in that, tho' a king, he is subject to an higher monarch, to whom he must give an account of all his administrations, and receive from him his sentence agreeable to their quality, which is sufficient to abate the pride of the haughtiest person in the world.

## XVIII

Rules concerning priests and Levites, ver. 1-8. Cautions against witchcraft, ver. 9-14. A promise of Christ, ver. 15-19. The punishment and mark of a false prophet, ver. 20-22.

1. His inheritance - The Lord's portion or inheritance, which God had reserved to himself, as tithes and first fruits, and other oblations distinct from those which were made by fire.

3. The maw - The Hebrew word here rendered maw or stomach, may have another signification, and some render it the breast, others take it for the part, which lies under the breast.

6. With all the desire of his mind - With full purpose to fix his abode, and to spend his whole time and strength in the service of God. It seems, the several priests were to come from their cities to the temple by turns, before David's time; and it is certain they did so after it. But if any of them were not contented with this attendance upon God in his tabernacle, or temple, and desired more entirely and constantly to devote himself to God's service there, he was permitted so to do, because this was an eminent act of piety joined with self - denial, to part with those great conveniences which he enjoyed in the city of his possession.

8. Like portions - With their brethren who were in actual ministration: as they share with them in the work, so shall they in the encouragements. Beside that which cometh - The reason of this law was, because he that waited on the altar, ought to live by the altar: and because it was fit he should keep his money, wherewith he might redeem what he sold, if afterwards he saw occasion for it. Mr. Henry adds a remarkable note here: especially considering he wrote threescore years ago. "A hearty, pious zeal to serve God and his church, tho' it may a little encroach upon a settled

order, and there may be somewhat in it that looks irregular, yet ought to be gratified, and not discouraged. He that loves dearly to be employed in the service of the sanctuary: in God's name let him minster. He shall be as welcome to God as the Levites, whose course it was to minister, and should be so to them."

10. Useth divination - Foretelleth things secret or to come, by unlawful arts and practices. An observer of times - Superstitiously pronouncing some days lucky, and others unlucky. Or, an observer of the clouds or heavens, one that divineth by the motions of the clouds, by the stars, or by the flying or chattering of birds, all which Heathens used to observe. An inchanter - Or, a conjecturer, that discovers hidden things by a superstitious use of words or ceremonies, by observation of water or smoke or any contingencies. A witch - One that is in covenant with the devil.

11. A charmer - One that charmeth serpents or other cattle. Or, a fortune-teller, that foretelleth the events of men's lives by the conjunctions of the stars. Spirits - Whom they call upon by certain words or rites. A wizard - Hebrew. a knowing man, who by any forbidden way's undertakes the Revelation of secret things. A necromancer - One that calleth up and inquireth of the dead.

13. Perfect - Sincerely and wholly his, seeking him and cleaving to him and to his word alone, and therefore abhorring all commerce and conversations with devils.

14. Hath not suffered thee so to do - Hath not suffered thee to follow these superstitious and diabolical practices, as he hath suffered other nations to do, but hath instructed thee better by his word and spirit, and will more fully instruct thee by a great prophet.

15. Will raise up - Will produce and send into the world in due time. A prophet like unto me - Christ was truly, and in all commendable parts like him, in being both a prophet and a king and a priest and mediator, in the excellency of his ministry and work, in the glory of his miracles, in his familiar and intimate converse with God.

19. I will require it - I will punish him severely for it. The sad effect of this threatning the Jews have felt for above sixteen hundred years together.

22. If the thing - Which he gives as a sign of the truth of his prophecy. The falsehood of his prediction shews him to be a false prophet. Presumptuously - Impudently ascribing his own vain and lying fancies to the God of truth.

## XIX

Of the cites of refuge, ver. 1-10. Of wilful murderers, ver. 11-13. Of removing land-marks, ver. 14. Of witnesses, true, ver. 15. Of false, ver. 16-21

2. In the midst of the land - Namely, beyond Jordan, as there were three already appointed on this side Jordan: In the midst of the several parts of their land, to which they might speedily flee from all the parts of the land.

3. Prepare thee a way - Distinguish it by evident marks, and make it plain and convenient, to prevent mistakes and delays.

8. Enlarge thy coast - As far as Euphrates.

9. If thou shalt keep all these commandments - But the Jewish writers themselves own, that the condition not being performed, the promise of enlarging their coast was not fulfilled, so that there was no need for three more cities of refuge. Yet the holy, blessed God, say they, did not command it in vain, for in the day's of Messiah the Prince, they shall be added. They expect it in the letter: but we know, it has in Christ its spiritual accomplishment. For the borders of the Gospel- Israel are inlarged according to the promise: and in the Lord our righteousness, refuge is provided for all that by faith fly to him.

15. Rise - Or be established, accepted, owned as sufficient: it is the same word which in the end of the verse is rendered, be established.

16. A safe witness - A single witness, though he speak truth, is not to be accepted for the condemnation of another man, but if he be convicted of false witness, this is sufficient for his own condemnation.

21. Eye for eye - What punishment the law allotted to the accused, if he had been convicted, the same shall the false accuser bear.

## XX

The exhortation of the priest to them who were going to battle, ver. 1-4. The dismission of them who were engaged in business, or faint-hearted, ver. 5-9. How they were to treat distant cities, ver. 10-15. The cities of the Canaanites, ver. 16-18. Fruit- trees not to be destroyed, ver. 19, 20.

2. Speak unto the people - Probably to one regiment of the army after another.

5. What man - This and the following exceptions are to be understood only of a war allowed by God, not in a war commanded by God, not in the approaching war with the Canaanites, from which even the bridegroom was not exempted, as the Jewish writers note.

6. A vineyard - This and the former dispensation were generally convenient, but more necessary in the beginning of their settlement in Canaan, for the encouragement of those who should build houses or plant vineyards, which was chargeable to them, and beneficial to the common-wealth. Eaten of it - Hebrew. made it common, namely, for the use of himself and family and friends, which it was not, 'till the fifth year.

9. Make captains - Or rather, as the Hebrew hath it, they shall set or place the captains of the armies in the head or front of the people under their charge, that they may conduct them, and by their example encourage their soldiers. It is not likely they had their captains to make when they were just going to battle.

16. Nothing - No man. For the beasts, some few excepted, were given them for a prey.

19. Thou shalt not destroy - Which is to be understood of a general destruction of them, not of the cutting down some few of them, as the conveniency of the siege might require. Man's life - The sustenance or support of his life.

## XXI

The expiation of an uncertain murder, ver. 1-9. The usage of a captive taken to wife, ver. 10-14. The first-born to not to be disinherited, ver. 15-17. A stubborn son to be put to death, ver. 18-21. Bodies of malefactors to be buried, ver. 22. 23.

1. The field - Or, in the city, or any place: only the field is named, as the place where such murders are most commonly committed.

2. Thy elders and Judges - Those of thy elders who are Judges: the Judges or rulers of all the neighbouring cities. Measure - Unless it be evident which city is nearest; for then measuring was superfluous.

3. Which hath not drawn in the yoke - A fit representative of the murderer, in whose stead it was killed, who would not bear the yoke of God's laws. A type also of Christ, who was under the yoke, but what he had voluntarily taken upon himself.

4. A rough valley - That such a desert and horrid place might beget an horror of murder and of the murderer. Strike off the neck - To shew what they would and should have done to the murderer if they had found him.

5. Every controversy - Of this kind: every controversy which shall rise about any stroke, whether such a mortal stroke as is here spoken of, or any other stroke or wound given by one man to another.

7. They shall answer - To the priests who shall examine them. This blood - This about which the present enquiry is made: or this which is here present: for it is thought the corps of the slain man was brought into the same place where the heifer was slain. Nor have we seen or understood how or by whom this was done.

8. Forgiven - Though there was no mortal guilt in this people, yet there was a ceremonial uncleanness in the land, which was to be expiated and forgiven.

10. Enemies - Of other nations, but not of the Canaanites.

11. Hast a desire unto her - Or, hast taken delight in her: which may be a modest expression for lying with her, and seems probable, because it is said, ver. 14, that he had humbled her. And here seem to be two cases supposed, and direction given what to do in both of them,

1. that he did desire to marry her, of which he speaks, ver. 11-13.
2. that he did not desire this, of which he speaks, ver. 14.

12. She shall shave her head - In token of her renouncing her heathenish idolatry and superstition, and of her becoming a new woman, and embracing the true religion.

13. Raiment of captivity - Those sordid raiments which were put upon her when she was taken captive. Bewail her father and mother - Either their death, or which was in effect the same, her final separation from them.

14. If thou have no delight in her - If thou dost not chuse to marry her. Thou shalt not make merchandise of her - Make gain of her, either by using her to thy own servile works, or by prostituting her to the lusts or to the service of others.

15. Two wives - This practice, though tolerated, is not hereby made lawful; but only provision is made for the children in this case. Hated - Comparatively, that is, less loved.

19. His father and mother - The consent of both is required to prevent the abuse of this law to cruelty. And it cannot reasonably be supposed that both would agree without the son's abominable and incorrigible wickedness, in which case it seems a righteous law, because the crime of rebellion against his own parents did so fully signify what a pernicious member he would be in the commonwealth of Israel, who had dissolved all his natural obligations. Unto the elders - Which was a sufficient caution to preserve children from the malice of any hard-hearted parents, because these elders were first to examine the cause with all exactness, and then to pronounce the sentence.

20. A glutton and a drunkard - Under which two offenses others of a like or worse nature are comprehended.

22. On a tree - Which was done after the malefactor was put to death some other way, this publick shame being added to his former punishment.

23. He is accursed of God - He is in a singular manner cursed and punished by God's appointment with a most shameful kind of punishment, as this was held among the Jews and all nations; and therefore this punishment may suffice for him, and there shall not be added to it that of lying unburied. And this curse is here appropriated to those that are hanged, to so signify that Christ should undergo this execrable punishment, and be made a curse for us, Gal. iii, 13, which though it was to come in respect to men, yet was present unto God. Defiled - Either by inhumanity towards the dead: or by suffering the monument of the man's wickedness, and of God's curse, to remain publick a longer time than God would have it, whereas it should be put out of sight, and buried in oblivion.

## XXII

Laws for preserving stray or fallen cattle, ver. 1-4. For a distinction of apparel between women and men, ver. 5. For compassion even toward birds, ver. 6, 7. Of battlements on houses, ver. 8. Against improper mixtures, ver. 9-11. Of fringes, ver. 12. Of a wife, falsely accused, ver. 13-19. Justly accused, ver. 20, 21. The punishment of adultery, rape, fornication, ver. 22-29. Of incest, ver. 30.

1. Thy brother's - Any man's. Thou shalt not hide thyself - Dissemble or pretend that thou dost not see them; or pass them by as if thou hadst not seen them.

2. To thine own house - To be used like thine own cattle.

3. Hide thyself - Dissemble that thou hast found it. Or, hide it, that is, conceal the thing lost.

5. Shall not wear - Namely, ordinarily or unnecessarily, for in some cases this may be lawful, as to make an escape for one's life. Now this is forbidden, both for decency sake, that men might not confound those sexes which God hath distinguished, that all appearance of evil might be avoided, such change of garments carrying a manifest sign of effeminacy in the man, of arrogance in the woman, of lightness and petulancy in both; and also to cut off all suspicions and occasions of evil, which this practice opens a wide door to.

7. Let the dam go - Partly for the bird's sake, which suffered enough by the loss of its young; for God would not have cruelty exercised towards the brute creatures: and partly for mens sake, to

refrain their greediness, that, they should not monopolize all to themselves, but leave the hopes of a future seed for others.

8. A battlement - A fence or breastwork, because the roofs of their houses were made flat, that men might walk on them. Blood - The guilt of blood, by a man's fall from the top of thy house, thro' thy neglect of this necessary provision. The Jew's say, that by the equity of this law, they are obliged, and so are we, to fence or remove every thing, whereby life may he endangered, as wells, or bridges, lest if any perish thro' our omission, their blood be required at our hand.

9. Divers seeds - Either

1. With divers kinds of seed mixed and sowed together between the rows of vines in thy vineyard: which was forbidden to be done in the field, Lev. xix, 19, and here, in the vineyard. Or,
2. With any kind of seed differing from that of the vine, which would produce either herbs, or corn, or fruit-bearing trees, whose fruit might be mingled with the fruit of the vines. Now this and the following precepts, tho' in themselves small and trivial, are given, according to that time and state of the church, for instructions in greater matters, and particularly to commend to them simplicity in all their carriage towards God and man, and to forbid all mixture of their inventions with God's institutions in doctrine or worship. Defiled - Legally and morally, as being prohibited by God's law, and therefore made unclean; as on the contrary, things are sanctified by God's word, allowing and approving them, 1 Tim. iv, 5.

10. An ox and an ass - Because the one was a clean beast, the other unclean whereby God would teach men to avoid polluting themselves by the touch of unclean persons or things.

12. Fringes - Or laces, or strings, partly to bring the commands of God to their remembrance, as it is expressed, Num. xv, 38, and partly is a public profession of their nation and religion, whereby they might be distinguished from strangers, that so they might be more circumspect to behave as became the people of God, and that they should own their religion before all the world. Thou coverest thyself - These words seem restrictive to the upper garment wherewith the rest were covered.

13. If any man take a wife - And afterward falsely accuse her- What the meaning of that evidence is, by which the accusation was proved false, the learned are not agreed. Nor is it necessary for us to know: they for whom this law was intended, undoubtedly understood it.

19. The father - Because this was a reproach to his family, and to himself, as such a miscarriage of his daughter would have been ascribed to his evil education.

24. She cried not - And therefore is justly presumed to have consented to it.

26. Even so - Not an act of choice, but of force and constraint.

27. The damsel cried - Which is in that case to be presumed; charity obliging us to believe the best, 'till the contrary be manifest.

29. Fifty shekels - Besides the dowry, as Philo, the learned Jew notes, which is here omitted, because that was customary, it being sufficient here to mention what was peculiar to this case. His wife - If her father consented to it.

30. Take - To wife. So this respects the state, and the next branch speaks of the act only.

## XXIII

Who are to be excluded the congregation of rulers, ver. 1-6. An Edomite and an Egyptian not to be abhorred, ver. 7, 8. No uncleanness to be in the camp, ver. 9-14. Of servants, escaped from their masters, ver. 15, 16. Laws, against sodomy and whoredom, ver. 17, 18. Against usury, ver. 19, 20. Against the breach of vows, ver. 21-23. The liberty which might be taken in another's field or vineyard, ver. 24, 25.

1. He that is wounded - A phrase denoting an eunuch. Shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord - Shall not be admitted to honours and offices either in the church or commonwealth of Israel; and so the congregation of the Lord doth not here signify, the body of the people, but the society of the elders or rulers of the people. Add to this, that the Hebrew word, Kahal, generally signifies a congregation or company of men met together; and therefore this cannot so conveniently be meant of all the body of the people, which could never meet in one place, but of the chief rulers, which frequently did so. Nor is it strange that eunuchs are excluded from government, both because such persons are commonly observed to want that courage which is necessary for a governor, because as such persons ordinarily were despicable, so the authority in their hands was likely to be exposed to the same contempt.

2. The congregation - Taking the word as in the former verse.

3. For ever - This seems to note the perpetuity of this law, that it should be inviolably observed in all succeeding ages.

4. They met you not with bread and water - As the manner of those times was to wait and provide for strangers and travelers, which was the more necessary, because in those times and countries, there were no public houses of entertainment. Their fault then was unmercifulness to strangers and afflicted persons, which was aggravated both by their relation to the Israelites, as being the children of Lot, and by the special kindness of God, and of the Israelites to them, in not fighting against them.

6. Thou shalt not seek their peace - That is, make no contracts either by marriages or leagues, or commerce with them, but rather constantly keep a jealous eye over them, as enemies who will watch every opportunity to ensnare or disturb thee. This counsel was now the more necessary, because a great part of the Israelites lived beyond Jordan in the borders of those people, and therefore God sets up this wall of partition betwixt them, as well knowing the mischief of bad neighbours, and Israel's proneness to receive infection from them. Each particular Israelite is not hereby forbidden to perform any office of humanity to them, but the body of the nation are forbidden all familiar conversation with them.

7. Thou wast a stranger - And didst receive habitation, protection and provision from them a long time, which kindness thou must not forget for their following persecution. It is ordinary with men, that one injury blots out the remembrance of twenty courtesies; but God doth not deal so with us, nor will he have us to deal so with others, but commands us to forget injuries, and to remember kindnesses.

8. In their third generation - Supposing their grandfather, or great- grandfather turned proselyte, and the children continue in that faith received by such ancestors.

9. Keep from every wicked thing - Then especially take heed, because that is a time of confusion and licentiousness; when the laws of God and man cannot be heard for the noise of arms; because the success of thy arms depends upon God's blessing, which wicked men have no reason to expect; and because thou dost carry thy life in thy hand, and therefore hast need to be well prepared for death and judgment.

13. Cover - To prevent the annoyance of ourselves or others; to preserve and exercise modesty and natural honesty; and principally that by such outward rites they might be innured to the greater reverence of the Divine Majesty, and the greater caution to avoid all real and moral uncleanness.

15. The servant - Of such as belonged to the Canaanites, or other neighbouring nations, because if he had lived in remote countries, it is not probable that he would flee so far to avoid his master, or that his master would follow him so far to recover him. For the Canaanites this sentence was most just, because both they and theirs were all forfeited to God and Israel, and whatsoever they enjoyed was by special indulgence. And for the other neighbours it may seem just also, because both masters and servants of these and other nations are unquestionably at the disposal of the Lord their maker and sovereign ruler. Understand it likewise of such as upon enquiry appear to have been unjustly oppressed by their masters. Now it is not strange if the great God, who hates all tyranny, and styles himself the refuge of the oppressed doth interpose his authority to rescue such persons from their cruel masters.

17. No whore - No common prostitute, such as were tolerated and encouraged by the Gentiles, and used even in their religious worship. Not that such practices were allowed to the strangers among them, as is evident from many scriptures and reasons, but that it was in a peculiar manner, and upon special reasons, forbidden to them, as being much more odious in them than in strangers.

18. The hire of a whore - This is opposed to the practice of the Gentiles, who allowed both such persons and the oblations they made out of their infamous gains; and some of them kept lewd women, who prostituted themselves in the temples, to the honour of their false Gods, and offered part of their profit to them. Or the price of a dog - It seems to mean, of a whoremonger or sodomite. Such are called dogs, Rev. xxii, 15. And it is not improbable they are called so here. From these God would not accept of any offering.

19. Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother - To an Israelite. They held their estates immediately from God, who while he distinguished them from all other people, might have ordered, had he pleased, that they should have all things in common. But instead of that, and in token of their joint interest in the good land he had given them, he only appointed them, as there was occasion, to lend to one another without interest. This among them would be little or no loss to the lender, because their land was so divided, their estates so settled, and there was so little a merchandise among them, that it was seldom or never they had occasion to borrow any great sums, but only for the subsistence of their family, or some uncommon emergence. But they might lend to a stranger upon usury, who was supposed to live by trade, and therefore got by what he borrowed: in which case 'tis just, the lender should share in the gain. This usury therefore is not oppressive: for they might not oppress a stranger.

21. Not slack - Not delay: because delays may make them both unable to pay it, and unwilling too.

23. A free-will-offering - Which though thou didst really make, yet being made, thou art no longer free, but obliged to perform it.

24. At thy pleasure - Which was allowed in those parts, because of the great plenty and fruitfulness of vines there.

## XXIV

Of Divorce, ver. 1-4. New-married men discharged from the war, ver. 5. Of pledges, ver. 6. 10-13. Of man-stealers, ver. 7. Of the leprosy, ver. 8, 9. Of daily wages, ver. 14, 15. None to be punished for another's sin, ver. 16. Of justice and mercy to the widow, fatherless and stranger, ver. 17-22.

1. Some uncleanness - Some hateful thing, some distemper of body or quality of mind not observed before marriage: or some light carriage, as this phrase commonly signifies, but not amounting to adultery. Let him write - This is not a command as some of the Jews understood it, nor an allowance and approbation, but merely a permission of that practice for prevention of greater mischiefs, and this only until the time of reformation, till the coming of the Messiah when things were to return to their first institution and purest condition.

4. May not - This is the punishment of his levity and injustice in putting her away without sufficient cause, which by this offer he now acknowledgeth. Defiled - Not absolutely, as if her second marriage were a sin, but with respect to her first husband, to whom she is as a defiled or unclean woman, that is, forbidden things; forbidden are accounted and called unclean, Judg. xiii, 7, because they may no more be touched or used than an unclean thing. Thou shalt not cause the land to sin - Thou shalt not suffer such lightness to be practiced, lest the people be polluted, and the land defiled and accursed by that means.

5. Business - Any publick office or employment, which may cause an absence from or neglect of his wife. One year - That their affections may be firmly settled, so as there may be no occasions for the divorces last mentioned.

6. Mill-stone - Used in their hand-mills. Under this, he understands all other things necessary to get a livelihood, the taking away whereof is against the laws both of charity and prudence, seeing by those things alone he can be enabled both to subsist and to pay his debts. Life - His livelihood, the necessary support of his life.

10. Thou shalt not go in - To prevent both the poor man's reproach by having his wants exposed, and the creditor's greediness which might be occasioned by the sight of something which he desired, and the debtor could not spare.

11. The pledge - He shall chuse what pledge he pleases, provided it be sufficient for the purpose.

12. Thou shalt not sleep - But restore it before night, which intimates that he should take no such thing for pledge, without which a man cannot sleep.

13. Bless thee - Bring down the blessing of God upon thee by his prayers: for though his prayers, if he be not a good man, shall not avail for his own behalf, yet they shall avail for thy benefit. It shall be right - Esteemed and accepted by God as a work of righteousness, or mercy.

15. At this day - At the time appointed, weekly or daily.

16. Not put to death - If the one be free from the guilt of the others sin, except in those cases where the sovereign Lord of life and death, before whom none is innocent, hath commanded it, as chap. xiii, 1-18 Josh. vii, 24. For though God do visit the father's sins upon the children, Exod. xx, 5, yet he will not suffer men to do so.

17. Raiment - Not such as she hath daily and necessary use of, as being poor. But this concerns not rich persons, nor superfluous raiment.

## XXV

Stripes not to exceed forty, ver. 1-3. The ox not to be muzzled, ver. 4. Of marrying the brother's widow, ver. 5-10. Of an immodest woman, ver. 11, 12. Of just weights and measures, ver. 13-16. Amalek to be destroyed, ver. 17-19.

1. Justify - Acquit him from guilt and false accusations, and free him from punishment.

2. Beaten - Which the Jews say was the case of all those crimes which the law commands to be punished, without expressing the kind or degree of punishment. Before his face - That the punishment may be duly inflicted, without excess or defect. And from this no person's rank or quality exempted him, if he was a delinquent.

3. Forty stripes - It seems not superstition, but prudent caution, when the Jews would not exceed thirty-nine stripes, lest through mistake or forgetfulness they should go beyond their bounds, which they were commanded to keep. Should seem vile - Should be made contemptible to his brethren, either by this cruel usage of him, as if he were a brute beast: or by the deformity or infirmity of body which excessive beating might produce.

4. He treadeth out the corn - Which they did in those parts, either immediately by their hoofs on by drawing carts or other instruments over the corn. Hereby God taught them humanity, even to their beasts that served them, and much more to their servants or other men who laboured for them, especially to their ministers, 1 Cor. ix, 9.

5. Together - In the same town, or at least country. For if the next brother had removed his habitation into remote parts, on were carried thither into captivity, then the wife of the dead had her liberty to marry the next kinsman that lived in the same place with her. One - Any of them, for the words are general, and the reason of the law was to keep up the distinction of tribes and families, that so the Messiah might be discovered by the family from which he was appointed to proceed; and also of inheritances, which were divided among all the brethren, the first-born having only a double portion. A stranger - To one of another family.

6. That his name be not put out - That a family be not lost. So this was a provision that the number of their families might not be diminished.

9. Loose his shoe - As a sign of his resignation of all his right to the woman, and to her husband's inheritance: for as the shoe was a sign of one's power and right, Psalm lx, 8; cviii, 9, so the parting with the shoe was a token of the alienation of such right; and as a note of infamy, to signify that by this disingenuous action he was unworthy to be amongst free-men, and fit to be reduced to the condition of the meanest servants, who used to go barefoot, Isaiah xx, 2, 4.

10. His name - That is, his person, and his posterity also. So it was a lasting blot.

13. A great and a small - The great to buy with, the small for selling.

17. Out of Egypt - Which circumstance greatly aggravates their sin, that they should do thus to a people, who had been long exercised with sore afflictions, to whom pity was due by the laws of nature and humanity, and for whose rescue God had in so glorious a manner appeared, which they could not be ignorant of. So this was barbarousness to Israel, and setting the great Jehovah at defiance.

## XXVI

A form of confession made by him that offered the first- fruits, ver. 1-11. A prayer to be made after the disposal of the third year's tithe, ver. 12-15. He binds all these precepts upon them, by the divine authority, and the covenant between God and them, ver. 16-19.

2. Thou shalt take - This seems to be required of each master of a family, either upon his first settlement, or once every year at one of their three feasts, when they were obliged to go up to Jerusalem.

5. A Syrian - So Jacob was, partly by his original, as being born of Syrian parents, as were Abraham and Rebecca, both of Chaldea or Mesopotamia, which was a part of Syria largely so called, partly by his education and conversation; and partly by his relations, his wives being such, and his children too by their mother's. Ready to perish - Either through want and poverty; (See Gen. xxviii, 11, 20; xxxii, 10,) or through the rage of his brother Esau, and the treachery of his father-in-law Laban.

10. It - The basket of first-fruits, ver. 2.

11. Thou shalt rejoice - Thou shalt hereby enabled to take comfort in all thy employments, when thou hast sanctified them by giving God his portion. It is the will of God, that we should be chearful not only in our attendance upon his holy ordinances, but in our enjoyment of the gifts of his providence. Whatever good thing God gives us, we should make the most comfortable use of it we can, still tracing the streams to the fountain of all consolation.

12. The year of tithing - Hebrew. the year of that tithe, so called, either

1. because these tithes were gathered only in that year. Or rather,
2. because then only they were so bestowed; and whereas these second tithes for two years together were eaten only by the owners and Levites, and that in Jerusalem, in the third year they were eaten also by the strangers, fatherless, and widows, and that in their own dwellings.

13. Before the Lord - In thy private addresses to God; for this is to be said presently upon the distribution of these tithes, which was not done at Jerusalem, but in their own private gates or dwellings. And this is to be spoken before the Lord, that is, solemnly, seriously, and in a religious manner, with due respect to God's presence, and will, and glory.

14. In my mourning - In sorrow, or grieving that I was to give away so much of my profits to the poor, but I have chearfully eaten and feasted with them, as I was obliged to do. Unclean use -

For any common use; for any other use than that which thou hast appointed, which would have been a pollution of them. For the dead - For any funeral pomp or service; for the Jews used to send in provisions to feast with the nearest relations of the party deceased; and in that case both the guests and food were legally polluted, Num. xix, 11, 14, and therefore the use of these tithes in such cases had been a double fault, both the defiling of sacred food, and the employing those provisions upon sorrowful occasions, which by God's express command were to be eaten with rejoicing.

15. Look down - After that solemn profession of their obedience to God's commands, they are taught to pray for God's blessing whereby they are instructed how vain and ineffectual the prayers of unrighteous or disobedient persons are.

17. Avouched - Or, declared, or owned.

18. Avouched thee - Hath owned thee for such before all the world by eminent and glorious manifestations of his power and favour, by a solemn entering into covenant with thee, and giving peculiar laws, promises, and privileges to thee above all mankind.

## XXVII

A command to write all the law upon stones, ver. 1-8. A charge to Israel, to obey God, ver. 9-10. To pronounce a blessing on mount Gerizzim, and a curse on mount Ebal, ver. 11-13. To the Levites, to pronounce the whole curse, ver. 14-26.

2. On that day - About that time, for it was not done 'till some days after their passing over. 3. This law - The law properly so called, that is, the sum and substance of the precepts or laws of Moses, especially such as were moral, particularly the decalogue. Write it, that thou mayest go in - As the condition of thy entering into the land. For since Canaan is given only by promise, it must be held by obedience.

4. Mount Ebal - The mount of cursing. Here the law is written, to signify that a curse was due to the violators of it, and that no man could expect justification from the works of the law, by the sentence whereof all men are justly accused, as being all guilty of the transgression of it in one kind and degree or other. Here the sacrifices are to be offered, to shew that there is no way to be delivered from this curse, but by the blood of Christ, which all these sacrifices did typify, and by Christ's being made a curse for us.

6. Whole stones - Rough, not hewed or polished. By the law written on the stones, God spake to them: by the altar and sacrifices upon it, they spake to God: and thus was communion kept up between them and God.

9. The people of the Lord - By thy solemn renewing of thy covenant with him.

12. Upon mount Gerizzim - These words may be rendered beside or near to mount Gerizzim. There were in Canaan two mountains that lay near together, with a valley between, one called Gerizzim, the other Ebal. On the sides of these which faced each other, all the tribes were to be drawn up, six on a side, so that in the valley they came near each other, so near that the priests standing between them, might be heard by them that were next them on both sides. Then one of

the priests, or perhaps more, at some distance from each other, pronounced with a loud voice, one of the curses following. And all the people who stood on the foot and side of mount Ebal, (those farther off taking the signal from those who were nearer) said Amen! Then the contrary blessing was pronounced, "Blessed is he that doth so or so:" To which all who stood on the foot and side of mount Gerizzim, said, Amen! Simeon - All these were the children of the free-women, Leah and Rachel, to shew both the dignity of the blessings above the curses, and that the blessings belong only to those who are evangelically such, as this is expounded and applied, Gal. iv, 22, even to those that receive the Spirit of adoption and liberty. Joseph is here put for both his sons and tribes Manasseh and Ephraim, which are reckoned as one tribe, because Levi is here numbered; but when Levi is omitted, as it is where the division of the land is made, there Manasseh and Ephraim pass for two tribes.

13. To curse - Of the former tribes, 'tis said, they stood to bless the people: of these, that they stood to curse. Perhaps the different way of speaking intimates, That Israel in general were an happy people, and should ever be so, if they were obedient. And to that blessing, they on mount Gerizzim said, Amen! But the curses come in, only as exceptions to the general rule: "Israel is a blessed people: but if there be any even among them, that do such and such things, they have no part or lot in this matter, but are under a curse." This shews how ready God is to bestow the blessing: if any fall under the curse, they bring it on their own head. Four of these are children of the bond-woman, to shew that the curse belongs to those of servile and disingenuous spirits. With these are joined Reuben, who by his shameful sin fell from his dignity, and Zebulun, the youngest of Leah's children, that the numbers might be equal.

14. The Levites - Some of the Levites, namely, the priests, who bare the ark, as it is expressed Josh. viii, 33, for the body of the Levites stood upon mount Gerizzim, ver. 12. But these stood in the valley between Gerizzim and Ebal, looking towards the one or the other mountain as they pronounced either the blessings or the curses.

15. Cursed - The curses are expressed, but not the blessings. For as many as were under the law, were under the curse. But it was an honour reserved for Christ to bless us; to do that which the law could not do. So in his sermon on the mount, the true mount Gerizzim, we have blessings only. The man - Under this particular he understands all the gross violations of the first table, as under the following branches he comprehends all other sins against the second table. Amen - 'Tis easy to understand the meaning of Amen to the blessings. But how could they say it to the curses? It was both a profession of their faith in the truth of it, and an acknowledgment of the equity of these curses. So that when they said Amen, they did in effect Say, not only, it is certain it shall be so, but it is just it should be so.

16. Light - Or, despiseth in his heart: or reproacheth or curseth, secretly: for if the fact was notorious, it was punished with death.

17. Out of the way - That misleadeth simple souls, giving them pernicious counsel, either for this life, or for the next.

24. Smiteth - That is, killeth. This includes murder under colour of law, which is of all others the greatest affront to God. Cursed therefore is he that any ways contributes to accuse, or convict, or condemn an innocent person.

26. Confirmeth not - Or, performeth not. To this we must all say, Amen! Owning ourselves to be under the curse, and that we must have perished for ever, if Christ had not redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us.

## XXVIII

The blessings of obedience, personal, family and national, ver. 1-14. The curses of the disobedient; their extreme vexation, ver. 15-44. Their utter ruin and destruction, ver. 45-68.

2. Overtake thee - Those blessings which others greedily follow after, and never overtake, shall follow after thee, and shall be thrown into thy lap by special kindness.

3. In the city, and in the field - Whether they were husbandmen or tradesmen, whether in the town or country, they should be preserved from the dangers of both, and have the comforts of both. How constantly must we depend upon God, both for the continuance and comfort of life! We need him at every turn: we cannot be safe, if he withdraw his protection, nor easy, if he suspends his savour: but if he bless us, go where we will, 'tis well with us.

5. Store - Store-house, it shall always be well replenished and the provision thou hast there shall be preserved for thy use and service.

6. Comest in - That is, in all thy affairs and administrations.

9. Establish thee - Shall confirm his covenant with thee, by which he separated thee to himself as an holy and peculiar people.

10. Of the Lord - That you are in truth his people and children: A most excellent and glorious people, under the peculiar care and countenance of the great God.

11. The same things which were said before are repeated, to shew that God would repeat and multiply his blessings upon them.

12. His treasure - The heaven or the air, which is God's storehouse, where he treasures up rain or wind for man's use.

13. The head - The chief of all people in power, or at least in dignity and privileges; so that even they that are not under thine authority shall reverence thy greatness and excellency. So it was in David's and Solomon's time, and so it should have been much oftner and much more, if they had performed the conditions.

15. Overtake thee - So that thou shalt not be able to escape them, as thou shalt vainly hope and endeavour to do. There is no running from God, but by running to him; no flying from his justice, but by flying to his mercy.

20. Vexation - This seems chiefly to concern the mind, arising from the disappointment of hopes and the presages of its approaching miseries. Rebuke - Namely, from God, not so much in words as by his actions, by cross providences, by sharp and sore afflictions.

23. Brass - Like brass, hard and dry, and shut up from giving rain. Iron - Hard and chapt and barren.

24. Dust - Either thy rain shall be as unprofitable to thy ground and seed as if it were only so much dust. Or instead of rain shall come nothing but dust from heaven, which being raised and carried up by the wind in great abundance, returns, and falls upon the earth as it were in clouds or showers.

27. The botch of Egypt - Such boils and blains as the Egyptians were plagued with, spreading from head to foot: The emerodes - Or piles.

28. Blindness - Of mind, so that they shall not know what to do: Astonishment - They shall be filled with wonder and horror because of the strangeness and soreness of their calamities.

29. Grope at noon day - In the most clear and evident matters thou shalt grossly mistake. Thy ways - Thy counsels and enterprizes shall be frustrated and turn to thy destruction.

32. Unto another people - By those who have conquered them, and taken them captives, who shall give or sell them to other persons. Fail - Or, be consumed, partly with grief and plentiful tears; and partly with earnest desire, and vain and long expectation of their return. No might - No power to rescue, nor money to ransom them.

33. Which thou knowest not - Which shall come from a far country, which thou didst not at all expect or fear, and therefore will be the more dreadful when they come; a nation whose language thou understandest not, and therefore canst not plead with them for mercy, nor expect any favour from them.

34. Thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes - Quite put out of the possession of their own souls; quite bereaved of all comfort and hope, and abandoned to utter despair. They that walk by sight, and not by faith, are in danger of losing reason itself, when all about them looks frightful; and their condition is bad indeed, who are mad for the sight of their eyes.

36. Thy king - The calamity shall be both universal, which even thy king shall not be able to avoid, much less the subjects, who have far less advantage and opportunity for escape; and irrecoverable, because he who should protect or rescue them is lost with them, Lam. iv, 10. Wood and stone - So what formerly was their choice and delight now becomes their plague and misery. And this doubtless was the condition of many Israelites under the Assyrian and Balylonish captivities.

43. Within thee - Within thy gates; who formerly honoured and served thee, and were some of them glad of the crumbs which fell from thy table.

45. Moreover all these curses - It seems Moses has been hitherto foretelling their captivity in Babylon, by which even after their return, they were brought to the low condition mentioned, ver. 44. But in the following he foretells their last destruction by the Romans. And the present deplorable state of the Jewish nation, so exactly answers this prediction, that it is an incontestable proof of the truth of the prophecy, and consequently of the divine authority of the scriptures. And this destruction more dreadful than the former shews, that their sin in rejecting Christ, was more provoking to God than idolatry itself, and left them more under the power of Satan. For their captivity in Babylon cured them effectually of idolatry in seventy years. But under this last destruction, they continue above sixteen hundred years incurably averse to the Lord Jesus.

46. They - These curses now mentioned. A wonder - Signal and wonderful to all that hear of them. 'Tis amazing, a people so incorporated, should be so universally disperst! And that a people scattered in all nations, should not mix with any, but like Cain, be fugitives and vagabonds, and yet so marked as to be known.

54. Evil - Unkind, envious, covetous to monopolize these dainty bits to themselves, and grudging that their dearest relations should have any part of them.

56. Evil - Unmerciful: she will desire or design their destruction for her food.

57. Her young one - Hebrew. after-birth: that which was loathsome to behold, will now be pleasant to eat; and together with it she shall eat the child which was wrapt up in it, and may be included in this expression. Which she shall bear - Or, which she shall have born, that is, her more grown children. She shall eat them - This was fulfilled more than once, to the perpetual reproach

of the Jewish nation. Never was the like done either by Greek or Barbarian. See the fruit of being abandoned by God!

63. To destroy you - His just indignation against you will be so great, that it will be a pleasure to him to take vengeance on you. For though he doth not delight in the death of a sinner in itself, yet he doth delight in glorifying his justice upon incorrigible sinners, seeing the exercise of all his attributes must needs please him, else he were not perfectly happy.

65. Neither shall thy foot have rest - Ye shall have no settlement in the land whither you are banished, but there you shall be tossed about from place to place, and sold from person to person, or Cain - like, wander about.

66. Thy life shall hang in doubt - Either because thou art in the hands of thy enemies that have power, and want no will, to destroy thee: or because of the terrors of thy own mind, and the guilt of thy conscience making thee to fear, even where no fear is.

68. Into Egypt - Which was literally fulfilled under Titus, when multitudes of them were carried thither in ships, and sold for slaves. And this expression seems to mind them of that time when they went over the sea without ships, God miraculously drying up the sea before them, which now they would have occasion sadly to remember. By the way - Or, to the way. And the way seems not to be meant here of the usual road-way from Canaan to Egypt, which was wholly by land, but to be put for the end of the way or journey, even the land of Egypt, for to this, and not to the road-way between Canaan and Egypt, agree the words here following, whereof I speak unto thee, thou shalt see it, (that is, Egypt) no more again. No man shall buy you - Either because the number of your captives shall be so great, that the market shall be glutted with you; or because you shall be so loathsome and contemptible that men shall not be willing to have you for slaves. And this was the condition of the Jews after the destruction of Jerusalem, as Josephus the Jew hath left upon record. Let us all learn hence, to stand in awe and not to sin. I have heard of a wicked man (says Mr. Henry) who on reading these threatenings, was so enraged, that he tore the leaf out of his bible. But to what purpose is it, to deface a copy, while the original remains unchangeable? By which it is determined, that the wages of sin is death: yea, a death more dreadful than all that is here spoken!

## XXIX

The preface of God's covenant, ver. 1. A recital of his dealings with them, ver. 2-8. A solemn exhortation to keep covenant with God, ver. 9-17. A severe threatning to them that break it, ver. 18-28. The end of the revealed will of God, ver. 29.

1. These are the terms or conditions upon which God hath made, that is renewed his covenant with you. The covenant was but one in substance, but various in the time and manner of its dispensation.

4. Yet the Lord - That is, you have perceived and seen them with the eyes of your body, but not with your minds and hearts; you have not yet learned rightly to understand the word and works of God, so as to know them for your good, and to make a right use of them, and to comply with them: which he expresseth thus, the Lord hath not given you, &c. not to excuse their wickedness,

but to direct them to whom they must have recourse for a good understanding of God's works; and to intimate that although the hearing ear, and the seeing eye, be the workmanship of God, yet their want of his grace was their own fault, and the just punishment of their former sins; their present case being like theirs in Isaiah's time, who first shut their own eyes and ears that they might not see and hear, and would not understand, and then by the righteous judgment of God, had their eyes and ears closed that they should not see and hear, and understand. God's readiness to do us good in other things, is a plain evidence, that if we have not grace, that best of gifts, 'tis our own fault and not his: he would have gathered us, and we would not.

6. Ye have not eaten bread - Common bread purchased by your own money, or made by your own hands, but heavenly and angelical bread. Neither drank wine - But only water out of the rock. The Lord - Omnipotent and all-sufficient for your provision without the help of any creatures, and your God in covenant with you who hath a true affection to you, and fatherly care of you.

11. Thy stranger - Such strangers as had embraced their religion: all sorts of persons, yea, even the meanest of them.

12. Into covenant and into his oath - Into covenant, confirmed by a solemn oath.

13. That he may establish thee - Here is the summary of that covenant whereof Moses was the mediator, and in the covenant relation between God and them, all the precepts and promises of the covenant are included. That they should be established for a people to him, to fear, love, obey, and be devoted to him, and that he should be to them a God, to make them holy and happy; and a due sense of the relation we stand in to God as our God, and the obligation we are under to him as his people, is enough to bring us to all the duties, and all the comforts of the covenant. And does this covenant include nothing spiritual? nothing that refers to eternity?

15. So also - With your posterity. For so the covenant was made at first with Abraham and his seed, by which as God engaged himself to continue the blessing of Abraham upon his posterity, so he also engaged them to the same duties which were required of Abraham. So it is even among men, where a king confers an estate upon a subject and his heirs for ever, upon some certain conditions, all his heirs who enjoy that benefit, are obliged to the same conditions. It may likewise include those who were then constrained to be absent, by sickness, or any necessary occasion. Nay one of the Chaldee pharaphrasts reads it, all the generations that have been from the first days of the world, and all that shall arise to the end of the whole world, stand with us here this day. And so taking this covenant as a typical dispensation of the covenant of grace, 'tis a noble testimony to the Mediator of that covenant, who is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. 16. Egypt - Where you have seen their idolatries, and learned too much of them, as the golden calf shewed, and therefore have need to renew your covenant with God; where also we were in dreadful bondage whence God alone hath delivered us, to whom therefore we are deeply obliged, and have all reason to renew our covenant with him. Through the nations - With what hazard, if God had not appeared for us!

18. A root - An evil heart inclining you to such cursed idolatry, and bringing forth bitter fruits.

19. Of this curse - Of that oath where-in he swore he would keep covenant with God, and that with a curse pronounced against himself if he did not perform it. Bless himself - Flatter himself in his own eyes, with vain hopes, as if God did not mind such things, and either could not, or would not punish them. Peace - Safety and prosperity. My own heart - Though I do not follow God's command, but my own devices. To add drunkenness to thirst - The words may be rendered, to add thirst to drunkenness, and so the sense may be, that when he hath multiplied his sins, and made himself as it were drunk with them, yet he is not satisfied therewith, but still whets his appetite,

and provokes his thirst after more, as drunkards often use means to make themselves thirst after more drink.

20. Shall smoke - Shall burn and break forth with flame and smoke as it were from a furnace.

21. Unto evil - Unto some peculiar and exemplary plague; he will make him a monument of his displeasure to the whole land.

23. Salt and burning - Is burnt up and made barren, as with brimstone and salt.

26. Whom God had not given to them - For their worship, but hath divided them unto all nations, for their use and service. So he speaks here of the sun and moon and stars, which were the principal gods worshipped by the neighbouring nations.

29. The secret things - Having mentioned the amazing judgments of God upon the whole land and people of Israel, and foreseeing the utter extirpation which would come upon them for their wickedness, he breaks out into this pathetic exclamation, either to bridle their curiosity, who would be apt to inquire into the time and manner of so great an event; or to quiet his own mind, and satisfy the scruples of others, who perceiving God to deal so severely with his own people, when in the meantime he suffered those nations which were guilty of grosser atheism and idolatry, might thence take occasion to deny his providence or question the equity of his proceedings. To this he answers, that the ways and judgments of God, tho' never unjust, are often times hidden from us, unsearchable by our shallow capacities, and matter for our admiration, not our enquiry. But the things which are revealed by God and his word, are the proper object of our enquiries, that thereby we may know our duty, and be kept from such terrible calamities as these now mentioned.

## XXX

Promises upon their repentance, ver. 1-10. The righteousness of faith set before them, ver. 11-14. Life and death offered to their choice, ver. 15-20.

1. The blessing - When thou art obedient. The curse - When thou becomest rebellious.

6. And the Lord - Or, For the Lord will circumcise thine heart, will by his word and spirit change and purge thy heart from all thine idolatry and wickedness, and incline thy heart to love him. God will first convert and sanctify them, the fruit whereof shall be, that they shall return and obey God's commandments, ver. 8, and then shall prosper in all things, ver. 9. This promise principally respects the times of the gospel, and the grace which was to be then imparted to all Israel by Christ.

9. For good - Whereas thou did formerly receive these mercies for thy hurt, now thou shalt have them for thy good, thy heart shall be so changed that thou shalt not now abuse them, but employ them to the service of God the giver. Over thee for good - To do thee good; as he did rejoice to destroy thee.

10. If thou wilt hearken - This is added to warn them that they should not receive the grace of God in vain, and to teach them that the grace of God doth not discharge man's obligation to his duty, nor excuse him for the neglect of it. It is observable, that Moses calls God, the Lord thy God twelve times in these ten verses. In the threatnings of the former chapter, he is all along called the

Lord, a God of power, and the judge of all. But in the promises of this chapter, the Lord thy God, a God of grace, and in covenant with thee.

11. This commandment - The great command of loving and obeying God, which is the sum of the law, of which yet he doth not here speak, as it is in itself, but as it is molified and accompanied with the grace of the gospel. The meaning is, that tho' the practice of God's laws be now far from us, and above our strength, yet, considering the advantage of gospel grace, whereby God enables us to do our duty, it is near and easy to us, who believe. And so this well agrees with Rom. x, 6, &c. where St. Paul applies this place to the righteousness of faith. Is not hidden - Hebrew. Is not too wonderful for thee, not too hard for thee to know and do. The will of God, which is but darkly manifested to other nations, Acts xvii, 27, is clearly and fully revealed unto thee: thou canst not pretend ignorance or invincible difficulty.

12. In heaven - Shut up there, but it hath been thence delivered and published in thy hearing.

13. Neither beyond the sea - The knowledge of this commandment is not to be fetched from far distant places, to which divers of the wise Heathens travelled for their wisdom; but it was brought to thy very doors and ears, and declared to thee in this wilderness.

14. In thy mouth - Thou knowest it so well, that it is the matter of thy common discourse. In thy heart - In thy mind, (as the heart is very commonly taken) to understand and believe it. In a word, the Law is plain and easy: but the gospel is much more so.

19. Chuse life - They shall have life that chuse it: they that chuse the favour of God, and communion with him, shall have what they chuse. They that come short of life and happiness, must thank themselves only. They had had them, if they had chosen them, when they were put to their choice: but they die, because they will die.

20. That thou mayest love the Lord thy God - Here he shews them in short, what their duty is; To love God as the Lord, a being most amiable, and as their God, a God in covenant with them: as an evidence of their love, to obey his voice in every thing, and by constancy in this love and obedience, to cleave to him all their days. And what encouragement had they to do this? For he is thy life and the length of thy days - He gives life, preserves life, restores life, and prolongs it, by his power, tho' it be a frail life, and by his presence, tho' it be a forfeited life. He sweetens life by his comforts, and compleats all in life everlasting.

## XXXI

Moses encourages the people and Joshua, ver. 1-8. 23. Delivers to the priests the law, to be read every seventh year, ver. 9-13. God informs Moses of his approaching death, and the future apostasy of Israel, ver. 14-18. Orders him to write a song, which should be a testimony against them, ver. 19-22. Moses gives the law to the Levites to lay up beside the ark, and bids them assemble the people to hear his song, ver. 24-30.

1. Went and spake - Continued to speak, an usual Hebrew phrase.

2. Go out and come in - Perform the office of a leader or governor, because the time of my death approaches.

9. This law - Largely so called, the whole law or doctrine delivered unto Moses contained in these five books. To the priests - That they might keep it carefully and religiously, and bring it forth upon occasion, and read it, and instruct the people out of it. The elders - Who were assistants to the priests, to take care that the law should be kept, and read, and observed.

10. The year of release - When they were freed from debts and troubles, and cares of worldly matters, and thereby fitter to attend on God and his service.

11. Thou shalt read - Thou shalt cause it to be read by the priest or Levites; for he could not read it himself in the hearing of all Israel, but this was to be done by several persons, and so the people met in several congregations.

12. Together - Not in one place. But into divers assemblies or synagogues. Women who hereby are required to go to Jerusalem at this solemnity, as they were permitted to do in other solemnities. Children - Such of them as could understand, as appears from Neh. viii, 2, 3, the pious Jews doubtless read it daily in their houses, and Moses of old time was read in the synagogues every sabbath day. But once in seven years, the law was thus to be read in public, to magnify it and make it honourable.

14. Give him a charge - Immediately from myself for his greater encouragement, and to gain him more authority with the people.

16. The strangers of the land - That is, of the Canaanites, who will be turned out of their possessions, and become as strangers in their own land. This aggravates their folly to worship such gods as could neither preserve their friends, nor annoy their enemies.

17. Hide my face - Withdraw my favour and help. Whatever outward troubles we are in if we have but the light of God's countenance, we are safe. But if God hide his face from us then we are undone.

19. Write this song - Which is contained chap. xxxii, 1-43, and is put into a song that it may be better learned, and more fixed in their minds and memories. Put it in their mouths - Cause them to learn it, and sing it one to another, to oblige them to more circumspection. A witness - Of my kindness in giving them so many blessings, of my patience in bearing so long with them, of my clemency in giving them such fair and plain warnings, and my justice in punishing such an incorrigible people.

21. Their imaginations - Inclinations to Idolatry, which they do not check, as they ought; and some of them do not only cherish it in their hearts, but as far as they can and dare, secretly practice it, as may be gathered from Amos v, 25 Acts vii, 43.

25. The Levites - The priests, ver. 9, who also were Levites.

26. Take this book - Probably the very same book, which (after having been some way misplaced) was found in the house of the Lord, in the days of Josiah, and publickly read by the king himself, for a witness against a people, who were then almost ripe for ruin. In the side - In the outside, in a little chest fixed to it, for nothing but the tables of stone were contained in the ark, 1 Kings viii, 9, here it was kept for greater security and reverence. A witness against thee - Against thy people, to whom he turns his speech that they might be the more affected with it.

## XXXII

The song of Moses contains the preface, ver. 1, 2. A high character of God, ver. 3-6. A recital of the great things God had done for them, and as their carriage toward him, ver. 7-18. A prediction of judgments for their aggravated impieties, ver. 19-35. A promise of vengeance upon their enemies, and deliverance for a remnant, ver. 36-43. An exhortation annext, ver. 44-47. Orders given to Moses, to go up to the mount and die, ver. 48-52.

1. O heavens, O earth - You lifeless and senseless creatures, which he calls upon partly to accuse the stupidity of Israel, that were more dull of hearing than these: and partly as witnesses of the truth of his sayings and the justice of God's proceedings against them.

2. As the rain - Look what effect rain and dew have upon herbs and grass which they make fresh and fragrant and growing, the same effect may my discourse have upon your hearts, that is, to make them soft and pliable and fruitful.

3. The name of the Lord - His glorious excellencies and righteous actions, by which he hath made himself known as a man is known by his name, and by which it will appear both that there is no blame to be laid upon him whatsoever befalls you, and that it is gross madness to forsake such a God for dumb idols. Ascribe ye - As I am about to publish the majesty and glory of God, so do you also acknowledge it.

4. A rock - As for the stability of his nature, and invincibleness of his power, so also for his fixedness and immutability in his counsels and promises and ways; so that is there shall be a sad change in your affairs, remember that this proceeds from yourselves and from the change of your ways towards God, and not from God, in whom there is no variableness or shadow of change, James i, 17. His work - All his works and actions are unblameable, perfect, wise and righteous. His ways - All his administrations in the world and particularly with you are managed with wisdom and justice. A God of truth - Constant to his promises: you cannot accuse him of any unfaithfulness to this day.

5. They - The Israelites. Their spot - The wickedness with which they are stained, is not of his children - Plainly shews they are not his children, but the devil's. God's children have no such spot. Indeed this text does not affirm, they have any spot at all. Perverse - Froward and untractable: Crooked - Irregular and disorderly.

6. O foolish people and unwise! - Fools and double fools! Fools indeed, to disoblige one, on whom you so entirely depend! Who hath bewitched you! To forsake your own mercies for lying vanities! Bought thee - That hath redeemed thee from Egyptian bondage. Made thee - Not only in a general by creation, but in a peculiar manner by making thee his peculiar people. Established - That is, renewed and confirmed his favour to thee, and not taken it away, which thou hast often provoked him to do.

7. The days of old - The events of ancient days or former ages, and thou wilt find that I had a respect unto thee not only in Abraham's time, but long before it.

8. Their inheritance - When God by his providence allotted the several parts of the world to several people, which was done Gen. x, 1-32 Gen. xi, 1-9. When he separated - Divided them in their languages and habitations according to their families. He set the bounds - That is, he disposed of the several lands and limits of the people so as to reserve a sufficient place for the great numbers of the people of Israel. And therefore he so guided the hearts of several people, that the posterity

of Canaan, which was accursed of God, and devoted to ruin, should be seated in that country which God intended for the children of Israel, that so when their iniquities were ripe, they might be rooted out, and the Israelites come in their stead.

9. His people - It is no wonder God had so great a regard to this people, for he chose them out of all mankind to be his peculiar portion.

10. He found him - Not by chance, but as it were looking out and seeking for him. He did indeed manifest himself to him in Egypt, but it was in the wilderness at Sinai, God found him in an eminent manner, and revealed his will to him, and entered into covenant with him, and imparted himself and his grace and blessing to him. By this word he also signifies both their lost condition in themselves, and that their recovery was not from themselves, but only from God who sought and found them out by his grace. In the waste howling wilderness - In a place destitute of all the necessaries and comforts of life, which also was a type of that desolate and comfortless condition in which all men are before the grace of God finds them out; where instead of the voices of men, is nothing heard but the howlings and yellings of ravenous birds and beasts. He led them - He conducted them frons place to place by his cloudy pillar and providence. Or, he compassed him about, by his provident care, watching over him and preserving him on every side. As the apple of his eye - As men use to keep the apple of their eye, that is, with singular care and diligence, this being as a most tender, so a most useful part.

11. Her nest - Her young ones in the nest; which she by her cry and motion provoketh to fly. Her wings - As preparing herself to fly. On her wings - Or, as on her wings, that is, gently, and tenderly and safely too, as if she carried them not in her claws for fear of hurting them, but upon her wings. Some say, the eagle doth usually carry her young ones upon her wings.

12. Did lead them - When they were shut up in Egypt as in their nest whence they durst not venture to fly nor stir, he taught and encouraged and enabled them to fly out from that bondage, he dealt tenderly with them, bearing with their infirmities, keeping them from all harms. With him - To assist him at that work or to deliver them. The more unworthy they in giving to idols a share in that worship which they owe to God only.

13. The high places - To conquer their strongest holds, which often are in the mountains, and their cities fenced with walls of greatest height and strength. To ride upon, in scripture phrase, is to subdue or conquer. Out of the rock - This being a land flowing with honey, where the bees made honey in the holes of rocks, or in the trees that grew upon or among the rocks. Out of the flinty rocks - The olive-trees grow and bear most fruit in rocky or hilly places.

14. Fat of lambs - For though the fat wherewith the inward parts were covered was not to be eaten by them, but offered to God, yet that fat which was mixed with the flesh they might eat, as the Jewish doctors note. Basham - A place famous for excellent cattle. Fat of kidneys of wheat - With the finest of the grains of wheat; compared to kidneys for their shape and largeness.

15. Jeshurun - Israel whom he calls right or upright, (as the word signifies) partly by way of instruction to mind them what they professed and ought to be; and partly by way of exprobration, to shew them what a shame it was to degenerate so much from their name and profession. Kicked - As well fed cattle use to do: he grew insolent and rebellious against God and against his word and spirit.

16. To jealousy - To anger and fury, for jealousy is the rage of a man. And withall it implies the ground of his anger, their falseness to God whom they had accepted as their husband, and their spiritual whoredom with other gods.

17. Unto devils - Unto idols, which the devils brought into the world in opposition to God, in and by which the devils often manifested themselves to men, and gave them answers, and received their worship. The Gentiles pretended to worship God in those idols, and the devils which inspired them, deluded the nations with pretenses that they were a sort of lower gods. Moses takes off this mark, and shews the Israelites that these pretended gods were really devils, and therefore that it was the height of madness to honour or worship them. Not to God - For God utterly rejected those sacrifices which they offered to him together with idols. They knew not - Or, who never knew them, that is, never shewed any kindness to them, or did them any good: New gods - Not simply or absolutely, for some of these had been worshipped for many generations, but comparatively to the true God, who is the ancient of days, chap. vii, 9, and who was worshipped from the beginning of the world. Feared not - Served not, worshipped not.

18. Of the rock - Of God, one of whose titles this is, or of Christ, who is called the rock, 1 Cor. x, 4, whom the Israelites tempted.

19. His sons and daughters - Such they were by calling and profession.

20. I will see - I will make them and others see, what the fruit of such actions shall be. No faith - No fidelity: perfidious, that have broken their covenant so solemnly made with me.

21. I will move them to jealousy with those that are not a people - With the Heathen nations, who are none of my people, who scarce deserve the name of a people, as being without the knowledge and fear of God, which is the foundation of all true policy and government, and many of them destitute of all government, laws and order. And yet these people I will take in your stead, receive them and reject you; which, when it came to pass how desperately did it provoke the Jews to jealousy? A foolish nation - So the Gentiles were both in the opinion of the Jews and in truth and reality, notwithstanding all their pretenses to wisdom, there being nothing more foolish or brutish than the worship of idols.

22. A fire is kindled - Great and grievous judgments shall be inflicted, which often come under the name of fire. Are they proud of their plenty? It shall burn up the increase of the earth. Are they confident of their strength? It shall destroy the very foundations of the mountains. It shall burn unto the lowest hell: it shall bring them to the very depth of misery in this world, which yet will he but a faint resemblance of their endless misery in the next.

23. Spend mine arrows - Even empty my quiver, and send upon them all my plagues, which, like arrows shot by a skilful and strong hand, shall speedily reach and certainly hit and mortally wound them.

24. With hunger - With famine, which burns and parches the inward parts, and make the face black as a coal, Lam. iv, 8. Burning heat - From fevers or carbuncles, or other inflaming distempers.

27. The wrath - Their rage against me, as it is expressed, Isaiah xxxvii, 28, 29, their furious reproaches against my name, as if I were cruel to my people or unable to deliver them. The fear hereof is ascribed to God after the manner of men. Strangely - Insolenty and arrogantly above what they used to do.

28. Void of counsel - Their enemies are foolish people, and therefore make so false and foolish a judgment upon things.

29. They - Israel. Latter end - What their end will be, and that tho' God spare them long, yet at last judgment will certainly overtake them.

30. One - Israelite. Their rock - Their God, who was their refuge and defense. Sold them - Namely, for bond-slaves, had given themselves up into their enemies hands. Shut them up - As it were in the net which their enemies had laid for them.

31. Being Judges - Who by their dear bought experience have been forced to acknowledge that our God was far stronger than they and their false gods together.

32. For - As if he had said, This is the reason why their rock hath shut them up. Their vine is of the vine of Sodom - The people of Israel, which I planted as a choice vine, are now degenerated and become like the vine of Sodom, their principles and practices are all corrupt and abominable. Bitter - Their fruits are loathsome to me, mischievous to others, and at last will be pernicious to themselves.

34. This - All their wickedness mentioned before. My long suffering towards them may make them think I have forgotten their sins, but I remember them punctually, they are sealed up as in a bag, Job xiv, 17, and as men seal up their treasures.

35. Their feet shall slide - They who now think they stand fast and unmoveable, shall fall into utter destruction. In due time - Though not so soon as some may expect, yet in that time when it shall be most proper, when they have filled up the measure of their sins. At hand - Hebrew. is near. So the scripture often speaks of those things which are at many hundred years distance, to signify, that though they may be afar off as to our measures of time, yet in God's account they are near, they are as near as may be, when the measure of their sins is once full, the judgment shall not be deferred.

36. For - Or, nevertheless, having spoken of the dreadful calamity which would come upon his people, he now turns his discourse into a more comfortable strain, and begins to shew that after God had sorely chastised his people, he would have mercy upon them and turn their captivity. Judge his people - Shall plead their cause, shall protect and deliver them. Repent - Of the evils he hath brought upon them. None shut up - Either in their strong cities or castles or other hiding places, or in the enemies hands or prisons, whence there might be some hope or possibility of redemption; and none left, as the poor and contemptible people are neglected and usually left by the conquerors in the conquered land, but all seem to be cut off and destroyed.

37. He shall say - The Lord, before he deliver his people, will first convince them of their former folly in forsaking him and following idols.

38. Which did eat - That is, to whom you offered sacrifices and oblations after the manner of the Gentiles. Help you - If they can.

39. See now - Learn by your own sad experience what vain and impotent things idols are. I am he - The only true, omnipotent and irresistible God.

40. I lift up my hand - I solemnly swear, that I will do what here follows. I live - As sure as I live.

41. If I whet my sword - If once I begin to prepare for war and for the execution of my sentence. Judgment - Of the instruments of judgment, of the weapons of war. A metaphor from warriors, that take their weapons into their hand, when they intend to fight.

42. Captives - Whom my sword hath sorely wounded, though not utterly killed. From the beginning - When once I begin to revenge myself and my people upon mine and their enemies, I will go on and make a full end.

43. Rejoice - He calls upon the nations to rejoice and bless God for his favours, and especially for the last wonderful deliverance which shall be given to the Jews, when they shall be converted

to the gospel in the last days; which they have all reason to do, because of that singular advantage which all nations will have at that time and upon that occasion.

44. He and Hoshea - Or Joshua. Probably Moses spoke it to as many as could hear him, while Josh. in another assembly at the same time delivered it to as many as his voice would reach. Thus Joshua, as well as Moses, would be a witness against them, if ever they forsook God.

47. Not vain - It is not an unprofitable or contemptible work I advise you to, but well worthy of your most serious care.

48. That self-same day - Now he had finished his work, why should he desire to live a day longer? He had indeed formerly desired and prayed, that he might go over Jordan: but now he is entirely satisfied, and saith no more of that matter.

49. Nebo - A ridge or top of the mountains of Abarim.

51. Because ye trespassed - God reminds him of the sin he had committed long before. It is good for the holiest of men to die repenting, even of their early sins.

52. Yet thou shalt see the land - And see it as the earnest of that better country, which is only seen with the eye of faith. What is death to him who has a believing prospect and a steadfast hope of eternal life?

## XXXIII

The blessing of Moses. He pronounces them all blessed, in what God had done for them, already, ver. 1-5. He pronounces a blessing upon each tribe, ver. 6-25. He pronounces them all in general blessed, on account of what God would be to them, and do for them, if they were obedient, ver. 26-29.

1. Moses blessed Israel - He is said to bless them, by praying to God with faith for his blessing upon them; and by foretelling the blessings which God would confer upon them. And Moses calls himself here the man of God, that is, the servant or prophet of God, to acquaint them that the following prophecies were not his own inventions, but divine inspirations. The children of Israel - The several tribes: only Simeon is omitted, either in detestation of their parent Simeon's bloody carriage, for which Jacob gives that tribe a curse rather than a blessing, in Gen. xlix, 5-7. Or, because that tribe had no distinct inheritance, but was to have its portion in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xix, 1.

2. The Lord came - Namely, to the Israelites, manifested himself graciously and gloriously among them. From Sinai - Beginning at Sinai, where the first appearance of God was, and so going on with them to Seir and Paran. And rose up - He appeared or shewed himself, as the sun doth when it riseth. From Seir - From the mountain or land of Edom, to which place the Israelites came, Num. xx, 14, &c. and from thence God led them on towards the land of promise, and then gloriously appeared for them in subduing Sihon and Og before them. But because the land of Edom is sometimes taken more largely, and so reacheth even to the Red-sea, and therefore mount Sinai was near to it, and because Paran was also near Sinai, being the next station into which they came from the wilderness of Sinai: all this verse may belong to God's appearance in mount Sinai, where that glorious light which shone upon mount Sinai directly, did in all probability scatter its beams into

adjacent parts, such as Seir and Paran were. And if so, this is only a poetical expression of the same thing in divers words, and God coming or rising or shining from or to or in Sinai and Seir and Paran note one and the same illustrious action of God appearing there with ten thousands of his saints or holy angels, and giving a fiery law to them. Paran - A place where God eminently manifested his presence and goodness both in giving the people flesh which they desired, and in appointing the seventy elders and pouring forth his spirit upon them. With ten thousands of saints - That is, with a great company of holy angels, Psalm lxviii, 17 Dan. vii, 10, which attended upon him in this great and glorious work of giving the law, as may be gathered from Acts vii, 53 Gal. iii, 19. From his right hand - Which both wrote the law and gave it to men. An allusion to men who ordinarily write and give gifts with their right hand. A fiery law - The law is called fiery, because it is of a fiery nature purging and searching and inflaming, to signify that fiery wrath which it inflicteth upon sinners for the violation of it, and principally because it was delivered out of the midst of the fire.

3. The people - The tribes of Israel. The sense is, this law, though delivered with fire and smoke and thunder, which might seem to portend nothing but hatred and terror, yet in truth was given to Israel, in great love, as being the great mean of their temporal and eternal salvation. Yea, he, embraced the people, and laid them in his bosom! so the word signifies, which speaks not only the dearest love, but the most tender and careful protection. All God's saints or holy ones, that is, his people, were in thy hand, that is, under God's care to protect, direct and govern them. These words are spoken to God: the change of persons, his and thy, is most frequent in the Hebrew tongue. This clause may farther note God's kindness to Israel, in upholding them when the fiery law was delivered, which was done with so much terror that not only the people were ready to sink under it, but even Moses did exceedingly fear and quake. But God sustained both Moses and the people, in or by his hand, whereby he in a manner covered them that no harm might come to them. At thy feet - Like scholars to receive instructions. He alludes to the place where the people waited when the law was delivered, which was at the foot of the mount. Every one - Of the people will receive or submit to thy instructions and commands. This may respect either, the peoples promise when they heard the law, that they would hear and do all that was commanded. Or, their duty to do so.

4. Moses - He speaks this of himself in the third person, which is very usual in the Hebrew language. The law is called their inheritance, because the obligation of it was hereditary, passing from parents to their children, and because this was the best part of their inheritance, the greatest of all those gifts which God bestowed upon them.

5. He was king in Jeshurun - Moses was their king not in title, but in reality, being under God, their supreme governor, and law giver. Gathered together - When the princes and people met together for the management of public affairs, Moses was owned by them as their king and lawgiver.
6. Let Reuben live - Though Reuben deserve to be cut off or greatly diminished and obscured, according to Jacob's prediction, Gen. xlix, 4, yet God will spare them and give them a name and portion among the tribes of Israel, and bless them with increase of their numbers. All the ancient paraphrasts refer this to the other world, so far were they from expecting temporal blessings only. Let Reuben live in life eternal, says Onkelos, and not die the second death. Let Reuben live in this world, so Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum, and not die that death which the wicked die in the world to come.

7. Hear, Lord - God will hear his prayer for the accomplishment of those great things promised to that tribe, Gen. xlix, 8-12. This implies the delays and difficulties Judah would meet with, that would drive him to his prayers, which would be with success. Unto his people - When he shall go

forth to battle against his enemies and shall fall fiercely upon them, as was foretold, Gen. xlix, 8, 9. Bring him back with honour and victory, to his people, to the rest of his tribe who were left at home when their brethren went to battle: and to his brethren the other tribes of Israel. Let his hands be sufficient for him - This tribe shall be so numerous and potent that it shall suffice to defend itself without any aid, either from foreign nations or from other tribes; as appeared when this tribe alone was able to grapple with nine or ten of the other tribes. From his enemies - Thou wilt preserve this tribe in a special manner, so that his enemies shall not be able to ruin it, as they will do other tribes, and that for the sake of the Messiah who shall spring out of it.

8. Let thy Urim - The Thummim and the Urim, which are thine, O Lord by special institution and consecration, (by which he understands the ephod in which they were put, and the high priesthood, to which they were appropriated, and withal the gifts and graces signified by the Urim and Thummim, and necessary for the discharge of that high-office) shall be with thy holy one, that is, with that priest, whom thou hast consecrated to thyself, and who is holy in a more peculiar manner than all the people were; that is, the priesthood shall be confined to and continued in Aaron's family. Whom thou didst prove - Altho' thou didst try him, and rebuke him, yet thou didst not take away the priesthood from him. At Massah - Not at that Massah mentioned Exod. xvii, 7, which is also called Meribah, but at that other Meribah, Num. xx, 13. Thou didst strive - Whom thou didst reprove and chastise.

9. I have not seen him - That is, I have no respect unto them. The sense is, who followed God and his command fully, and executed the judgment enjoined by God without any respect of persons, Exod. xxxii, 26, 27. They kept thy covenant - When the rest broke their covenant with God by that foul sin of idolatry with the calf, that tribe kept themselves pure from that infection, and adhered to God and his worship.

11. His substance - Because he hath no inheritance of his own and therefore wholly depends upon thy blessing. The work of his hands - All his holy administrations, which he fitly calls the work of his hands, because a great part of the service of the Levites and priests was done by the labour of their hand and body, whereas the service of evangelical ministers is more spiritual and heavenly. Smite - He pray's thus earnestly for them, because he foresaw they who were to teach and reprove, and chastise others would have many enemies, and because they were under God, the great preservers and upholders of religion, and their enemies were the enemies of religion itself.

12. Of Benjamin - Benjamin is put next to Levi, because the temple, where the work of the Levites lay, was upon the edge of the lot of this tribe. And 'tis put before Joseph, because of the dignity of Jerusalem, (part of which was in this lot) above Samaria, which was in the tribe of Ephraim: likewise because Benjamin adhered to the house of David and to the temple of God, when the rest of the tribes deserted both. The beloved of the Lord - So called in allusion to their father Benjamin who was the beloved of his father Jacob; and because of the kindness of God to this tribe which appeared both in this, that they dwelt in the best part of the land, as Josephus affirms, and in the following privilege. Shall dwell in safety by him - Shall have his lot nigh to God's temple, which was both a singular comfort and safeguard to him. Shall cover - Shall protect that tribe continually while they cleave to him. He - The Lord shall dwell, that is, his temple shall be placed, between his shoulders, that is, in his portion, or between his border's as the word shoulder is often used. And this was truly the situation of the temple, on both sides whereof was Benjamin's portion. And though mount Sion was in the tribe of Judah, yet mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, was in the tribe of Benjamin.

13. And of Joseph - Including both Ephraim and Manasseh. In Jacob's blessing that of Joseph's is the largest. And so it is here. His land - His portion shall be endowed with choice blessings from God. Of heaven - That is, the precious fruits of the earth brought forth by the influences of heaven, the warmth of the sun, and the rain which God will send from heaven. The deep - The springs of water bubbling out of the earth: perhaps it may likewise refer to the great deep, the abyss of waters, which is supposed to be contained in the earth.

14. By the sun - Which opens and warms the earth, cherishes and improves and in due time ripens the seeds and fruits of it. The moon - Which by its moisture refreshes and promotes them. Hebrew. Of the moons, or months, that is, which it bringeth forth in the several months or seasons of the year.

15. The chief things - That is, the excellent fruits, as grapes, olives, figs, &c. which delight in mountains, growing upon, or the precious minerals contained in, their mountains and hills called ancient and lasting, that is, such as have been from the beginning of the world, and are likely to continue to the end of it, in opposition to those hills or mounts which have been cast up by man.

16. And for - And in general for all the choice fruits which the land produceth in all the parts of it, whither hills or valleys. Fulness thereof - That is, the plants and cattle and all creatures that grow, increase, and flourish in it. The good will - For all other effects of the good will and kindness of God who not long since did for a time dwell or appear in the bush to me in order to the relief of his people, Exod. iii, 2. Of Joseph - That is, of Joseph's posterity. Him that was separated from his brethren - His brethren separated him from them by making him a slave, and God distinguished him from them by making him a prince. The preceeding words might be rendered, My dweller in the bush. That was an appearance of the divine majesty to Moses only, in token of his particular favour. Many a time had God appeared to Moses; but now he is just dying, he seems to have the most pleasing remembrance, of the first time that he saw the visions of the Almighty. It was here God declared himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and so confirmed the promise made to the father, that promise which our Lord shews, reaches as far as the resurrection and eternal life.

17. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock - Or young bull, which is a stately creature, and was therefore formerly used as an emblem of royal majesty. This seems to note the kingdom which Ephraim should obtain in Jeroboam and his successors. His horns - His strength and power shall be very great. The people - All that shall oppose him, and particularly the Canaanites. The ten thousands - Of the land of Canaan. Though Manasseh be now more numerous, yet Ephraim shall shortly outstrip him, as was foretold Gen. xlviii, 17-19.

18. Rejoice - Thou shalt prosper and have cause of rejoicing. In thy going out -

1. To war, as this phrase is often used.
2. To sea, in way of traffick, because their portion lay near the sea. And in both respects his course is opposite to that of Issachar, who was a lover of peace and pasturage. He is here joined with Zebulun, both because they were brethren by father and mother too, and because their possessions lay near together. In thy tents - Thou shalt give thyself to the management of laud and cattle, living quietly in thy own possessions.

19. They - Zebulun of whom Moses takes more special notice. And so having dispatched Issachar in two words, he returns to Zebulun. The people - the Gentiles, either those of Galilee, which was called Galilee of the Gentiles, who were their neighbours; or people of other nations, with whom they had commerce, which they endeavoured to improve in persuading them to worship the true

God. The mountain - That is, to the temple, which Moses knew was to be seated upon a mountain. Sacrifices of righteousness - Such as God requires. Their trafficking abroad with Heathen nations shall not make them forget their duty at home, nor shall their distance from the place of sacrifice hinder them from coming to it to discharge that duty. Of the abundance of the sea - They shall grow rich by the traffick of the sea, and shall consecrate themselves and their riches to God. Hid in the sand - Such precious things as either

1. Are contained in the sand of the sea and rivers, in which sometimes there is mixed a considerable quantity of gold and silver. Or,
2. Such as grow in the sea, or are fetched from the sandy bottom of it, as pearls, coral, ambergrease. Or,
3. Such as being cast into the sea by shipwreck are cast upon the shore by the workings of the sea. It were well, if the enlargement of our trade with foreign countries, were made to contribute to the spreading of the gospel.

20. Enlargeth - That bringeth him out of his straits amid troubles, which he was often engaged in, because he was encompassed with potent enemies. As a lion - Safe and secure from his enemies, and terrible to them when they rouse and molest him. Teareth the arm - Utterly destroys his enemies, both the head, the seat of the crown, their dignity and principality, and the arm, the subject of strength and instrument of action; both chief princes, and their subjects.

21. The first part - The first fruits of the land of promise, the country of Sihon, which was first conquered, which he is said to provide for himself, because he desired and obtained it of Moses. Of the law-giver - Of Moses, whose portion this is called, either because this part of the land beyond Jordan was the only part of the land which Moses was permitted to enter upon: or because it was given him by Moses, whereas the portions beyond Jordan were given to the several tribes by Joshua according to the direction of the lot. Seated - Hebrew. hid or protected: for their wives and children were secured in their cities, while many of their men went over to the war in Canaan. He came - He went, or he will go, to the war in Canaan, with the princes, or captains, or rulers of the people of Israel, that is, under their command and conduct, as indeed they did; or with the first of the people; or, in the front of the people, as the Syriack renders it; for this tribe and their brethren whose lot fell beyond Jordan, were to march into Canaan before their brethren. He executed - The just judgment of God against the Canaanites, as the rest of the Israelites did.

22. A lion's whelp - Courageous, and generous, and strong, and successful against his enemies. Which leapeth - From Bashan, because there were many and fierce lions in those parts, whence they used to come forth and leap upon the prey. Or this may refer either to the particular victories obtained by Samson, who was of the tribe of Daniel, or to a more general achievement of that tribe, when a party of them surprised Laish, which lay in the farthest part of the land of Canaan from them. And the mountain of Bashan lying not far from that city, from whence they probably made their descent upon it, thus leaping from Basham.

23. Satisfied with favour - With the favour of God. That only is the favour that satisfies the soul. They are happy indeed that have the favour of God; and they shall have it, that place their satisfaction in it. And full with the blessing of the Lord - Not Only with corn, wine and oil, the fruit of the blessing, but with the blessing itself, the grace of God, according to his promise and covenant. Possess thou the west and the south - Or, the sea and the south. This is not to be understood of the place, that his lot should fall there, for he was rather in the east and north of the land; but of the pleasures and commodities of the west or of the sea, which were conveyed to him from his neighbour

Zebulun; and of the south, that is, from the southern tribes and parts of Canaan, which were brought to him down the river Jordan, and both sorts of commodities were given him in exchange for the fruitful rich soil which he had in great abundance.

24. Let Asher - Who carries blessedness in his very name, be blessed with children - He shall have numerous, strong and healthful children. Acceptable to his brethren - By his sweet disposition and winning carriage. In oil - He shall have such plenty of oil that he may not only wash his face, but his feet also in it.

25. Iron and brass - The mines of iron and copper, which were in their portion, whence Sidon their neighbour was famous among the Heathens for its plenty of brass, and Sarepta is thought to have its name from the brass and iron which were melted there in great quantity. Thy strength shall be - Thy strength shall not be diminished with age, but thou shalt have the vigour of youth even in thine old age: thy tribe shalt grow stronger and stronger.

26. There us none - These are the last words that ever Moses wrote, perhaps the greatest writer that ever lived upon the earth. And this man of God, who had as much reason to know both as ever any mere man had, with his last breath magnifies both the God of Israel, and the Israel of God. Unto the God of Jeshurun, who to help thee, rideth upon the heaven, and with the greatest state and magnificence, on the sky. Riding on the heaven denotes the greatness and glory, in which he manifests himself to the upper world, and the use he makes of the influences of heaven and the products of the clouds, in bringing to pass his own counsels in this lower world. All these he manages and directs, as a man doth the horse he rides on.

27. The eternal God - He who was before all worlds, and will be, when time shall be no more: Is thy refuge - Or, thy habitation or mansion-house (so the word signifies) in whom thou art safe, and easy, and at rest, as a man is in his own house. Every true Israelite is at home in God: the soul returns to him, and reposes in him. And they that make him their habitation shall have all the comforts and benefits of an habitation in him. And underneath are the everlasting arms - The almighty power of God, which protects and comforts all that trust in him, in their greatest straits and distresses. He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee - Shall make room for thee by his resistless power, and shall say, Destroy them - Giving thee not only a commission but strength to put it in execution. And, has he not given the same commission and the same strength to believers, to destroy all sin?

28. Alone - Either

1. Tho' they be alone, and have no confederates to defend them, but have all the world against them, yet my single protection shall be sufficient for them. Or,
2. Distinct and separated from all other nations, with whom I will not have them mingle themselves. The fountain - That is, the posterity of Jacob, which flowed from him as waters from a fountain, in great abundance. The fountain is here put for the river or streams which flow from it, as Jacob or Israel who is the fountain is often put for the children of Israel. His heavens - That is, those heavens or that air which hangs over his land.

29. The shield of they help - By whom thou are sufficiently guarded against all assailants; and the sword of thy excellency - Or, thy most excellent sword, that is, thy strength and the author of all thy past or approaching victories. Those in whose hearts is the excellency of holiness, have God himself for their shield and sword. They are defended by the whole armour of God: His word is their sword, and faith their shield. And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee - Who said they

would destroy thee: or at least, that they would never submit: and thou shalt tread upon their high places - Their strong holds, palaces and temples. Thus shall the God of peace tread Satan under the feet of all believers, and that shortly.

## XXXIV

Moses having finished his testimony, finishes his life. This chapter was probably added by Samuel, who wrote by divine authority what he found in the records of Joshua, and his successors the Judges. Here is, The view Moses had of the land, ver. 1-4. His death, burial, and age, ver. 5-7. Israel's mourning for him, ver. 8. His successor, ver. 9. His character, ver. 10-12.

1. And Moses went up - When he knew the place of his death he chearfully mounted a steep hill to come to it. Those who are well acquainted with another world, are not afraid to leave this. When God's servants are sent for out of the world, the summons runs go up and die! Unto Daniel - To that city which after Moses's death was called so.

2. All Naphtali - The land of Naphtali, which together with Daniel, was in the north of Canaan, as Ephraim and Manasseh were in the midland parts, and Judah on the south, and the sea, on the west. So these parts lying in the several quarters are put for all the rest. He stood in the east and saw also Gilead, which was in the eastern part of the land, and thence he saw the north and south and west. The utmost sea - The midland sea, which was the utmost bound of the land of promise on the west.

3. The south - The south quarter of the land of Judah, which is towards the salt sea, the city of palm-trees - Jericho, so called from the multitude of palm-trees, which were in those parts, as Josephus and Strabo write. From whence and the balm there growing it was called Jericho, which signifies, odouriferous or sweet smelling.

4. I have caused thee to see it - For tho' his sight was good, yet he could not have seen all Canaan, an hundred and sixty miles in length, and fifty or sixty in breadth, if his sight had not been miraculously assisted and enlarged. He saw it at a distance. Such a sight the Old Testament believers had of the kingdom of the Messiah. And such a sight believers have now of the glory that shall he revealed. Such a sight have we now, of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, which shall cover the earth. Those that come after us shall undoubtedly enter into that promised land: which is a comfort to us, when we find our own carcases falling in this wilderness.

5. So Moses the servant of the Lord died - He is called the servant of the Lord, not only as a good man, (all such are his servants) but as a man eminently useful, who had served God's counsels in bringing Israel out of Egypt, and leading them thro' the wilderness. And it was more his honour, to be the servant of the Lord, than to be king in Jeshurun. Yet he dies. Neither his piety nor his usefulness would exempt him from the stroke of death. God's servants must die, that they may rest from their labours, receive their recompense, and make room for others. But when they go hence, they go to serve him better, to serve him day and night in his temple. The Jews say, God sucked his soul out of his body with a kiss. No doubt he died in the embraces of his love.

6. He - The Lord, buried him either immediately, or by the ministry of angels, whereof Michael was the chief or prince. Of his sepulchre - Of the particular place where he was buried: which God hid from the Israelites, to prevent their superstition and idolatry, to which he knew their great proneness. And for this very reason the devil endeavoured to have it known and contended with Michael about it, Jude i, 9. God takes care even of the dead bodies of his servants. As their death is precious, so is their dust. Not one grain of it shall be lost, but the covenant with it shall be remembered.

7. His eye was not dim - By a miraculous work of God in mercy to his church and people.

8. Thirty day's - Which was the usual time of mourning for persons of high place and eminency. 'Tis a debt owing to the surviving honour of deceased worthies, to follow them with our tears, as those who loved and valued them, are sensible of the loss, and humbled for the sins which have provoked God to deprive us of them.

9. Wisdom - And other gifts and graces too, but wisdom is mentioned as being most necessary for the government to which he was now called. Upon him - And this was the thing which Moses at that time asked of God for him.

10. Whom the Lord - Whom God did so freely and familiarly converse with.

12. Moses was greater than any other of the prophets of the Old Testament. By Moses God gave the law, and molded and formed the Jewish church. By the other prophets he only sent particular reproofs, directions and predictions. But as far as the other prophets came short of him, our Lord Jesus went beyond him. Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ as a son: his miracles more illustrious, his communion with the father more intimate: for he is in his bosom from eternity. Moses lies buried: but Christ is sitting at the right-hand of God, and of the increase of his government there shall be no end.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

IN this book and those that follow to the end of Esther, we have the history of the Jewish nation. These books, to the end of the second book of Kings, the Jewish writers call, the first book of the prophets: as being wrote by prophets, men divinely inspired. Indeed it is probable they were collections of the authentic records of the nation, which some of the prophets were divinely directed and assisted to put together. It seems the substance of the several histories was written under divine direction, when the events had just happened, and long after put into the form wherein they stand now, perhaps all by the same hand. In the five books of Moses we had a full account of the rise and constitution of the Old Testament church, the miracles by which it was built up, and the laws and ordinances by which it was to be governed. And any nation that had statutes and judgments so righteous, one would think, should have been very holy. But alas! a great part of the history is a representation of their sins and miseries. For the law made nothing perfect; that was to be done by the bringing in of the better hope. The book of Joshua, if not written by him, was at least collected out of his journals or memoirs. It contains the history of Israel under the command of Joshua: how he presided over them,

1. In their entrance into Canaan, chap. i-v.

2. In their conquest of Canaan, chap. vi-xii.
3. In the distribution of the land among the tribes of Israel, chap. xiii-xxi.
4. In the establishment of religion among them, chap. 21-24. In all which he was a great example of wisdom, courage, fidelity and piety. And in this history we may see,
   1. Much of God and his providence; his power in the kingdom of nature; his justice in punishing the Canaanites; his faithfulness to his covenant with the patriarchs; his kindness to his people:
   2. Much of Christ and his grace: Joshua being in many respects an eminent type of him.

**I**

In this chapter,
1. God appoints Joshua to govern in the stead of Moses, and gives him instructions and encouragement, ver. 1-9.
2. He enters on his office immediately, giving orders to the officers, and to the two tribes and an half, ver. 10-15.
3. The people accept him as their governor, ver. 16-18

1. After the death of Moses - Either immediately after it, or when the days of mourning for Moses were expired. Joshua was appointed and declared Moses's successor in the government before this time; and here he receives confirmation from God therein. The servant of the Lord - This title is given to Moses here and ver. 2, as also Deut. xxxiv, 5, and is repeated not without cause, to reflect honour upon him, to give authority to his laws and writings, in publishing whereof he acted as God's servant, in his name: and that the Israelites might not think of Moses above what was meet, remembering that he was not the Lord himself, but only the Lord's servant; and therefore not to be too pertinaciously followed in all his institutions when the Lord himself should come and abolish part of the Mosaical dispensation; it being but reasonable that he who was only a servant in God's house, should give place to him who was the son, and heir, and Lord of it. The Lord spake - Either in a dream or vision, or by Urim, Num. xxvii, 21. Moses's minister - Who had waited upon Moses in his great employments, and thereby been privy to his manner of government, and so prepared for it.

2. Now therefore arise - Let not the withering of the most useful hands be the weakening of ours. When God has work to do, he will either find or make instruments fit to carry it on. Moses the servant is dead; but God the master is not: he lives forever. This Jordan - Which is now near thee, which is the only obstacle in thy way to Canaan. Which I give - That is, am now about to give thee actual possession of it, as I formerly gave a right to it by promise.

3. Every place - That is, within the following bounds.

4. This Lebanon - Emphatically, as being the most eminent mountain in Syria, and the northern border of the land: or this which is within thy view. Hittites - Of the Canaanites, who elsewhere are all called Amorites; (Gen. xv, 16) and here Hittites, the Hittites being the most considerable and formidable of all. The greater - The midland sea, great in itself, and especially compared with those lesser collections of waters, which the Jews called seas. "But the Israelites never possessed all this land." I answer:

1. That was from their own sloth and cowardice, and disobedience to God, and breach of those conditions upon which this promise was suspended:
2. Though their possessions extended not to Euphrates, yet their dominion did, and all those lands were tributary to them in David's and Solomon's time.

5. With Moses - To assist him against all his enemies, and in all the difficulties of governing this stiff-necked people, which Joshua might justly fear no less than the Canaanites. Forsake thee - I will not leave thee destitute either of inward support, or of outward assistance.

6. Be strong and of a good courage - Joshua, though a person of great courage and resolution, whereof he had given sufficient proof, yet needs these exhortations, partly because his work was great, and difficult, and long, and in a great measure new; partly because he had a very mean opinion of himself, especially if compared with Moses; and remembering how perverse and ungovernable that people were, even under Moses, he might very well suspect the burden of ruling them would be too heavy for his shoulders.

7. Commanded thee - Remember, that though thou art the commander of my people, yet thou art my subject, and obliged to observe all my commands. To the right hand or to the left - That is, in any kind, or upon any pretense; which plainly shews, that God's assistance promised to him and the Israelites, was conditional, and might justly be withdrawn upon their breach of the conditions. Whithersoever thou goest - That is, whatsoever thou doest. Mens actions are often compared to ways, or steps by which they come to the end they aim at.

8. Out of thy mouth - That is, thou shalt constantly read it, and upon occasion discourse of it, and the sentence which shall come out of thy mouth, shall in all things be given according to this rule. Day and night - That is, diligently study, and upon all occasions consider what is God's will and thy duty. The greatness of thy place and employments shall not hinder thee from this work, because this is the only rule of all thy private actions, and publick administrations.

9. I commanded thee - I whom thou art obliged to obey: I who can carry thee through every thing I put thee upon: I of whose faithfulness and almighty power thou hast had large experience?

10. The officers of the people - These who commanded under Joshua, in their respective tribes and families, attended him for orders, which they were to transmit to the people.

11. Prepare you victuals - For although Manna was given them to supply their want of ordinary provisions in the wilderness; yet they were allowed, when they had opportunity, to purchase other provisions, and did so, Deut. ii, 6, 28. And now having been some time in the land of the Amorites, and together with Manna used themselves to other food, which that country plentifully supplied them with; they are warned to furnish themselves therewith for their approaching march. Three days - These words, though placed here, seem not to have been delivered by Joshua 'till after the return of the spies; such transpositions being frequent in scripture. And hence it comes, that these three days mentioned here below, after the history of the spies, are again repeated chap. iii, 2.

13. Commanded you - His charge to you, and your promise to him. Rest - That is, a place of rest, as that word signifies.

14. Before their brethren - In the front of all of them; which was but reasonable; because they had the advantage of their brethren, having actually received their portion, which their brethren had only in hope, because they were freed from those impediments which the rest were exposed to, their wives, and children, and estates being safely lodged; and to prevent their withdrawing themselves from the present service, which they otherwise would have had temptation to do, because of the nearness of their habitations. Armed - For by this time they were well furnished with arms,

which they had either from the Egyptians, Amalekites, or Amorites, from whom they had taken them; or by purchase from those people by whose borders they passed. Men of valour - All such were obliged to go over if occasion required it, but Joshua took only some of them, because they were sufficient for his purpose, and because some were fit to be left, both to secure their own wives, children, and possessions, and to prevent their enemies on that side from giving them disturbance in their enterprise upon Canaan.

16. And they answered - Not the two tribes and an half only, but the officers of all the people, in their name, concurring with the divine appointment, by which Joshua was set over them. Thus must we swear allegiance to our Lord Jesus, as the captain of our salvation.

17. Unto thee - The same obedience which we owed, to Moses, we promise unto thee. With Moses - This is not a limitation of their obedience, as if they would not obey him any longer than he was prosperous, but an additional prayer for him. As we have hereby promised thee our obedience, so our prayer shall be, that God would bless and prosper thee, as he did Moses.

## II

Joshua sends spies to Jericho, ver. 1. Rahab receives and conceals them, ver. 2-7. Her agreement with them for the safety of herself and family, ver. 8-21. The return of the spies, and the account given by them, ver. 22-24.

1. Sent - Or, had sent. Two men - Not twelve, as Moses did, because those were to view the whole land, these but a small parcel of it. To spy - That is, to learn the state of the land and people. It is evident Joshua did not this out of distrust; it is probable, he had God's command and direction in it for the encouragement of himself and his army. Secretly - With reference not to his enemies, that being the practice of all spies, but to the Israelites; a good caution to prevent the inconveniency which possibly might have arisen, if their report had been discouraging. Jericho - That is, the land about Jericho, together with the city. Hebrew. The land and Jericho, that is, especially Jericho. Harlot's - So the Hebrew word is used, Judg. xi, 1, and so it is rendered by two apostles, Heb. xi, 31 James ii, 25, such she either now was, or rather, had been formerly. Lodged - Or, lay down; as the same word is rendered, ver. 8, composed themselves to rest; but they were hindered from that intention.

2. To night - This evening.

3. Probably Israel had but one friend in all Jericho: and God directed them to her! Thus what seems to be most accidental, is often over-ruled, to serve the great ends of providence. And those that acknowledge God in their ways, he will guide them with his eye.

4. And the woman - Or, But the woman had taken - and had hid them, before the messengers came from the king; as soon as she understood from her neighbours, that there was a suspicion of the matter, and guessed that search would be made. And this is justly mentioned as a great and generous act of faith, Heb. xi, 31, for she apparently ventured her life upon a steadfast persuasion of the truth of God's word and promise given to the Israelites. Whence they were - Her answer contained in these and the following words, was false, and therefore unquestionably sinful; tho' her

intention was good therein. But it is very probable, she being an Heathen, might think, that an officious lie is not unlawful.

6. Roof - Which was flat after their manner. Upon the roof - That they might be dried by the heat of the sun.

7. Fords - Or passages, that is, the places where people used to pass over Jordan, whether by boats or bridges. The gate - Of the city, to prevent the escape of the spies, if peradventure Rahab was mistaken, and they yet lurked therein.

8. Laid down - To sleep as they intended.

9. Your terror - That is, the dread of you.

11. Melted - That is, were dissolved, lost all courage.

12. By the Lord - By your God who is the only true God: so she owns his worship, one eminent act whereof is swearing by his name. My father's house - My near kindred, which she particularly names, ver. 13, husband and children it seems she had none. And for herself, it was needless to speak, it being a plain and undeniable duty to save their preserver. True token - Either an assurance that you will preserve me and mine from the common ruin: or a token which I may produce as a witness of this agreement, and a means of my security. This is all that she asks. But God did for her more than she could ask or think. She was afterwards advanced to be a princess in Israel, the wife of Salmon and one of the ancestors of Christ.

13. All that they have - That is, their children, as appears from chap. vi, 23.

14. For yours - We will venture our lives for the security of yours. Our business - That is, this agreement of ours, and the condition of it, lest others under this pretense, should secure themselves. By which they shew both their piety and prudence in managing their oath with so much circumspection, that neither their own consciences might be ensnared, nor the publick justice obstructed.

15. Town-wall - Which gave her the opportunity of dismissing them when the gates were shut. Upon the wall - Her particular dwelling was there: which may possibly be added, because the other part of her house was reserved for the entertainment of strangers.

16. The mountain - That is, to some of the mountains wherewith Jericho was encompassed, in which also there were many caves where they might lurk. Three days - Not three whole days, but one whole day, and part of two days.

17. Said - Or, had said; namely, before she let them down; it being very improbable, either that she would dismiss them before the condition was agreed on; or that she would discourse with them, or they with her, about such secret and weighty things after they were let down, when others might overhear them. Blameless - That is, free from guilt or reproach if it be violated, namely, if the following condition be not observed.

18. Into the land - That is, over Jordan, and near the city. This line of scarlet - Probably the same with which she was about to let them down. Window - That it may be easily discerned by our soldiers.

19. Upon his head - The blame of his death shall rest wholly upon himself, as being occasioned by his own neglect of the means of safety. Our head - We are willing to bear the sin, and shame, and punishment of it. Be upon him - So as to kill him.

21. In the window - Forthwith, partly that the spies might see it hung out before their departure, and so the better know it at some distance; partly lest some accident might occasion a neglect about it.

22. Three days - Supporting themselves there with the provisions, which Rahab had furnished them with. The ways - That is, in the road to Jordan, and the places near it, but not in the mountains.

23. Passed over - Jordan unto Joshua.

## III

The people decamp from Shittim, and are directed to follow the ark, and sanctify themselves, ver. 1-5. The priests are ordered to go first, ver. 6. Joshua being encouraged and directed as God, tells the people what God is about to do, ver. 7 - 13. Jordan is divided, and Israel marches through, ver. 14-17

1. In the morning - Not after the return of the spies, but after the three days, chap. i, 11, as it follows, ver. iii, 2. Lodge there - That night, that they might go over in the day time, that the miracle might be more evident and unquestionable, and strike the greater terror into their enemies.

2. After three days - Either at the end of them, or upon the last of them. Through the host - The second time to give them more particular directions, as they had given them a general notice, chap. i, 10, 11.

3. Commanded the people - In Joshua's name, and by his authority. Priests and Levites - Who were not only Levites, but priests also. For altho' the Levites were to carry the ark, Num. iv, 1-15, yet the priests might perform that office, and did so upon some solemn occasions. Go after it - Towards Jordan, to go over it in such a manner as I am about to describe. 'Till this time the ark went in the middle of the cloudy pillar, now it goes in the front. Probably the pillar of fire and cloud was still hovering over the ark.

4. Two thousand cubits - A thousand yards, at which distance from it the Israelites seem to have been encamped in the wilderness. And because they generally went from their tents to the ark to worship God, especially on the sabbath-days; hence it hath been conceived, that a sabbath-day's journey reached only to two thousand cubits. But that may be doubted; for those who encamped nearest the ark, were at that distance from it, and came so far; but the rest were farther from it, and their sabbath-day's journey was considerably longer. Near unto it - Partly from the respect they should bear to the ark; but chiefly, that the ark marching so far before you into the river, and standing still there 'till you pass over, may give you the greater assurance of your safe passage. Ye have not passed this way heretofore - While we are here, we must expect unusual events, to pathways that we have not passed before: and much more when we go hence, when we pass thro' the valley of the shadow of death. But if we have the assurance of God's presence, what have we to fear?

5. And Joshua said - Or rather, had said, the day before their passage; for it follows, tomorrow. Sanctify yourselves - Both in soul and body, that you may be meet to receive such a favour, and with more reverence observe this great work, and fix it in your hearts.

6. Take up - Namely, upon your shoulders; for so they were to carry it, Num. vii, 9. Before the people - Not in the middle of them, as you used to do.

7. Magnify thee - That is, to gain thee authority among them, as the person whom I have set in Moses's stead, and by whom I will conduct them to the possession of the promised land.

8. The brink - Hebrew. to the extremity, so far as the river then spread itself, which was now more than ordinary, ver. 15. In Jordan - Within the waters of Jordan, in the first entrance into the river; Where they stood for a season, 'till the river was divided, and then they went into the midst of it, and there abode 'till all the people were passed over. 9. Come hither - To the ark or tabernacle, the place of public assemblies. The Lord your God - Who is now about to give a proof that he is both the Lord, the omnipotent governor of heaven and earth, and all creatures; and your God, in covenant with you, having a tender care and affection for you.

10. Ye shall know - By experience and sensible evidence. The living God - Not a dull, dead, senseless God, such as the gods of the nations are; but a God of life, and power, and activity to watch over you, and work for you. Among you - Is present with you to strengthen and help you.

12. Twelve men - For the work described, chap. iv, 2, 3.

13. The ark of the Lord - That so it may appear this is the Lord's doing, and that in pursuance of his covenant made with Israel. Of all the earth - The Lord of all this globe of earth and water, who therefore can dispose of this river and the adjoining land as he pleaseth. Cut off - The waters which now are united now shall be divided, and part shall flow down the channel towards the dead sea, and the other part that is nearer the spring of the river, and flows down from it, shall stand still. An heap - Being as it were congealed, as the Red-Sea was, Exod. xv, 8, and so kept from overflowing the country.

15. All the time of harvest - This is meant not of wheat-harvest, but of the barley-harvest, as is manifest from their keeping the passover at their first entrance, chap. v, 10, which was kept on the fourteenth day of the first month, when they were to bring a sheaf of their first-fruits, which were of barley. So that this harvest in those hot countries fell very early in the spring, when rivers used to swell most; partly because of the rains which have fallen all the winter, partly because of the snows which melt and come into the rivers. And this time God chose that the miracle might be more glorious, more amazing and terrible to the Canaanites; and that the Israelites might be entertained at their first entrance with plentiful and comfortable provisions.

16. Adam - The city Adam being more obscure, is described by its nearness to a more known place, then eminent, but now unknown. The meaning is, that the waters were stopped in their course at that place, and so kept at a distance from the Israelites whilst they passed over. Against Jericho - Here God carried them over, because this part was,

1. The strongest, as having in its neighbourhood an eminent city, a potent king, and a stout and war-like people.
2. The most pleasant and fruitful, and therefore more convenient both for the refreshment of the Israelites after their long and tedious marches, and for their encouragement.

17. Stood firm - That is, in one and the same place and posture; their feet neither moved by any waters moving in upon them, nor sinking into any mire, which one might think was at the bottom of the river. And this may be opposed to their standing on the bank of the water when they came to it, commanded, ver. 8, which was but for a while, 'till the waters were divided and gone away; and then they were to go farther, even into the midst of Jordan, where they are to stand constantly and fixedly, as this Hebrew word signifies, until all were passed over. The midst of Jordan - In the middle and deepest part of the river.

## IV

Twelve stones taken up out of the midst of Jordan, and twelve set up there for a memorial, ver. 1-9. The march of the people through Jordan, ver. 10-13. God magnifies Joshua, who commands the priests to come out of Jordan, ver. 14-17. The waters close again, ver. 18, 19. Joshua erects twelve stones for a memorial, ver. 20-24.

1. Spake - This was commanded before, chap. iii, 12, and is here repeated with enlargement, as being now to be put in execution.

2. Out of every tribe a man - For the greater evidence, and the more effectual spreading the report of this marvelous work among all the tribes.

3. Lodge this night - That is, in Gilgal, as is expressed below, ver. 19, 20.

4. Prepared - That is, appointed for that work, and commanded to be ready for it.

5. Before the ark - That is, go back again to the place where the ark stands.

6. A sign - A monument or memorial of this day's work.

9. Twelve stones - These stones are not the same with those which a man could carry upon his shoulder, ver. 5. They might be very much larger; and being set up in two rows one above another, might be seen, at least when the water was low, especially where it was shallow, as it was ordinarily, though not at this time, when Jordan overflowed all its banks. Add to this, that the waters of Jordan are very clear; therefore these stones might be seen in it, either by those who stood upon the shore, because the river was not broad; or by those that passed in boats. Unto this day - This might be written, either

1. by Joshua who probably wrote this book near 20 years after this was done: or,
2. by some other holy man divinely inspired, who inserted this and some such passages both in this book and in the writings of Moses.

10. Commanded Joshua - Not particularly, but in general; because he commanded Joshua to observe and do all that God had commanded him by Moses, and all that he should command him any other way. Hasted - That is, passed over with haste, an argument of their fear, or weakness of their faith; as on the contrary, the priests are commended that they stood firm, and settled in their minds, as well as in the posture of their bodies.

13. Before the Lord - Either,

1. before the ark, or,
2. in the presence of God who observed whether they would keep their covenant made with their brethren, or not.

16. Out of Jordan - For being now in the middle, and deepest place of the river, they are most properly said to go up to the land.

17. The priests - Who stayed contentedly in the river, 'till God by Joshua called them out.

18. Their place - Returned into their proper channel, according to their natural and usual course.

19. The first month - Namely, of Nisan, which wanted but five days of forty years from the time of their coming out of Egypt, which was on the fifteenth day of this month. So punctual is God in the performing of his word, whether promised or threatened. And this day was very

seasonable for the taking up of the lambs which were to be used four days after, according to the law, Exod. xii, 3, 6. Gilgal - A place afterwards so called, chap. v, 9.

20. In Gilgal - Probably in order, like so many little pillars, to keep up the remembrance of this miraculous benefit.

23. Before us - That is, myself and Caleb, and all of us here present; for this benefit, though done to their fathers, is justly said to be done to themselves, because they were then in their parent's loins. It greatly magnifies later mercies, to compare them with former mercies; for hereby it appears, that God is the same yesterday, today and forever.

## V

The Canaanites terrified, ver. 1. Circumcision renewed, ver. 2- 9. The passover kept, ver. 10. The Israelites eat corn, and the manna ceases, ver. 11-12. Christ appears to Joshua, ver. 13-15.

1. Amorites - These and the Canaanites are mentioned for all the rest, as being the chief of them for number, and power, and courage. Westward - This is added to distinguish them from the other Amorites, eastward from Jordan, whom Moses had subdued. Canaanites - So the proper place of this nation was on both sides of Jordan. The sea - The midland sea, all along the coast of it, which was the chief seat of that people, though divers colonies of them were come into, and settled in other places. Jordan - Which was their bulwark on the east-side, where the Israelites were; for it is very probable they had taken away all bridges near those parts; and the Israelites having been so long in that neighbouring country, and yet not making any attempt upon them, they were grown secure; especially now, when Jordan swelled beyond its ordinary bounds; and therefore they did not endeavour to hinder their passage. Melted - They lost all their courage, and durst attempt nothing upon the Israelites; not without God's special providence, that the Israelites might quietly participate of the two great sacraments of their church, circumcision and the passover, and thereby be prepared for their high and hard work, and for the possession of the holy and promised land; which would have been defiled by an uncircumcised people.

2. At that time - As soon as ever they were come to Gilgal, which was on the tenth day; and so this might be executed the eleventh day, and that in the morning: on the thirteenth day they were sore of their wounds, and on the fourteenth day they recovered, and at the even of that day kept the passover. Make - Or, prepare, or make ready, as this word sometimes used. As it was not necessary for those who had such knives already to make others for that use; so it is not probable that such were commanded to do so, but only to make them sharp and fit for that work. The second time - He calleth this a second circumcision, not as if these same persons had been circumcised before, but with respect to the body of the people, where of one part had been circumcised before, and the other at this time, which is called a second time, in relation to some former time wherein they were circumcised, either, in Egypt, when many of the people, who possibly for fear or favour of the Egyptians, had neglected this duty, were by the command of Moses circumcised. Or at Sinai, when they received the passover, Num. ix, 5, which no uncircumcised person might do.

3. And circumcised - That is, he caused this to be done; and, because it was to be done speedily, the passover approaching, it was necessary to use many hands in it. Children of Israel - That is, such of them as were uncircumcised. And, though it be not mentioned, it is more than probable, that the Israelites beyond Jordan were circumcised at the same time.

4. Out of Egypt - This is to be restrained to such as were then above twenty years old, and such as were guilty of that rebellion, Num. xiv, 1-25, as it is expressed below, ver. 6.

5. Them - Either their parents, or the rulers of Israel, by Divine permission and indulgence; because they were now on a journey, in which case the passover also might be neglected, Num. ix, 10, 13. Rather, it was a continued token of God's displeasure against them, for their unbelief and murmuring: a token that they should never have the benefit of that promise, whereof circumcision was the seal.

6. The people - The Hebrew word commonly signifies the Gentiles; so he calls them, to note that they were unworthy the name of Israelites. Shew them - That is, not give them so much as a sight of it, which he granted to Moses, much less the possession.

7. Circumcised - Which God would have done,

1. As a testimony of God's reconciliation to the people, and that he would not farther impute their parents rebellion to them.
2. Because the great impediment of circumcision was now removed, their continued travels, and frequent and uncertain removal.
3. To prepare them for the approaching passover.
4. To distinguish them from the Canaanites, into whose land they were now come.
5. To ratify the covenant between God and them, whereof circumcision was a sign and seal, to assure them that God would now make good his covenant, in giving them this land; and to oblige them to perform all the duties to which that covenant bound them, as soon as they came into Canaan, Exod. xii, 25 Lev. xxiii, 10 Num. xv, 2.

8. Whole - Free from that pain and soreness which circumcision caused, it was indeed an act of great faith, to expose themselves to so much pain and danger too, in this place where they were hemmed in by Jordan and their enemies.

9. The reproach of Egypt - That is, uncircumcision, was both in truth, and in the opinion of the Jews, a matter of great reproach, and although this was a reproach common to most nations of the world, yet it is particularly called the reproach of Egypt, either,

1. because the other neighbouring nations, being the children of Abraham by the concubines, are supposed to have been circumcised, which the Egyptians at this time were not, as may be gathered from Exod. ii, 6, where they knew the child to be an Hebrew by this mark. Or
2. because they came out of Egypt, and were esteemed to be a sort of Egyptians, Num. xxii, 5, which they justly thought a great reproach; but by their circumcision they were now distinguished from them, and manifested to be another people. Or
3. because many of them lay under this reproach in Egypt, having wickedly neglected this duty there for worldly reasons; and others of them continued in the same shameful condition for many years in the wilderness. Gilgal - That is, rolling.

10. The passover - Which was their third passover: the first was in Egypt, Exod. xii, 11-24, the second at mount Sinai, Num. ix, 1-5, the third here; for in their wilderness travels, these and all other sacrifices were neglected, Amos v, 25. While they were in the wilderness, they were denied the comfort of this ordinance, as a farther token of God's displeasure. But now God comforted them again, after the time that he had afflicted them.

11. Old corn - The corn of the last year, which the inhabitants of those parts had left in their barns, being fled into their strong cities, or other remoter parts. The morrow - That is, on the sixteenth day; for the passover was killed between the two evenings of the fourteenth day, and was eaten in that evening or night, which, according to the Jewish computation, whereby they begin their days at the evening, was a part of the fifteenth day, all which was the feast of the passover; and so the morrow of the sixteenth day, was the morrow after the passover, when they were obliged to offer unto God the first sheaf, and then were allowed to eat of the rest. Parched corn - Of that year's corn. which was most proper for that use. Self-same day - Having an eager desire to enjoy the fruits of the land. And this corn came very seasonably; for after the passover, they were to keep the feast of unleavened bread, which they could not do, when they had nothing but manna to live upon.

12. The manna ceased - Which God now withheld, to shew that Manna was not an ordinary production of nature, but an extraordinary and special gift of God to supply their necessity. And because God would not be prodigal of his favours, by working miracles where ordinary means were sufficient. The morrow - That is, on the seventeenth day.

13. By Jericho - Hebrew. In Jericho, that is, in the territory adjoining to it; whither he went to view those parts, and discern the fittest places for his attempt upon Jericho. A man - One in the appearance of a man. Drawn - In readiness to fight, not, as Joshua thought, against him, but for him and his people.

14. As captain - I am the chief captain of this people, and will conduct and assist thee and them in this great undertaking. Now this person is not a created angel, but the son of God, who went along with the Israelites in this expedition, as their chief and captain. And this appears,

1. By his acceptance of adoration here, which a created angel durst not admit of, Rev. xxii, 8, 9.
2. Because the place was made holy by his presence, ver. 15, which was God's prerogative, Exod. iii, 5.
3. Because he is called the Lord, Hebrew. Jehovah, chap. vi, 2. My Lord - I acknowledge thee for my Lord and captain, and therefore wait for thy commands, which I am ready to obey.

15. From thy foot - In token of reverence and subjection. Holy - Consecrated by my presence. The very same orders which God gave to Moses at the bush, when he was sending him to bring Israel out of Egypt, he here gives to Joshua, for the confirming his faith, that as he had been with Moses, so he would be with him.

## VI

Directions given to Joshua concerning Jericho, ver. 1-5. The people compass the city seven days, ver. 6-14. The taking it, with the charge to destroy it utterly, ver. 15-21. The preservation of Rahab and her relations, ver. 22-25. A curse pronounced on any that should rebuild it, ver. 26, 27.

3. Round about the city once - At a convenient distance, out of the reach of their arrows. Six days - Every day once. This and the following course might seem ridiculous and absurd, and is therefore prescribed by God, that they might learn to take new measures of things, and to expect success not from their own valour, or skill, but merely from God's appointment and blessing; and in general, not to judge of any of God's institutions by mere carnal reason, to which divers of their ceremonies would seem no less foolish than this action.

5. The wall - Not all of it; which was unnecessary, and might have given the people better opportunity of escaping, but only a considerable part of it, where the Israelites might fitly enter: for Rahab's house was not overthrown, ver. 22. Flat - Hebrew. under it, it was not battered down with engines which would have made part of it fall out of its place; but it fell of its own accord, and therefore in the place it did formerly stand in. God chose this way, to try the faith and obedience of the people: whether they would observe a precept, which to human policy seemed foolish, and believe a promise, which seemed impossible to be performed: whether they could patiently bear the reproaches of their enemies, and patiently wait for the salvation of God. Thus by faith, not by force, the walls of Jericho fell down.

6. Of rams horns - Of the basest matter, and the dullest sound, that the excellency of the power might be of God.

7. Him that is armed - God would have them armed both for the defense of themselves and the ark, in case the enemies should make a sally upon them, and for the execution of the Lord's vengeance upon that city.

9. The rereward - Which being opposed to the armed men, may seem to note the unarmed people, who were desirous to be spectators of this wonderful work.

10. Ye shall not shout - Because shouting before the time appointed, would be ineffectual, and so might give them some discouragement, and their enemies matter of insulting.

16. Shout - To testify your faith in God's promise, and thankfulness for this glorious mercy; to encourage yourselves and brethren, and to strike a terror into your enemies. Given you the city - It is given to them, to be devoted to God, as the first, and perhaps the worst of all the cities of Canaan.

17. Accursed - That is, devoted to utter destruction. This he speaks by direction from God, as is evident from 1 Kings xvi, 34. To the Lord - Partly because the first-fruits were appropriated to God; partly lest the soldiers being glutted with the spoil of the rich city, should grow sluggish in their work; and partly to strike the greater terror into the rest of their enemies.

18. A curse - By provoking God to punish them for your sin, in which they may be one way or other involved; or the whole camp having sins of their own, God might take what occasion he saw fit to inflict this punishment.

19. Vessels of brass and iron - Except that of which images were made, which were to be utterly destroyed. Unto the Lord - Being first made to pass through the fire, Num. xxxi, 22, 23. Treasury of the Lord - To be employed wholly for the uses of the tabernacle, not to be applied to the use of any private person or priest.

21. Young and old - Being commanded to do so by the sovereign Lord of every man's life; and being informed by God before that the Canaanites were abominably wicked, and deserved the severest punishments. As for the infants, they were guilty of original sin, and otherwise at the disposal of their creator; but if they had been wholly innocent, it was a great favour to them to take them away in infancy, rather than reserve them to those dreadful calamities which those who survived them were liable to.

22. Harlot's house - Which together with the wall upon which it leaned, was left standing, by a special favour of God to her.

23. Without the camp of Israel - 'Till they were cleansed from the impurities of their Gentile state, and instructed in the Jewish religion, and solemnly admitted into that church, for which Rahab's good counsel and example had doubtless prepared them.

25. The harlot olive - For that general command of rooting out the Canaanites seems to have had some exception, in case any of them had sincerely and seasonably cast off their wickedness, and submitted to the Israelites.

26. Adjured them - Or, made them to fear; caused the people, or some in the name of all, to swear for the present and succeeding generations, and to confirm their oath by a curse. Before the Lord - That is, from God's presence, and by his sentence, as they are said to cast lots before the Lord, chap. xviii, 8, 10, that is, expecting the design from God. He intimates, that he doth not utter this upon a particular dislike of that place, but by divine inspiration. God would have the ruins of this city remain as a standing monument of God's justice against this wicked and idolatrous people, and of his almighty power in destroying so great and strong a city by such contemptible means. Buildeth - That is, that shall attempt to build it. So this curse is restrained to the builder, but no way belongs to those who should inhabit it after it was built, as is evident from 2 Kings iv, 18 Luke xix, 1, 5. In his youngest son - That is, he shall lose all his children in the work, the first at the beginning, others in the progress of it by degrees, and the youngest in the close of it, when the gates use to be set up. This was fulfilled, 1 Kings xvi, 34.

27. The word of the Lord was with him - (So the Chaldee:) Even Christ himself, the same that was with Moses. Nothing makes a man appear more truly great, than to have the evidences of God's presence with him.

## VII

We have here the sin of Achan in taking the accursed thing, ver. 1. The defeat of Israel before Ai, ver. 2-5. Joshua's humiliation and prayer, ver. 6-9. God's directions to him, ver. 10- 15. The discovery, conviction, and execution of the criminal, ver. 16-26.

1. The children of Israel - That is, one of them, by a very usual figure, as Matt. xxvi, 8, where that is ascribed to the disciples, which belonged to Judas only, John xii, 4. Accursed thing - That is, in taking some of the forbidden and accursed goods. Zabdi - Called also Zimri, 1 Chron. ii, 6. Zerah - Or, Zarah, who was Judah's immediate son, Gen. xxxviii, 30, who went with Judah into Egypt: and so for the filling up the 256 years that are supposed to come between that and this time,

we must allow Achan to be, now an old man, and his three ancestors to have begotten each his son at about sixty years of age; which at that time was not incredible nor unusual. Against the children of Israel - Why did God punish the whole society for this one man's sin? All of them were punished for their own sins, whereof each had a sufficient proportion; but God took this occasion to inflict the punishment upon the society, partly because divers of them might be guilty of this sin, either by coveting what he actually did, or by concealing his fault, which it is probable could not be unknown to others; or by not sorrowing for it, and endeavouring to purge themselves from it: partly to make sin the more hateful; as being the cause of such dreadful judgments: and partly to oblige all the members of every society to be more circumspect in ordering their own actions, and more diligent to prevent the miscarriages of their brethren, which is a great benefit to them, and to the whole society.

2. To Ai - They were not to go into the city of Ai, but into the country belonging to it, to understand the state of the place; and the people.

3. Go up - Which was done by the wise contrivance of Divine providence, that their sin might be punished, and they awaked and reformed with as little mischief and reproach, as might be: for if the defeat of these caused so great a consternation in Joshua, it is easy to guess what dread it would have caused in the people if a host had been defeated.

4. They fled - Not having courage to strike a stroke, which was a plain evidence that God had forsaken then; and an useful instruction, to shew them what they were when God left them: and that it was God, not their own valour, that gave the Canaanites into their hands.

5. About thirty and six men - A dear victory to them, whereby Israel was awakened and reformed, and they hardened to their own ruin. The going down - By which it seems it was a down-hill way to Jericho, which was nearer Jordan. As water - Soft and weak, and full of fluctuation and trembling.

6. Rent his clothes - In testimony of great sorrow, for the loss felt, the consequent mischief feared, and the sin which he suspected. His face - In deep humiliation and fervent supplication. Until the even-tide - Continuing the whole day in fasting and prayer. Put dust upon their heads - As was usual in case of grief and astonishment.

7. Over Jordan - This and the following clause, tho' well intended, yet favour of human infirmity, and fall short of that reverence and modesty, and submission, which he owed to God; and are mentioned as instances that the holy men of God were subject to like passions and infirmities with other men.

8. What shall I say - In answer to the reproaches of our insulting enemies. When Israel - God's people, which he hath singled out of all nations for his own.

9. Thy great name - Which will upon this occasion be blasphemed and charged with inconstancy, and with inability to resist them, or to do thy people that good which thou didst intend them. The name of God is a great name, above every name. And whatever happens, we ought to pray, that this may not be polluted. This should be our concern more than any thing else: on this we should fix our eye: and we cannot urge a better plea than this, Lord, what wilt thou do for thy great name? Let God in all be glorified, and then welcome his whole will!

10. Upon thy face - This business is not to be done by inactive supplication, but by vigourous endeavours for reformation.

11. Israel - Some or one of them. Transgressed my covenant - That is, broken the conditions of my covenant which they have promised to perform, whereof this was one, not to meddle with the accursed thing. Stolen - That is, taken my portion which I had reserved, chap. vi, 19. Dissembled

- Covered the fact with deep dissimulation. Possibly Achan might be suspected, and being accused, had denied it. Among their own stuff - Converted it to their own use, and added obstinacy to the crime.

12. Were accursed - They have put themselves out of my protection, and therefore are liable to the same destruction which belongs to this accursed people.

13. Sanctify yourselves - Purify yourselves from that defilement which you have all in some sort contracted by this accursed fact, and prepare yourselves to appear before the Lord, expecting the sentence of God for the discovery and punishment of the sin, and that the guilty person might hereby be awakened, and brought to a free confession of his fault. And it is a marvelous thing that Achan did not on this occasion acknowledge his crime; but this is to be imputed to the heart-hardening power of sin, which makes men, grow worse and worse; to his pride, being loath to take to himself the shame of such a mischievous and infamous action; and to his vain conceit, whereby he might think others were guilty as well as he, and some of them might be taken, and he escape.

14. The Lord taketh - Which shall be declared guilty by the lot, which is disposed by the Lord, Prov. xvi, 33, and which was to be cast in the Lord's presence before the ark. Of such use of lots, see 1 Sam. xiv, 41, 42 Jonah i, 7 Acts i, 26.

15. Shall be burnt with fire - As persons and things accursed were to be. All that he hath - His children and goods, as is noted, ver. 24, according to the law, Deut. xiii, 16. Wrought folly - So sin is often called in scripture, in opposition to the idle opinion of sinners, who commonly esteem it to be their wisdom. In Israel - That is, among the church and people of God who had such excellent laws to direct them, and such an all-sufficient and gracious God to provide for them, without any such unworthy practices. It was sacrilege, it was invading God's rights, and converting to a private use that which was devoted to his glory, which was to be thus severely punished, for a warning to all people in all ages, to take heed how they rob God.

17. The family - Either,

1. the tribe or people, as the word family sometimes signifies, or,
2. the families, as ver. 14, the singular number for the plural, the chief of each of their five families, Num. xxvi, 20, 21. Man by man - Not every individual person, as is evident from ver. 18, but every head of the several houses, or lesser families of that greater family of the Zarhites, of which see 1 Chron. ii, 6.

19. My son - So he calls him, to shew, that this severe inquisition and sentence did not proceed from any hatred to his person, which he loved as a father doth his son, and as a prince ought to do each of his subjects. The Lord God of Israel - As thou hast highly dishonoured him, now take the blame to thyself, and ascribe unto God the glory of his omniscience in knowing thy sin, of his justice in punishing it in thee, and others for thy sake; of his omnipotency, which was obstructed by thee; and of his kindness and faithfulness to his people, which was eclipsed by thy wickedness; all which will now be evident by thy sin confessed and punished.

20. Indeed I have sinned - He seems to make a sincere and ingenuous confession, and loads his sin with all just aggravations. Against the Lord - Against his express command, and glorious attributes. God of Israel - The true God, who hath chosen me and all Israel to be the people of his peculiar love and care.

21. When I saw - He accurately describes the progress of his sin, which began at his eye, which he permitted to gaze upon them, which inflamed his desire, and made him covet them; and that

desire made him take them; and having taken, resolve to keep them; and to that end hide them in his tent. Babylonish garment - Which were composed with great art with divers colours, and of great price, as appears both from scripture, and Heathen authors. Two hundred shekels - To wit, in weight, not in coin; for as yet they received and payed money by weight. The silver under it - That is, under the Babylonish garment; covered with it, or wrapt up in it.

22. Sent messengers - That the truth of his confession might be unquestionable, which some, peradventure might think was forced from him. And they ran - Partly longing to free themselves and all the people from the curse under which they lay; and partly that none of Achan's relations might get thither before them, and take away the things. It was hid - That is, the parcel of things mentioned, ver. 21 and 24.

23. Before the Lord - Where Joshua and the elders continued yet in their assembly waiting for the issue.

24. His sons, and his daughters - Their death was a debt they owed to their own sins, which debt God may require when he pleaseth; and he could not take it in more honourable circumstances than these, that the death of a very few in the beginning of a new empire, and of their settlement in the land, might be useful to prevent the deaths of many thousands who took warning by this dreadful example, whom, if the fear of God did not, yet the love of their own, and of their dear children's lives would restrain from such pernicious practices. And it is very probable they were conscious of the fact, as the Jewish doctors affirm. If it be pretended that some of them were infants; the text doth not say so, but only calls them sons and daughters. And considering that Achan was an old man, as is most probable, because he was the fifth person from Judah, it seems most likely, that the children were grown up, and so capable of knowing, and concealing, or discovering this fact. His oxen, and his asses, and his sheep - Which, though not capable of sin, nor of punishment, properly so called, yet as they were made for man's use, so they are rightly destroyed for man's good; and being daily killed for our bodily food, it cannot seem strange to kill them for the instruction of our minds, that hereby we might learn the contagious nature of sin, which involves innocent creatures in its plagues; and how much sorer punishments are reserved for man, who having a law given to him, and that excellent gift of reason and will to restrain him from the transgressions of it, his guilt must needs be unspeakably greater, and therefore his sufferings more severe and terrible. Farther, by this enumeration it appears, that he had no colour of necessity to induce him to this fact.

25. With stones - And burned him with fire; which is easily understood both out of the following words, and from God's command to do so. They were stoned (which was the punishment of such offenders, Lev. xxiv, 14 Num. xv, 35,) and not burned to death; but God would have their dead carcases burned to shew his utmost detestation of such persons as break forth into sins of such a public scandal and mischief.

26. A great heap of stones - As a monument of the sin and judgment here mentioned, that others might be warned by the example; and as a brand of infamy, as chap. viii, 29; 2 Sam. xviii, 17. The valley of Achor - Or, the valley of trouble, from the double trouble expressed, ver. 25.

## VIII

Here is God's encouragement to Joshua, ver. 1, 2. Joshua's orders to the men of war, ver. 3-8. The stratagem succeeds, ver. 9- 22. Joshua takes and destroys the city, ver. 23-29. The solemn writing and reading of the law before all Israel, ver. 30-35.

1. Take all the people - That all of them might be partakers of this first spoil, and thereby encouraged to proceed in their work. The weak multitude indeed were not to go, because they might have hindered them in the following stratagem; and it was but fit that the military men who run the greatest hazards, should have the precedency in the spoils.

2. To Ai - That is, the city and people of Ai. Unto Jericho and her king - That is, overcome and destroy them. This was enjoined to chastise their last insolence, and the triumphs and blasphemies which doubtless their success had produced: and to revive the dread and terror which had been impressed upon the Canaanites by Jericho's ruin, and had been much abated by the late success of Ai.

3. To go up against Ai - That is, to consider about this expedition; not as if all the people of war did actually go up, which was both unnecessary and burdensome: but it seems to be resolved by Joshua and all the council of war, that the thirty thousand here following should be selected for the enterprize. Either, 1, the thirty thousand now mentioned; or, 2. part of them; namely, such as were to lie in wait; and these were only five thousand men, as is expressed, ver. 12.

4. Them - The same party last spoken of, even the five thousand mentioned ver. 12, there are only two parties engaged in the taking of Ai, and but one ambush, as plainly appears by comparing ver. 9, with ver. 12, which speaks only of five thousand, who are justly supposed to be a part of those thirty thousand named, ver. 3.

5. That are - Or, that shall be: for at present he sent them away, ver. 9, but the next morning followed, and joined himself with them, ver. 10, 11. That we - I and the twenty five thousand with me.

9. Sent them - The same party. Among the people - Hebrew. that people, the people of war as they are called, ver. 11, that is, the main body of the host consisting of thirty thousand.

10. The people - Hebrew. that people, not all the people of Israel; which was needless, and required more time than could now be spared; but the rest of that host of thirty thousand, whereof five thousand were sent away; the remainder are numbered, to see whether some of them had not withdrawn themselves, taking the advantage of the night, and of the design of laying an ambush; and that it might be evident, this work was done without any loss of men, whereby they might be encouraged to trust in God, and to proceed resolutely in their work. The elders of Israel - The chief magistrates and rulers of Israel under Joshua; and these, I suppose, went with Joshua, and with the army, to take care that the cattle and the spoil of the city, which was given by God to all Israel for a prey, ver. 2, 27, might be justly and equally divided between those that went to battle, and the rest of the people.

11. That were with him - Namely, the thirty thousand mentioned, ver. 3, or the most of them.

12. And he took - Or rather, but he had taken, namely, out of the said number of thirty thousand, for this is added by way of recapitulation and farther explication of what is said in general, ver. 9.

13. Joshua went - Namely, accompanied with a small part of the host now mentioned, that is, very early in the morning, when it was yet dark, as is said in a like case, John xx, 1, whence it is

here called night, though it was early in the morning, as is said, ver. 10, for it seems most probable, that all was done in one night's space, and in this manner; Joshua sends away the ambush by night, ver. 3, and lodgeth that night with twenty-five thousand men, ver. 9, not far from the city. But not able or willing to sleep all night, he rises very early, ver. 10, and numbers his men, which by the help of the several officers was quietly done, and so immediately leads them towards Ai; and while it was yet duskish or night, he goes into the midst of the valley, ver. 13, and when the day dawns he is discovered by the king and people of Ai, who thereupon rose up early to fight with them, ver. 14. The valley - Which was near the city, thereby to allure them forth.

14. His people - Namely, all his men of war, for the rest were left in Ai, ver. 16. At a time appointed - At a certain hour agreed upon between the king and people of Ai, and of Bethel too, who were their confederates in this enterprize, as it may seem from ver. 17. Possibly they might appoint the same hour of the day on which they had fought against Israel with good success, looking upon it as a lucky hour. Before the plain - That is, towards or in sight of that plain or valley in which the Israelites were, that so they might put themselves in battle-array. Against him - The former success having made him secure, as is usual in such cases; God also blinding his mind, and infatuating him, as he useth to do with those whom he intends to destroy.

15. Made as if they were beaten - That is, fled from them, as it were for fear of a second blow. The wilderness - Which lay between Ai and Jericho, whither they now seemed to flee.

16. All the people - Namely, all that were able to bear arms, for old men and children were unfit for the pursuit or fight; and that they were yet left, may seem from ver. 24, 25.

17. Not a man - Namely, fit for war. Bethel - Which, being a neighbouring city, and encouraged by the former success, had sent some forces to assist them; and now, upon notice sent to them of the flight of their common enemies, or upon some other signal given, all their men of war join with those of Ai in the pursuit.

18. Stretch out the spear - This was, either,

1. for a sign to his host present with him, to stop their flight, and make head against the pursuers: or,
2. for a signal to the liers in wait, or,
3. as a token of God's presence and assistance with them, and of their victory.

19. Set the city on fire - Not all of it, as appears from ver. 28, and because then they had lost that prey which God had allowed them; but part of it, enough to raise a smoke, and give notice to their brethren of their success.

21. All Israel - That is, all the Israelites there present.

22. The other - They who lay in ambush.

23. Took alive - Reserving him to a more ignominious punishment.

24. Smote it - That is, the inhabitants of it, the men, who through age or infirmity were unfit for war, and the women, ver. 25.

25. Of Ai - Not strictly, but largely so called, who were now in Ai, either as constant and settled inhabitants, or as sojourners and such as came to them for their help.

26. Drew not his hand back - He kept his hand and spear in the same posture, both stretched out and lifted up, as a sign both to encourage them, and to direct them to go on in the work.

29. Hanged on a tree - He dealt more severely with the kings of Canaan than with the people, because the abominable wickedness of that people was not restrained and punished (as it should have been) but countenanced and encouraged by their evil examples; and because they were the

principal authors of the destruction of their own people, by engaging them in an obstinate opposition against the Israelites. Down from the tree - According to God's command in that case, Deut. xxi, 22. The gate of the city - Which place he chose either as most commodious, now especially when all the city within the gate was already turned in to an heap of stones and rubbish; or because this was the usual place of judgment; and therefore proper to bear the monument of God's just sentence against him, not without reflection upon that injustice which he had been guilty of in that place.

30. Then - Namely, after the taking of Ai. For they were obliged to do this, when they were brought over Jordan into the land of Canaan, Deut. xi, 29; xxvii, 2, 3, which is not to be understood strictly, as if it were to be done the same day; for it is manifest they were first to be circumcised, and to eat the passover, which they did, and which was the work of some days; but as soon as they had opportunity to do it, which was now when these two great frontier cities were taken and destroyed, and thereby the coast cleared, and the bordering people under great consternation, so that all the Israelites might securely march thither. And indeed this work was fit to be done as soon as might be, that thereby they might renew their covenant with God, by whose help alone they could expect success in their great and difficult enterprize. Built an altar - Namely, for the offering of sacrifices, as appears from the following verse. Mount Ebal - God's altar was to be but in one place, Deut. xii, 13, 14, and this place was appointed to be mount Ebal, Deut. xxvii, 4, 5, which also seems most proper, that in that place whence the curses of the law were denounced against sinners, there might also be the tokens and means of grace, and peace, and reconciliation with God, for the removing of the curses, and the procuring of God's blessing to sinners.

32. Upon the stones - Not upon the stones of the altar, which were to be rough and unpolished, ver. 31, but upon other stones, smooth and plaistered, as is manifest from Deut. xxvii, 2. The law of Moses - Not certainly the whole five books of Moses, for what stones and time would have sufficed for this, but the most weighty parts of the law, and especially the law of the ten commandments.

33. All Israel - That is, the whole congregation, old and young, male and female. That side - Some on one side of it, and some on the other. Mount Gerizim - These two places were in the tribe of Ephraim, not far from Shechem, as appears both from scripture, and from other authors. Bless - Or curse, which is easily understood out of the following verse.

34. Afterward - After the altar was built, and the stones plaistered and writ upon. He read - That is, he commanded the priests or Levites to read, Deut. xxvii, 14. Blessings and cursings - Which words came in not by way of explication, as if the words of the law were nothing else besides the blessings and curses; but by way of addition, to note that these were read over and above the words of the law.

35. Read not - Therefore he read not the blessings and curses only, as some think, but the whole law, as the manner was when all Israel, men and women, were assembled together, or the ten commandments. Among them - Who were proselytes, for no others can be supposed to be with them at this time.

## IX

The confederacy of the kings of Canaan against Israel, ver. 1, 2. The confederacy of the Gibeonites with Israel, ver. 3-18. Their employment, ver. 19-27.

2. Together - They entered into a league to do this. Tho' they were many kings of different nations, and doubtless of different interests, often at variance with each other, yet they are all determined to unite against Israel. O that Israel would learn this of Canaanites, to sacrifice private interests to the public good, and to lay aside all animosities among themselves, that they may cordially unite against the common enemy.

3. Gibeon - A great and royal city of the Hivites.

4. Been ambassadors - Sent from a far country.

6. The camp at Gilgal - The place of their head-quarters. Men of Israel - To those who used to meet in council with Joshua, to whom it belonged to make leagues, even the princes of the congregation. Now therefore - Because we are not of this people, whom, as we are informed, you are obliged utterly to destroy.

7. The Hivites - That is, the Gibeonites who were Hivites, chap. xi, 19. Among us - That is, in this land, and so are of that people with whom we are forbidden to make any league or covenant.

8. Thy servants - We desire a league with you upon your own terms; we are ready to accept of any conditions. From whence came ye - For this free and general concession gave Joshua cause to suspect that they were Canaanites.

9. Name of the Lord - Being moved thereunto by the report of his great and glorious nature and works; so they gave them hopes that they would embrace their religion. In Egypt - They cunningly mention those things only which were done some time ago, and say nothing of dividing Jordan, or the destruction of Jericho and Ai, as if they lived so far off that the fame of those things had not yet reached them.

13. The bottles - Leathern bottles.

14. The men - That is, the princes. Their victuals - That they might examine the truth of what they said. The mouth of the Lord - As they ought to have done upon all such weighty occasions. So they are accused of rashness and neglect of their duty. For though it is probable, if God had been consulted, he would have consented to the sparing of the Gibeonites; yet it should have been done with more caution, and an obligation upon them to embrace the true religion. In every business of importance, we should stay to take God along with us, and by the word and prayer consult him. Many a time our affairs miscarry, because we asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord. Did we acknowledge him in all our ways, they would be more safe, easy and successful.

15. To let them live - That is, they should not destroy them. That this league was lawful and obliging, appears,

1. Because Joshua and all the princes, upon the review concluded it so to be, and spared them accordingly.
2. Because God punished the violation of it long after, 2 Sam. xxi, 1.
3. Because God is said to have hardened the hearts of all other cities, not to seek peace with Israel, that so he might utterly destroy them, chap. xi, 19, 20, which seems to imply that their utter destruction did not necessarily come upon them

by virtue of any peremptory command of God, but by their own obstinate hardness, whereby they refused to make peace with the Israelites.

16. Three days - That is, at the last of them, or upon the third day, as it is said, ver. 17.

17. And Kirjath-jearim - Which cities were subject to Gibeon, the royal city, chap. x, 2.

18. Against the princes - Both from that proneness which is in people to censure the actions of their rulers; and from their desire of the spoil of these cities.

21. Unto all the congregation - That is, Let them be public servants, and employed in the meanest offices, (one kind being put for all the rest) for the use of the congregation; to do this partly for the sacrifices and services of the house of God, which otherwise the Israelites themselves must have done; partly for the service of the camp or body of the people; and sometimes, even to particular Israelites.

22. Called for them - Probably not only the messengers, but the elders of Gibeon were now present.

23. Ye are cursed - You shall not escape the curse of God which by divine sentence belongs to all the Canaanites; but only change the quality of it, you shall feel that curse of bondage, which is proper to your race by virtue of that ancient decree, Gen. ix, 25. Bond-men - The slavery, which is upon you shall be entailed on your posterity. The house of my God - This only service they mention here, because it was their durable servitude, being first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple, whence they were called Nethinim, 1 Chron. ix, 2 Ezra ii, 43, whereas their servitude to the whole congregation in a great measure ceased when the Israelites were dispersed to their several habitations.

25. In thine hand - That is, in thy power to use us as thou wilt. Unto thee - We refer ourselves to thee and thy own piety, and probity, and faithfulness to thy word and oath; if thou wilt destroy thy humble suppliants, we submit. Let us in like manner submit to our Lord Jesus, and refer ourselves to him; saying, We are in thy hand; do unto us as seemeth right unto thee. Only save our souls: give us our lives for a prey; and let us serve thee, just as thou wilt!

27. The altar of the Lord - By which appears, that they were not only to do this service in God's house, but upon all other occasions, as the congregation needed their help.

## X

In this chapter we have an account of the confederacy against Gibeon, and the request of the Gibeonites to Joshua, ver. 1-6. Of Joshua's marching and defeating the confederate kings, ver. 7-11. Of the sun's standing still, ver. 12-14. Of the execution of the kings, ver. 15-27. Of the taking their cities, and conquering all that country, ver. 28-42. Of the return of the army to Gilgal, ver. 43.

1. Among them - That is, were conversant with them, had submitted to their laws, and mingled interests with them.

2. Thy - That is, he and his people, the king being spoken of ver. 1, as a publick person representing all his people. Royal cities - Either really a royal city, or equal to one of the royal cities, though it had no king, but seems to have been governed by elders, chap. ix, 11.

3. Adoni-zedek sent - Either because he was superior to them, or because he was nearest the danger, and most forward in the work.

5. Of the Amorites - This name being here taken largely for any of the Canaanites, as is frequent; for, to speak strictly, the citizens of Hebron here mentioned, ver. 3, were Hittites. It is reasonably supposed, that the Amorites being numerous and victorious beyond Jordan poured forth colonies into the land of Canaan, subdued divers places, and so communicated their name to all the rest.

6. Slack not thy hand - Do not neglect or delay to help us. Whom thou art obliged to protect both in duty as thou art our master; and by thy owns interest, we being part of thy possessions; and in ingenuity, because we have given ourselves to thee, and put ourselves under thy protection. In the mountains - ln the mountainous country.

7. Joshua ascended - Having no doubt asked advice of God first, which is implied by the answer God gives him, ver. 8. All the mighty men - That is, an army of the most valiant men picked out from the rest; for it is not probable, either that he would take so many hundred thousands with him, which would have hindered one another, or that he would leave the camp without an army to defend it.

9. Came suddenly - Though assured by God of the victory, yet he uses all prudent means. All night - It is not said, that he went from Gilgal to Gibeon in a night's space; but only that he travelled all night; unto which you may add part either of the foregoing or of the following day. It is true, God had promised, that he would without fail deliver the enemies into his hand. But God's promises are intended, not to slacken, but to quicken our endeavours. He that believeth doth not make haste, to anticipate providence; but doth make haste to attend it, with a diligent, not a distrustful speed.

10. At Gibeon - Hebrew. in Gibeon, not in the city, but in the territory belonging to it.

11. Great stones - That is, hailstones of extraordinary greatness, cast down with that certainty, as to hit the Canaanites and not their pursuers the Israelites. Josephus affirms, that thunder and lightning were mixed with the hail, which may seem probable from Hab. iii, 11. They had robbed the true God of his honour, by worshipping the host of heaven, and now the hosts of heaven fights against them, and triumphs in their ruin. Beth-horon lay north of Gibeon, Azekah and Makkedah, south, so that they fled each way. But which way soever they fled, the hailstones pursued them. There is no fleeing out of the hands of God!

12. Spoke Joshua - Being moved to beg it out of zeal to destroy God's enemies, and directed to it by the motion of God's spirit, and being filled with holy confidence of the success, he speaks the following words before the people, that that they might be witnesses. In the sight - That is, in the presence and audience of Israel. Over Gibeon - That is, in that place and posture in which now it stands towards, and looks upon Gibeon. Let it not go down lower, and by degrees, out of the sight of Gibeon. It may seem, that the sun, was declining, and Joshua perceiving that his work was great and long, and his time but short, begs of God the lengthening out of the day, and that the sun and moon might stop their course, He mentions two places, Gibeon and Ajalon, not as if the sun stood over the one and the moon over the other, which is absurd especially these places being so near the one to the other; but partly to vary the phrase, as is common in poetical passages; partly because he was in his march in the pursuit of his enemies, to pass from Gibeon to Ajalon; and he begs that he may have the help of longer light to pursue them, and to that end that the sun might stand still, and the moon also; not that he needed the moon's light, but because it was fit, either that both sun and moon should go, or that both should stand still to prevent disorder in the heavenly bodies. The prayer is thus exprest with authority, because it was not an ordinary prayer, but the prayer of a

prophet, divinely inspired at this very time for this purpose. And yet it intimates to us the prevalency of prayer in general, and may mind us of that honour put upon prayer, concerning the work of my hands command you me.

13. Avenged them on their enemies - That is, till they bad utterly destroyed them. Book of Jasher - This book was written and published before Joshua wrote his, and so is fitly alluded here. But this, as well as some other historical books, is lost, not being a canonical book, and therefore not preserved by the Jews with the same care as they were. The sun stood - Here is no mention of the moon, because the sun's standing was the only thing which Joshua desired and needed; and the moon's standing he desired only by accident to prevent irregularity in the motions of those celestial lights. And if it seem strange to any one, that so wonderful a work should not be mentioned in any Heathen writers; he must consider, that it is confessed by the generality of writers, Heathens and others, that there is no certain history or monument in Heathen authors of any thing done before the Trojan war, which was a thousand years after Joshua's time; and that all time before that, is called by the most learned Heathens, the uncertain, unknown, or obscure time. A whole day - That is, for the space of a whole day. Understand an artificial day between sun-rising and sun-setting; for that was the day which Joshua needed and desired, a day to give him light for his work.

14. No day like that - Namely, in those parts of the world in which he here speaks, vain therefore is that objection, that the days are longer near the northern and southern poles, where they are constantly longer at certain seasons, and that by the order of nature; whereas the length of this day was purely contingent, and granted by God in answer to Joshua's prayer. The Lord hearkened to a man - Namely, in such a manner to alter the course of nature, and of the heavenly bodies, that a man might have more time to pursue and destroy his enemies. The Lord fought - This is added as the reason why God was so ready to answer Joshua's petition, because he was resolved to fight for Israel, and that in a more than ordinary manner. But this stupendous miracle was designed for something more, than to give Israel light to destroy the Canaanites. It was designed to convince and confound those idolaters, who worshipped the sun and moon, by demonstrating, that these also were subject to the command of the God of Israel: as also to signify, that in the latter days, when the world was covered with darkness, the sun of righteousness, even our Joshua, should arise, and be the true light of the world. To which we may add, that when Christ conquered our enemies upon the cross, the miracle wrought on the sun was the reverse of this. It was then darkened, as if going down at noon. For Christ needed not the light of the sun, to compleat his victory: so he made darkness his pavilion.

15. Joshua returned - Not upon the same day, but after he had dispatched the matter which here follows; as appears by ver. 43, where the very same words are repeated. And they are put here to close the general discourse of the fight which begun ver. 10, and ends here; which being done he particularly describes some remarkable passages, and closeth them with the same words.

16. A cave - A place of the greatest secrecy; but there is no escaping the eye or hand of God. At Makkedah - Hebrew. in Makkedah, not in the city, for that was not yet taken; but in the territory of it.

19. Enter their cities - Whereby they will recover their strength, and renew the war. God hath delivered them - Your work will be easy, God hath already done the work to your hands.

20. The children of Israel - That is, a party of them by the command of Joshua; for Joshua himself went not with them, but abode in the siege before Makkedah, ver. 21.

21. To the camp - To the body, of the army which were engaged there with Joshua to besiege that place. None moved his tongue - Not only their men of war could not find their hands, but they were so confounded, that they could not move their tongues in way of insult, as doubtless they did when the Israelites were smitten at Ai; but now they were silenced as well as conquered: they durst no more provoke the Israelites.

24. Put your feet on the necks - This he did not from pride and contempt; but as a punishment of their impious rebellion against their Sovereign Lord; in pursuance of that curse of servitude due to all this people, and as a token to assure his captains, that God would subdue the proudest of them under their feet.

27. Took them down - That neither wild beasts could come to devour them, nor any of their people to give them honourable burial. Thus that which they thought would have been their shelter, was made their prison first, and then their grave. So shall we surely be disappointed, in whatever we flee to from God.

28. And that day - On which the sun stood still. Nor is it strange that so much work was done, and places so far distant taken in one day, when the day was so long, and the Canaanites struck with such a terror.

29. All Israel - Namely, who were with him in this expedition.

35. On that day - On which they first attempted it.

36. Unto Hebron - The conquest of Hebron is here generally related, afterwards repeated, and more particularly described, chap. xv, 13, 14.

37. All the cities - Which were subject to its jurisdiction; this being, it seems, a royal city as Gibeon was, ver. 2, and having cities under it as that had.

38. Joshua returned - He is said to return thither, not as if he had been there before, but because having gone as far westward and southward as he thought fit, even as far as Gaza, ver. 41, he now returned towards Gilgal, which lay north-ward and eastward from him, and in his return fell upon Debir.

40. All that breathed - That is, all mankind, they reserved the cattle for their own uses. As God had commanded - This is added for the vindication of the Israelites, whom God would not have to suffer in their reputation for executing his commands; and therefore he acquits them of that cruelty, which they might be thought guilty of, and ascribes it to his own just indignation. And hereby was typified the final destruction of all the impenitent enemies of the Lord Jesus, who having slighted the riches of his grace, must for ever feel the weight of his wrath.

41. Kadesh-barnea - Which lay in the south of Canaan, Num. xxxiv, 4 Deut. i, 19 chap. xv, 3. Gaza - Which was in the southwest of Canaan. So he here signifies, that Joshua did in this expedition subdue all those parts which lay south and west from Gilgal. Goshen - Not that Goshen in Egypt, but another in Judah.

## XI

The confederacy of many kings against Israel, ver. 1-5. God's encouragement to Joshua, and his conquest of them and their cities, ver. 6-20. The destruction of the Anakims, ver. 21-23.

1. Hazor - The chief city of those parts, ver. 10. Had heard - This was a remarkable instance of the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence, which so governed the minds of the Canaanites, that they were not all united under one king, but divided amongst many petty kings; and next, that these did not all unanimously join their counsels and forces together to oppose the Israelites at their first entrance, but quietly suffered the destruction of their brethren, thereby preparing the way for their own.

2. On the north - The general designation of all the particular places following: they were in the northern parts of Canaan, as those mentioned chap. x, 1-43, were in the southern parts; in the mountain, either in or near the mountain of Lebanon, called the mountain by way of eminency; or in the mountainous country. Cinneroth - Hebrew. in the plain lying southward from Cinneroth, or the lake of Genesareth. Dor - A place upon the coast of the midland-sea.

3. The Canaanite - The Canaanites properly so called, lived part of them on the east near Jordan, and part on the west near the sea, and both are here united. The Hivite - That dwelt under mount Hermon in the north of Canaan, whereby they are differenced from those Hivites who lived in Gibeon. Mizpeh - That Mizpeh which was in the northern part of Gilead. But there are other cities called by that name, which signifying a watching-place, might be easily applied to several places of good prospect.

5. Merom - A lake made by the river Jordan in the northern part of it, which was in the territory of the King of Schimron, near Hazor, Jabin's royal city, and almost in the middle of these confederate kings.

6. Hough their horses - Cut their hamstrings that they may my be unfit for war. For God forbad them to keep many horses, now especially, that they might not trust to their horses, nor ascribe the conquest of the land to their own strength, but wholly to God, by whose power alone a company of raw and unexperienced footmen were able to subdue so potent a people, who besides their great numbers, and giants, and walled cities, had the advantage of many thousands of horses and chariots.

7. Suddenly - When they least expected them, intending there to refresh, and prepare, and order themselves for the offensive war which they designed.

8. Great Zidon - A great city in the northwest part of Canaan, upon the sea. Misrephoth-maim - A place not far from Zidon, supposed to be so called from the salt or glass which they made there. Valley of Mizpeh - Under mount Hermon, as appears by comparing this with ver. 3, and 17. where it seems to be called the valley of Lebanon. This lay on the east, as Zidon did on the west; and so it seems they fled several ways, and the Israelites also divided themselves into two bodies, one pursuing east, and the other west.

10. The king - In his royal city, to which he fled out of the battle. Head of these kingdoms - Not of all Canaan, but of all those who were confederate with him in this expedition.

11. Not any left - That is, no human person.

13. In their strength - Hebrew. with their fence, walls or bulwarks, that is, which were not ruined with their walls in taking them. Save Hazor - Because this city began the war, and being the chief and royal city, might renew the war. If the Canaanites should ever seize upon it: which in fact they did, and settled there, under a king of the same name, Judg. iv, 2.

16. All that land - Of Canaan, whose parts here follow. The hill - Or, the mountain, that is, the mountainous country, namely, of Judea. A considerable part of Judea was called the hilly or the mountainous country, Luke i, 39, 65. The south country - That is, not only the mountainous part, but all the country of Judea, which lay in the southern part of Canaan, and often comes under the

name of the south. The vale - The low countries. The plain - The fields or campaign grounds. The mountain of Israel - The mountains or mountainous country of Israel.

17. To Seir - That is, To the country of Seir or Edom; namely, that part of it which was south from Judea, not that which was eastward from it, as appears from hence, that here is mention of the two extreme bounds of the land conquered by Joshua; whereof the other which follows being in the north, this must needs be in the south of the land. Baal-Gad - A part of mount Lebanon.

18. A long time - For divers years together, as is evident by the following history. And this is here expressed, lest it should be thought that as all these wars are here recorded in a short narration, so they were dispatched in a short time. And God would have the land to be conquered gradually, for many weighty reasons;

1. Lest the sudden extirpation of those nations should have made a great part of the land desert, and thereby have increased the number of wild beasts, Deut. vii, 22.
2. Lest being done suddenly and easily, it should soon be forgotten and despised, as the nature of man is apt to do in those cases.
3. That by long exercise the Israelites might grow skilful in the art of war.
4. For the trial and exercise of their patience and courage, and trust in God.
5. To oblige them to the greater care to please God, whom they yet need for their help against their enemies.

19. All other - Namely, all that were taken by Joshua, were taken by the sword, and therefore it is no wonder that the war was long, when the enemy was so obstinate.

20. To harden their hearts - It was the design of God's providence not to soften their hearts to a compliance with the Israelites, but to give them up to their own animosity, pride, confidence and stubbornness; that so their abominable and incorrigible wickedness might be punished, and that the Israelites might not be mixed with them, but be entire among themselves in the possession of the land.

21. At that time - In that war, but in divers years. The mountain - Or, mountains, the singular number for the plural; these barbarous and monstrous persons either chose to live in the dens or caves, which were frequent in the mountains of those parts, or else they were driven thither by the arms and success of the Israelites. From Debir - From the territories belonging to these cities, as we have often seen in this history, cities mentioned for the country subject to them. The mountains of Israel - It doth not follow from hence, that this book was written by some other person long after Joshua's death, even after the division of the Israelites into two kingdoms. of Israel and Judah; but only that this was one of those clauses which were added by Ezra or some other prophet; though that be not necessary: for since it was evident to Joshua, from Gen. xlix, 10, &c. that the tribe of Judah was to be the chief of all these tribes, and some dawnings of its eminency appeared in that time, in their having the first lot in the land of Canaan, chap. xv, 1, and the largest inheritance, chap. xix, 9, it is no wonder that it is mentioned apart, and distinguished from the rest of the tribes of Israel, though that also be one of them. But how could Joshua utterly destroy these, when Caleb and Othniel destroyed some of them after Joshua's death? chap. xiv, 12Judg. i, 10-12. This might be, either

1. Because these places being in part destroyed and neglected by the Israelites, were repossessed by the giants, and by them kept 'till Caleb destroyed them. Or rather
2. Because this work, though done by the particular valour of Caleb, is ascribed to Joshua as the general of the army, according to the manner of all historians; and

therefore it is here attributed to Joshua, though afterwards, that Caleb might not lose his deserved honour, the history is more particularly described, and Caleb owned as the great instrument of it, chap. xiv, 6-15 and Judg. i, 12-20.

23. The whole land - That is, the greatest and best part of it, for some parts are expressly excepted in the following history. All that the Lord said unto Moses - God had promised to drive out the nations before them. And now the promise was fulfilled. Our successes and enjoyments are then doubly comfortable, when we see them flowing to us from the promise. This is according to what the Lord hath said: our obedience is acceptable, when it has an eye to the precept. And if we make a conscience of our duty, we need not question the performance of the promise.

## XII

The conquests of Israel, under Moses, ver. 1-6. Under Joshua, ver. 7-24.

1. Plain on the east - On the east of Jordan, called the plain, Deut. i, 1.

2. Middle of the river - It is not unusual even among us, for a river to be divided between two lords, and for their territories or jurisdictions to meet in the middle of the river: and besides, here is a very particular reason for this expression, because the city Ar, which was no part of Sihon's dominions, but belonged to the Moabites, Deut. ii, 9, 18, was in the middle of the river Arnon, Deut. ii, 36; iii, 16, and therefore the middle of the river is properly here mentioned, as the bound of Sihon's dominion on that side. Half Gilead - Hebrew. and the half Gilead, that is, half of the country of Gilead; this doth not denote the bound from which his dominion began, but the country, over which his dominion was, which began at Arnon, and took in half Gilead, and ended at Jabbok, beyond which was the other half of Gilead which belonged to Og.

3. On the east - Which words describe the situation not of the sea of Cinneroth, which was part of the western border of Sihon's dominion, but of the plain, which is here said to lie eastward from the sea of Cinneroth, and also eastward from the salt sea. And this was indeed the situation of the plains of Moab, which are here spoken of; they lay between the two seas, that of Cinneroth and the salt sea, and eastward to them both. Sea of the plain - The salt sea was a famous plain, pleasant and fruitful, before it was turned into a sea.

4. Ashtaroth and Edrei - Sometimes at the one, sometimes at the other city; both being his royal mansions. But Israel made one grave serve him, who could not be contented with one palace.

6. Smile - Fresh mercies must not drown the remembrance of former mercies: nor must the glory of the present instruments of good to the church, diminish the just honour of those that went before them. Joshua's services were confessedly great. But let not those under Moses be forgotten. Both together proclaim God to be the Alpha and Omega of his peoples salvation.

8. The wilderness - This word here and elsewhere in scripture notes not a land wholly desert and uninhabited, but one thin of inhabitants, as 1 Kings ii, 34; ix, 18 Matt. iii, 1, 3. The Gargashites either were now incorporated with some other of these nations, or as the tradition of the Jews is, upon the approach of Israel under Joshua, they all withdrew and went unto Africk, leaving their land to be possessed by the Israelites, with whom they saw, it was fruitless to contend.

23. King of Gilgal - Not of that Gilgal where Joshua first lodged after his passage over Jordan; where it doth not appear, that there was either king or city; but of a city of the same name, probably in Galilee towards the sea, where divers people might possibly resort for trade and merchandise, over whom this was a king, as formerly Tidal seems to have been, Gen. xiv, 1.

24. Thirty one - Each being king only of one city or small province belonging to it, which was by the wise and singular providence of God, that they might be more easily conquered. But what a fruitful land must Canaan then be, which could subsist so many kingdoms! And yet at this day it is one of the most barren and despicable countries in the world. Such is the effect of the curse it lies under, since its inhabitants rejected the Lord of glory!

## XIII

God informs Joshua what parts of the land were yet unconquered, and orders him to divide what was conquered, ver. 1-7. A repetition of the division made by Moses, first, in general, ver. 8-14. then in particular: the lot of Reuben, ver. 15-23. Of Gad, ver. 24-28. Of the half tribe of Manasseh, ver. 29-33.

1. Thou art old - Therefore delay not to do the work which I have commanded thee to do. It is good for those that are stricken in years, to be remembered that they are so: that they may be quickened to do the work of life, and prepare for death which is coming on apace.

2. Remaineth - Unconquered by thee, and to be conquered by the Israelites, if they behave themselves aright. All Geshuri - A people in the northeast of Canaan, as the Philistines are on the southwest.

3. Counted to the Canaanites - That is, which though now possessed by the Philistines, who drove out the Canaanites the old inhabitants of it, Deut. ii, 23 Amos ix, 7, yet is a part of the land of Canaan, and therefore belongs to the Israelites. The Avites - Or, the Avims, as they are called, Deut. ii, 23, who though they were expelled out of their ancient seat, and most of them destroyed by the Caphtorims or Philistines, as is there said, yet many of them escaped, and planted themselves not very far from the former.

4. From the south - That is, from those southern parts of the sea- coast, now possessed by the Philistines, all the more northern parts of the sea-coast being yet inhibited by the Canaanites, almost as far as Sidon. The Amorites - The Amorites were a very strong and numerous people, and we find them dispersed in several parts, some within Jordan, and some without it, some in the south and others in the north, of whom he speaks here.

6. Will I drive out - Whatever becomes of us, however we may be laid aside as broken vessels, God will do his work in his own time. I will do it by my word; so the Chaldee here, as in many other places: by the eternal word, the captain of my host. But the promise of driving them out from before the children of Israel, supposes that the Israelites must use their own endeavours, must go up against them. If Israel, thro' sloth or cowardice let them alone, they are not likely to be driven out. We must go forth on our Christian warfare, and then God will go before us.

8. Which Moses gave them - By my command, and therefore do not thou disturb them in their possessions, but proceed to divide the other possessions to the rest.

9. Medeba unto Dibon - Two cities anciently belonging to the Moabites, and taken from them by the Amorites, Num. xxi, 30, and from them by the Israelites; and after the Israelites were gone into captivity, recovered by the first possessors, the Moabites.

11. And Maacathites - Whose land God had given to the Israelites without Jordan, though they had not yet used the gift of God, nor taken possession of it, as is noted, ver. 13.

12. These did Moses smite - Not all now mentioned, but Sihon and Og, and their people, and the generality of them.

14. He gave - That is, Moses. None inheritance - Namely, in the land beyond Jordan, where yet a considerable part of the Levites were to have their settled abode. This is mentioned as the reason both why Moses gave all that land to the Reubenites and Gadites and Manassites; and why Joshua should divide the land only into nine parts and an half, as was said, ver. 7, because Levi was otherwise provided for. Made by fire - Which are here put for all the sacrifices and oblations, including first-fruits and tithes, that were assigned to the Levites; and this passage is repeated, to prevent those calumnies and injuries which God foresaw the Levites were likely to meet with, from the malice, envy and covetousness of their brethren.

15. According to their families - Dividing the inheritance into as many parts as they had families; but this is only spoken of the greater families; for the lesser distributions to the several small families was done by inferior officers, according to the rules which Moses gave them.

19. In the mount of the valley - In the mountain bordering upon that valley, which then was famous among the Israelites; whether that where Moses was buried, which was near to Beth-peor, Deut. xxxiv, 1, 6, or some other. And this clause is thought to belong to all the cities now mentioned.

21. Cities of the plain - Opposed to the cities of the mountain of the valley. All the kingdom of Sihon - A great part of it; in which sense we read of all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, Matt. iii, 5, and all Galilee, Matt. iv, 23. Whom Moses smote - Not in the same time or battle, as appears by comparing Num. xxi, 23, 24, with Num. xxxi, 8, but in the same manner. And they are here mentioned, partly because they were slain not long after, and upon the same occasion, even their enmity against Israel; and partly because of their relation and subjection to Sihon. Dukes of Sihon - But how could they be so, when they were kings of Midian? Num. xxxi, 8. There were divers petty kings in those parts, who were subject to greater kings; and such these were, but are here called dukes or princes of Sihon, because they were subject and tributaries to him, and therefore did one way or other assist Sihon in this war, though they were not killed at this time. It is probable, that when Sihon destroyed those Moabites which dwelt in these parts, he frighted the rest of them, and with them their neighbours and confederates, the Midianites, into some kind of homage, which they were willing to pay him. Dwelling in the country - Hebrew. inhabiting that land, namely Midian, last mentioned; whereby he signifies, that tho' they were subject to Sihon, yet they did not dwell in his land, but in another.

22. Were slain by them - This was recorded before, Num. xxxi, 8, and is here repeated, because the defeating of Balaam's purpose to curse Israel, and the turning that curse into a blessing, was such an instance of the power and goodness of God, as was fit to be had in everlasting remembrance.

23. The border thereof - That is, those cities or places which bordered upon Jordan.

25. The cities of Gilead - That is, all the cities of eminency; all the cities properly so called, which lay in that part of Gilead; and so this may well agree with ver. 31, where half the country of

Gilead is said to be given to the Manassites; but there is no mention of any cities there. The land of the children of Ammon - Not of that which was now theirs, for that they were forbidden to meddle with, but of that which was anciently theirs, 'till taken from them by the Amorites, from whom the Israelites took it. Aroer - The border between them and Moab. Rabbah - The chief city of the Ammonites.

26. Ramath-mizpeh - Called Ramoth-Gilead, or Ramoth in Gilead. Mahanaim - Exclusively; for Mahanaim was in the portion of Manasseh, beyond Jabbok, which was the border of Gad and Manasseh.

27. The rest of the kingdom - The northern part of his kingdom.

29. Of Manasseh - Not that thou desired it, as Reuben and Gad did, Num. xxxii, 1, but partly as a recompence to Machir the Manassite, for his valiant acts against Og; and partly for the better defense of the other two tribes, by so considerable an accession to them, which also was without any inconvenience to them, because the country was too large for the two tribes of Reuben and Gad.

30. Of Jair - Who, though of the tribe of Judah, by the father, 1 Chron. ii, 21, 22, yet is called the son of Manasseh, Num. xxxii, 41, because he married a daughter of Manasseh, and wholly associated himself with those valiant Manassites; and with their help took sixty cities or great towns, Deut. iii, 4, 14, which thence were called the towns of Jair.

31. Children of Machir - Whom before he called the children of Manasseh, he now calls the children of Machir, because Machir was the most eminent, and as it may seem, the only surviving son of Manasseh, Num. xxvi, 29; 1 Chron. vii, 14-16.

## XIV

The method of dividing the land, ver. 1-5. Caleb demands Hebron, ver. 6-12. which Joshua grants, ver. 13-15.

1. Eleazar the priest - He best understood the laws of God by which this division was to be regulated. Heads of the fathers - Twelve persons, each the head of his tribe, who were appointed and named by God, Num. xxxiv, 19, and if any of them were now dead, no doubt Joshua and Eleazar, by God's direction, put others in their stead.

2. By lot - This course God ordained, partly to prevent discontents, enmities and quarrels among the tribes, and partly to demonstrate the truth and wisdom of his providence, by which alone those parts fell to each of them, which Jacob long since, and Moses lately, foretold; so that as a learned man saith, he must be more stupid than stupidity, that doth not acknowledge a Divine hand in this matter. The lot did only determine the several parts to the several tribes, but did not precisely fix all the bounds of it; these might be either enlarged or diminished according to the greater or smaller number of the tribes.

4. Were two tribes - That is, had the portion of two tribes, and therefore though Levi was excluded, there remained nine tribes and a half, to be provided for in Canaan.

5. They - That is, the persons named, ver. 5, who acted in the name of the children of Israel, divided it, either now, or presently after.

6. Then - When Joshua and the rest were consulting about the division of the land, though they did not yet actually divide it. The heads of that tribe who were willing thus to shew respect to him; and to testify their consent, that he should be provided for by himself, and that they would not take it as any reflection on the rest of the tribe. In Gilgal - Where the division of the land was designed and begun, though it was executed and finished at Shiloh. The Kenezite - Of the posterity of Kenaz. The Lord said - In general, the promise he made us of possessing this land; and for my part, that which is expressed here, ver. 9.

7. As it was in mine heart - I spake my opinion sincerely, without flattery and fear, when the other spies were biased by their own fears, and the dread of the people, to speak otherwise than in their consciences they believed.

8. I wholly followed the Lord - Which self-commendation is justifiable, because it was necessary, as being the ground of his petition. Therefore it was not vain glory in him to speak it: no more than it is for those, who have God's spirit witnessing with their spirits, that they are the children of God, humbly and thankfully to tell others, for their encouragement, what God hath done for their souls.

10. Forty-five years - Whereof thirty- eight years were spent in the wilderness, and seven since they came into Canaan. The longer we live the more sensible we should be, of God's goodness to us in keeping us alive! Of his care in prolonging our frail lives, his patience in prolonging our forfeited lives! And shall not the life thus kept by his providence, be devoted to his praise?

11. For war - Not only for counsel, but for action; for marching and fighting. And therefore this gift will not be cast away upon an unprofitable and unserviceable person. To go out, and to come in - To perform all the duties belonging to my place. Moses had said, that at eighty years old, even our strength is labour and sorrow. But Caleb was an exception to this rule: At eighty-five years old, his strength was still ease and joy. This he got by following the Lord fully.

12. This mountain - That is, this mountainous country. He names the country rather than the cities, because the cities were given to the Levites, chap. xxi, 11, 13. Thou heardest - Didst understand, both by the reports of others, and by thy own observation. Hearing, the sense by which we get knowledge, is often put for knowing or understanding. If the Lord will be with me - A modest and pious expression, signifying both the absolute necessity of God's help, and his godly fear, lest God for his sins should deny his assistance to him; for although he was well assured in general, that God would crown his people with success in this war, yet he might doubt of his particular success in this or that enterprize. To drive them out - Out of their fastnesses where they yet remain, Caleb desires this difficult work as a testimony of his own faith, and as a motive to quicken his brethren to the like attempts.

13. Blessed him - Prayed to God to bless and help him according to his own desire.

15. A great man - In stature, and strength, and dignity, and authority, as being the progenitor of Anak, the father of those famous giants called Anakims.

## XV

The bounds of the inheritance of Judah, ver. 1-12. The assignment of Hebron to Caleb and his family, ver. 13-19. The cities of Judah, ver. 20-63.

1. The lot - For the general understanding of this, it must be known
    1. That casting lots was transacted with great seriousness and solemnity, in God's presence, with prayer and appeal to him for the decision of the matter.
    2. That although exact survey of this land was not taken 'till chap. xviii, 4, 5, yet there was, and must needs be a general description of it, and a division thereof into nine parts and an half; which, as far as they could guess, were equal either in quantity or quality.
    3. That the lot did not at this time so unchangeably determine each tribe, that their portion could neither be increased or diminished; as is manifest, because after Judah's lot was fixed, Simeon's lot was taken out of it, chap. xix, 9, though after the land was more distinctly known and surveyed, it is likely the bounds were more certain and fixed.
    4. That the lot determined only in general what part of the land belonged to each tribe, but left the particulars to be determined by Joshua and Eleazar. For the manner of this, it is probably conceived, that there was two pots, into one of which were put the names of all the tribes, each in a distinct paper, and into the other the names of each portion described; then Eleazar or some other person, drew out first the name of one of the tribes out of one pot, and then the name of one portion out of the other, and that portion was appropriated to that tribe. And with respect to these pots, in the bottom of which the papers lay, these lots are often said to come up, or come forth. Of Judah - Whose lot came out first by God's disposition, as a note of his preeminency above his brethren. Of Edom - Which lay southeast from Judah's portion. Judah and Joseph were the two sons of Jacob, on whom Reuben's forfeited birthright devolved. Judah had the dominion entailed upon him, and Joseph the double portion. Therefore these two tribes are first seated: and on them the other seven attended.

2. The bay - Hebrew. the tongue: either a creek or arm of that sea; or a promontory, which by learned authors is sometimes called a tongue. Every sea is salt, but this had an extraordinary saltness, the effect of that fire and brimstone which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah: the ruins of which lie buried at the bottom of this dead water, which never was moved itself by any tides, nor had any living thing in it.

5. The end of Jordan - That is, the place where Jordan runs into the salt-sea.

6. The stone of Bohan - A place so called, not from Bohan's dwelling there, (for the Reubenites had no portion on this side Jordan) but from some notable exploit which he did there, though it is not recorded in scripture.

8. Went up - Properly; for the line went from Jordan and the salt sea, to the higher grounds nigh Jerusalem; and therefore the line is said to go down, chap. xviii, 16, because there it takes a contrary course, and goes downward to Jordan and the sea. Valley of Hinnom - A very pleasant place, but afterward made infamous. Of the Jebusites - Of the city of the Jebusites, which was anciently called

Jebussi. Jerusalem - It may seem hence, that Jerusalem properly, or at least principally, belonged to Benjamin; and yet it is ascribed to Judah also; either because a part of the city was allotted to Judah; or because the Benjamites desired the help and conjunction of this powerful tribe of Judah, for the getting and keeping of this most important place. And when the Benjamites had in vain attempted to drive out the Jebusites, this work was at last done by the tribe of Judah, who therefore had an interest in it by the right of war; as Ziglag which belonged to the tribe of Simeon, being gotten from the Philistines by David, was joined by him to his tribe of Judah, 1 Sam. xxvii, 6.

10. Mount Seir - Not that of Edom, but another so called from some resemblance it had to it.

13. He - Joshua. City of Arba - Or, Kirjath-arba. Not the city, which was the Levites, but the territory of it, chap. xxi, 13.

14. Drove thence - That is, from the said territory, from their caves and forts in it. These giants having either recovered their cities, or defended themselves in the mountains. Three sons of Anak - Either the same who are mentioned, Num. xiii, 33, and so they were long-lived men, such as mainly were in those times and places: or their sons, called by their father's names, which is very usual.

15. Debir - The same mentioned above, ver. 7. The name was Kirjath-sepher - This clause seems to be added to distinguish this from the other Debir subdued by Joshua, chap. x, 38, 39.

16. To wife - Which is to be understood with some conditions, as, if he were one who could marry her by God's law; and if she were willing; for though parents had a great power over their children, they could not force them to marry any person against their own wills. He might otherwise be an unfit and unworthy person; but this was a divine impulse, that Othniel's valour might be more manifest, and so the way prepared for his future government of the people, Judg. iii, 9.

18. As she came - Or, as she went, namely, from her father's house to her husband's, as the manner was. She moved him - She persuaded her husband, either,

1. That he would ask: or rather,
2. That he would suffer her to ask, as she did. She lighted - That she might address herself to her father in an humble posture, and as a suppliant, which he understood by her gesture.

19. A blessing - That is, a gift, as that word signifies, Gen. xxxiii, 11. A south land - That is, a dry land, much exposed to the south wind, which in those parts was very hot and drying, as coming from the deserts of Arabia. Springs of water - That is, a field, wherein are springs of water, which in that country were of great price; she begs a well moistened field, which also might give some relief to that which was dry and barren. Upper and nether springs - Or two fields, one above and the other below that south and dry ground which she complained of, that by this means it might be watered on both sides.

32. Twenty nine - Here are thirty seven or thirty eight cities named before; how then are they only reckoned twenty nine? There were only twenty nine of them, which either,

1. properly belonged to Judah; the rest fell to Simeon's lot; or
2. Were cities properly so called, that is, walled cities, or such as had villages under them, as it here follows; the rest being great, but unwalled towns, or such as had no villages under them.

48. The mountains - That is, in the higher grounds called mountains or hills, in comparison of the sea-coast.

55. Ziph - Which gave its name to the neighbouring mountains, 1 Sam. xxvi, 1.

62. City of salt - So called either from the salt sea, which was near it; or from the salt which was made in, or about it.

63. Inhabitants of Jerusalem - For though Jerusalem was in part taken by Joshua before this; yet the upper and stronger part of it, called Zion, was still kept by the Jebusites, even until David's time; and it seems from thence they descended to the lower town called Jerusalem, and took it so that the Israelites were forced to win it a second time; yea, and a third time also: for afterwards it was possessed by the Jebusites, Judg. xix, 11; 2 Sam. v, 6, 7. Could not drive them out - Namely, because of their unbelief, as Christ could do no mighty work, because of the peoples unbelief, Mark vi, 5, 6 Matt. xiii, 58, and because of their sloth, and cowardice, and wickedness, whereby they forfeited God's help. The children of Judah - The same things which are here said of the children of Judah, are said of the Benjamites, Judg. i, 21. Hence ariseth a question, To which of the tribes Jerusalem belonged? It seems probable, that part of it, and indeed the greatest part, stood in the tribe of Benjamin; and hence this is mentioned in the list of their cities, and not in Judah's list; and part of it stood in Judah's share, even mount Moriah, on which the temple was built; and mount Sion, when it was taken from the Jebusites. To this day - When this book was written, whether in Joshua's life, which continued many years after the taking of Jerusalem; or after his death, when this clause was added by some other man of God. But this must be done before David's time, when the Jebusites were quite expelled, and their fort taken.

## XVI

The lot of Ephraim and Manasseh, ver. 1-4. Of Ephraim in particular, ver. 5-10

1. Children of Joseph - That is, of Ephraim, and the half tribe of Manasseh, which are here put together in one; because in these first verses he speaks of them in common; and then of their several portions.

4. Manasseh - That is, half Manasseh. Their inheritance - Their several portions which here follow. It is said, they took their inheritance, which also Judah had done before them, because the tribes of Judah and Joseph did take their inheritances before the rest; and it was fit they should do so, for the security of the main camp, and the body of the people which were at Gilgal, chap. xviii, 5.

5. East-side - That is, the northeast side. It is no wonder, if some of these descriptions are dark to us at this distance of time; there having been so many alterations made in places, and so many circumstances, being now altogether undiscoverable. But this is certain, that all the descriptions here mentioned, were then evident to the Israelites, because these were the foundations of all the possessions which then they took, and peaceably possessed in succeeding ages.

6. Toward the sun - The midland sea, towards the west.

7. To Jericho - Not to the city of Jericho, which belonged to Benjamin's lot, chap. xviii, 21, but to its territory.

9. The separate cities - That is, besides those cities which were within Ephraim's bounds, he had some other cities, to which all of all their territories were annexed out Manasseh's portion, because his tribe was all here, and was larger than Manasseh's.

## XVII

The families of Manasseh, ver. 1-6. The country that fell to their lot, ver. 7-18. Their request for more land, ver. 14-18.

1. The first born of Joseph - The sense is, though Ephraim was to be more potent and numerous, yet Manasseh was the first-born, and had the privilege of the first-born, which was translated to Joseph, namely, a double portion; and therefore though this was but half the tribe of Manasseh, yet they are not made intimates to Ephraim, but have a distinct lot of their own, as their brethren, or other half tribe had beyond Jordan. For Machir - The only son of Manasseh, who therefore is here, put for the whole tribe. The first-born - So even only sons are sometimes called, as Matt. i, 25. He - That is, Machir, had given great proof of his valour (though the particular history be not mentioned) and his posterity were no degenerate sons, but had his valiant blood still running in their veins. Gilead and Bashan - Part of these countries; for part of them was also given to the Reubenites, and part to the Gadites. This may be added as a reason, either,

1. why he got those places from the Amorites: or
2. why they were allotted to him or his posterity, because this was a frontier country, and the out-works to the land of Canaan, and therefore required valiant persons to defend it.

2. A Lot - A distinct inheritance. The rest - Namely, those of them which had not received their possessions beyond Jordan. Male- children - This expression is used to bring in what follows, concerning his female children.

4. He - That is, Eleazar, or Joshua, with the consent of the princes appointed for that work.

5. Ten portions - Five for the sons, and five for the daughters; for as for Hepher, both he and his son Zelophehad was dead, and that without sons, and therefore had no portion; but his daughters had several portions allotted to them.

6. The daughters - Not less than the son, so the sex was no bar to their inheritance.

9. Three cities - Tappuah, and the cities upon the coast descending to the river, &c. last mentioned. Among the cities of Manasseh - That is, are intermixed with their cities, which was not strange nor unfit, these two being linked together by a nearer alliance than the rest.

10. His border - Manasseh's, whose portion is here described, and whose name was last mentioned. In Asher - That is, upon the tribe of Asher; for though Zebulon came between Asher and them for the greatest part of their land; yet it seems there was some necks of land, both of Ephraim's and of Manasseh's, which jutted out farther than the rest, and touched the borders of Asher. And it is certain there were many such incursions of the land of one tribe upon some parcels of another, although they were otherwise considerably distant one from the other.

11. Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher - As Ephraim had some cities in the tribe of Manasseh, and as it was not unusual, when the place allotted to any tribe was too narrow for it, and the next too large, to give away part from the larger to the less portion; nay, sometimes one whole tribe was taken into another; as Simeon's was into Judah's portion, when it was found too large for Judah. Inhabitants of Dor - Not the places only, but the people; whom they spared and used for servants. Three countries - The words may be rendered, the third part of that country; and so the meaning may be, that the cities and towns here mentioned are a third part of that country, that is, of that part of Issachar's and Asher's portion, in which those places lay.

14. Children of Joseph - That is, of Ephraim and Manasseh. Spake unto Joshua - That is, expostulated with him, when they went and saw that portion which was allotted them, and found it much short of their expectation. One portion - Either,

1. because they really had but one lot, which was afterwards divided by the arbitrators between them. Or,
2. because the land severally allotted to them, was but little enough for one of them.

15. A great people - He retorts their own argument; seeing thou art a great and numerous people, turn thy complaints into action, and enlarge thy borders by thy own hand, to which thou mayest confidently expect God's assistance. The wood-country - To the mountain, as it is called, ver. 18, where among some towns there is much wood-land, which thou mayest without much difficulty possess, and so get the more room. And cut down - The wood, for thy own advantage; in building more cities and towns; and preparing the land for pasture and tillage. The Perizzites - Supposed to be a savage and brutish kind of people, that lived in woods and mountains. Giants - Who lived in caves and mountains, now especially when they were driven out of their cities. If mount Ephraim - Or, seeing mount Ephraim is too narrow for thee, as thou complainest; take to thyself the rest of that hilly and wood country. Mount Ephraim was a particular portion of the land, belonging to the tribe of Ephraim. And this seems to be here mentioned, for all the portion allotted to Ephraim and Manasseh, as appears from their complaint, which was not, that this part, but that their whole portion was too strait for them.

16. Is not enough - Hebrew. the hill will not be found, that is, obtained by us; those fierce and strong people the Perizzites and the giants will easily defend themselves, and frustrate our attempts, having the advantage of the woods and mountains. The Canaanites that dwell - That is, and if thou sayest, that if the hill either cannot be conquered, or is not sufficient for us, we may go down and take more land out of the pleasant and fruitful valleys, we shall meet with no less difficulty there than in the mountains. Chariots of iron - Not all made of iron, but armed with iron, not only for defense, but for offense also, having as it were scythes and swords fastened to them, to cut down all that stood in their way.

17. One lot only - Thou needest and deservedst more than that lot, of which thou art actually possessed, and thou hast power to get more; which if thou endeavourest to do, God will bless thee, and give thee more.

18. The out-goings of it - The valleys and fields belonging or adjoining to it, for there the Canaanites were, ver. 16.

## XVIII

The setting up of the tabernacle at Shiloh, ver. 1. Joshua's stirring up the seven remaining tribes to look after their lot, ver. 2- 7. The division of the land into several lots assigned to those several tribes, ver. 8-10. The lot of Benjamin, ver. 11-28.

1. Set up the tabernacle - By God's appointment. It was removed from Gilgal, partly for the honour and conveniency of Joshua, that he being of the tribe of Ephraim, and seating himself there, might have the opportunity of consulting with God as often as he needed; and partly for the conveniency of all the tribes, that being in the center of them, they might more easily resort to it from all places. Here the tabernacle continued for above three hundred years, even 'till Samuel's days, 1 Sam. i, 3. Shiloh was the name given to the Messiah in dying Jacob's prophecy. So the pitching the tabernacle in Shiloh intimated to the Jews, that in that Shiloh whom Jacob spoke of, all the ordinances of this worldly sanctuary should have their accomplishment, in a greater and more perfect tabernacle.

3. How long are you slack - This slackness is supposed to arise from an opinion of the impossibility of making any regular distribution of the parts, 'till the whole were more exactly surveyed, which accordingly is here done. Likewise, being weary of war, and having sufficient plenty of all things, they were unwilling to run into new hazards.

4. Three men - Three, not one, for more exact observation both of the measure and quality of the several portions, and for greater assurance of their care and faithfulness in giving in their account. Of each tribe - One of each of these tribes, who were yet unprovided for.

5. Seven parts - Which were of equal extent or worth: for no tribe was so great, but one of these parts in its full extent would abundantly suffice them; and there was no reason why the portions should be greater or less according as the tribes at present were more or fewer in number, because of the various changes which happened therein successively; it being usual for one tribe to be more numerous than another in one age, which was fewer in the next. And if the several tribes had increased more, and not diminished their numbers by their sins, they might have sent forth colonies, and taken any part of the land, even as far as Euphrates, all which the Lord of the whole earth had given them a right to, which when they pleased they might take possession of. Judah shall abide on the south - They shall not be disturbed in their possession, but shall keep it, except some part of it shall be adjudged to another tribe. Joseph on the north - In respect of Judah, not of the whole land; for divers other tribes were more northern than they.

6. Before the Lord - That is, before the ark or tabernacle, that God may be witness and judge, and author of the division, that each may be contented with his lot, and that your several possessions may be secured to you as things sacred.

9. By cities - Or, according to the cities, to which the several parties or territories belonged.

11. And the children of Joseph - Wherein we see the wisdom of Divine Providence, this being the only place in which that prophecy, Deut. xxxiii, 12, could have been accomplished. Providence cast Benjamin next to Joseph on the one hand, because Benjamin was own and only brother to Joseph, and next to Judah on the other hand, that this tribe might hereafter unite with Judah, in an adherence to the throne of David, and the temple at Jerusalem.

14. Kirjath-jearim - The Israelites changed the name, to blot out the remembrance of Baal.

16. The end of the mountain - The place where the mountain ends, and the valley begins. Before the valley - That is, in the prospect of that valley. In the valley on the north - Which extends unto this other valley on the north-side of it. Of Jebusi - To that part where the Jebusites lived, which was in and near Jerusalem.

21. Jericho - For tho' the city was destroyed, the territory remained.

## XIX

The lot of Simeon, ver. 1-9. Of Zebulon, ver. 10-16. Of Issachar, ver. 17-23. Of Asher, ver. 24-31. Of Naphtali, ver. 32- 39. Of Daniel, ver. 40-48. The inheritance assigned to Joshua and his family, ver. 49-51.

1. Within the inheritance of Judah - This was so ordered by God's providence, partly to fulfil that threatning that he would divide and scatter this tribe in Israel, Gen. xlix, 7, which was hereby done in part, because they had no distinct lot, but were as inmates to Judah; partly, because now upon the more exact survey of the land, it appeared, that the part given to Judah did far exceed the proportion which they needed, or which the other tribes could expect. And this was the least of the tribes, Num. xxvi, 14, and therefore fittest to be put within another tribe.

11. Toward the sea - The lot of this tribe was washed by the midland sea on the west, and by the sea of Tiberias on the east, answering Jacob's prophecy, Zebulun shall be an haven of ships; trading ships on the great sea, and fishing ships on the sea of Galilee. Before Jokneam - Supposed to be Kishon.

15. Beth-lehem - Not that where Christ was born, which was in Judah, but another. Twelve cities - There are more numbered here, but the rest either were not cities properly so called, or were not within this tribe, but only bordering upon it, and belonging to other tribes.

18. Jezreel - The royal city, 1 Kings xxi, 1. This tribe, because it lay between Benjamin on the south, and Zebulun on the north, is not here described by its borders, which were the same with theirs; but by some of its cities.

26. Carmel west-ward - Or, Carmel by the sea, to distinguish it from Carmel in the tribe of Judah. This was a place of eminent fruitfulness, agreeable to the prophecy concerning Asher, Gen. xlix, 20.

27. Cubal - A city so called. Left hand - That is, on the north, which, when men look towards the east, as is usual, is on their left hand.

28. Kenah - Namely, Kenah the greater, in the upper Galilee; not Kenah the less, which was in the lower Galilee. Zidon - Called great for its antiquity, and riches, and glory. The city either was not given to the Israelites, or at least was never possessed by them; not without a singular providence of God, that they might not by the opportunity of so good a port, be engaged in much commerce with other nations; from which, together with wealth, that great corrupter of mankind, they might contract their errors and vices.

29. To Ramah - From the north southward. To Tyre - Exclusively, for this city was no part of the land given them. But this was not the same city we read of afterwards. For that was built on an island, this on the continent. Probably into these strong holds Tyre and Sidon, many of the Canaanites fled, when Joshua invaded them.

30. Twenty two cities - Here are more named, but some of them were not within this tribe, but only bordering places.

33. Their coast - Their northern border drawn from west to east, as appears, because when this coast is described and brought to its end, the coast is said to turn from the east westward, ver. 34. The out-goings - The end of that coast.

35. Cinnereth - Whence the lake of Cinnereth or Genesareth received its name.

41. Of their inheritance - Which is here described only by its cities, not its borders, which are in part the same with Judah's, and their inheritance is in good part taken out of Judah's too large portion; as appears from divers of the cities here mentioned, which are also reckoned in Judah's portion.

47. Went up to fight - This was done after Joshua's death, and seems to be here inserted, that all the chief places where the Danites dwelt, tho' far distant, might be mentioned together; and to give an account of this strange accident, why they removed from their appointed portion to so remote a place; which may be this, that being much molested by their bad neighbours, they thought fit to go to some place remote from them, which also they were in a manner constrained to do, because otherwise they must have taken some part of the portions of other tribes, whereas now going to the very utmost northern point of the land, they took that which did not belong to any other tribe.

49. The children of Israel - That is, they are said to give it, because the whole land was given to Joshua, and Eleazar, and the princes, as joint trustees, acting in the name, and for the good of the people: so that even Joshua could take nothing without their gift.

50. The word of The Lord - As God had promised, or commanded; either formerly, or at this time by Eleazar. He built - That is, repaired and enlarged it, in which sense Nebuchadnezzar is said to have built Babylon, Dan. iv, 30.

## XX

The laws concerning the cities of refuge, ver. 1-6. The appointment of those cities, ver. 7-9.

2. Appoint - The possessions being now divided among you, reserve some of them for the use which I have commanded. Cities of refuge - Designed to typify the relief which the gospel provides for poor, penitent sinners, and their protection from the curse of the law and the wrath of God, in our Lord Jesus, to whom believers fly for refuge.

3. Unwittingly - Hebrew. Through ignorance, or error, or mistake, and without knowledge. The same thing twice repeated to cut off all the expectations that wilful murderers might have of protection here; God having declared, that such should be taken even from his altar, that they might be killed. It is strange that any Christians should make their sanctuaries give protection to such

persons whom God hath so expressly excepted from it! Avenger - The nearest kinsman, who had right or power to demand, or take vengeance of the slaughter.

4. The gate - Where the Judges used to sit. His cause - Shall give them a true relation of the fact, and all its circumstances. They shall take him - If they are satisfied in the relation he makes, concerning the fact, otherwise it had been a vain thing to examine. Give a place - Which they might well allow him, because God gave them the city with a reservation for such persons.

6. Stand - Which was the posture of the accused and accusers. The congregation - The council appointed to judge of these matters, not the council of the city of refuge, for they had examined him before, ver. 4, but of the city to which he belonged, or in or nigh which the fact was committed, as appears from Num. xxxv, 25.

7. And they appointed - Concerning these cities note,

1. That they were all upon mountains, that they might be seen at a great distance, and so direct those who fled thither.
2. That they were seated at convenient distance one from another, for the benefit of the several tribes; for Kedesh was in the north, Hebron in the south, and Shechem between them.
3. That they all belonged to the Levites; partly that these causes might be more impartially examined, and justly determined by them who are presumed best able to understand the law of God, and most obliged to follow it and not to be biass'd by any affection or corrupt interest, and partly, that their reputation with the people, and their good counsels, might lay a restraint upon revengeful persons, who might be inclined to follow the man- slayer thither, and endeavour to kill him there. It was likewise an advantage to the poor refugee, that when he might not go up to the house of the Lord, yet he had the servants of God's house with him, to instruct him, and pray for him, and help to make up the want of public ordinances.

8. They assigned - Or, had assigned or given; for they were given by Moses, Deut. iv, 41, &c. or, they applied them to that use to which Moses designed them.

9. The stranger - Not only proselytes, but others also; because this was a matter of common right, that a distinction might be made between casual man-slayers, and wilful murderers.

## XXI

The motion of the Levites, to have their cities appointed, which is done, ver. 1-8. A catalogue of those cities, ver. 9-42. A testimony, that God had fulfilled his word, ver. 43-45.

1. Then - When the whole land was distributed to the several tribes, but not actually possessed by them; which was the proper season for them to put in their claim. Fathers of the Levites-The fathers of the Levites were Kohath, Gershom, and Merari, and the heads of these were the chief persons now alive of these several families.

2. The Lord commanded - Observe: the maintenance of ministers is not an arbitrary thing, left purely to the good will of the people. No: as the God of Israel commanded, that the Levites should be provided for, so hath the Lord Jesus ordained, (and a perpetual ordinance it is) that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

3. The children of Israel gave - Probably they gave the Levites promiscuously such cities as God commanded, and the lot appropriated them to their several houses or families. Out of their inheritance - That is, out of their several possessions; that the burden might be equally divided; and, that the Levites being dispersed among the several tribes, according to Jacob's prediction, Gen. xlix, 7, might more easily, and effectually teach the Israelites God's law and judgments, which they were engaged to do, Deut. xxxiii, 10, and that the people might upon all occasions resort to them, and inquire the meaning of the law at their mouths. And suburbs - Not only the use, but the absolute dominion of them, as is manifest both from ver. 11, 12, where a distinction is made between the city and suburbs of Hebron, and the fields and villages thereof; (the former given to the Levites, the latter to Caleb;) and from the return of these cities in the Jubilee, unto the Levites as to their proper owners, Lev. xxv, 33, 34.

4. Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin - Which three tribes were nearest the temple, where their business lay. Thirteen cities - For though the priests were now few enough for one city, yet respect was to be had to their succeeding numbers; this division being made for all future generations. And seeing the Levites might sell their houses until the Jubilee, Lev. xxv, 33, much more might they let them; and therefore it is probable their cities were not long uninhabited, many being inclined to dwell with them by virtue of relations contracted with them; or out of respect to the service of God, and the good of their souls.

5. Children of Kohath - Who were of Aaron's family. Ephraim, Daniel, and Manesseh - Which tribes are nearest to the three former, and so the Kohathites are placed next to their brethren the Aaronites. Ten cities - Fewer than they gave out of the three former tribes, because their inheritance was less than the former.

9. Judah and Simeon - These are mentioned together, because the cities of Simeon lay within Judah's portion.

10. Families - That is, of the family, the plural number for the singular, which is not unusual.

12. The fields and villages - That is, all beyond the two thousand cubits expressed, Num. xxxv, 5. This is here mentioned, not as his peculiar case, but as one eminent instance, to shew, that it was so in all the rest of the cities here named; that the fields and villages thereof still belonged to the several tribes from whom the cities and their suburbs were taken; and to make the rest of the Israelites more chearfully resign part of their possessions to the Levites, because even Caleb did so, though his possession had been long before promised, and now actually given to him by God's special command, as a mark of honour and compensation for his long and faithful service.

16. And Ain - Ain and Gibeon, and some others here named are not named, 1 Chron. vi, 59. Either they were destroyed in some of those invasions wherewith their land was grievously wasted before that time; or they appear there under other names.

20. Which remained - Over and above those who were priests.

25. Half the tribe - Namely, that half which dwelt in Canaan.

41. Forty eight cities - Why hath this tribe, which was the least of all, more cities than any of them? First, it doth not appear that they had more: for though all the cities of the Levites be expressed, it is not so with the other tribes, but divers of their cities are omitted. Secondly, the

Levites were confined to their cities and suburbs; the rest had large territories belonging to their cities, which also so they were in a capacity of improving, which the Levites were not; so that one of their cities might be more considerable than divers of the Levites. Thirdly, God, was pleased to deal liberally with his ministers, to put honour on those whom he foresaw many would be prone to despise; and, that being free from outward distractions, they might more entirely and fervently devote themselves to the service of God.

43. All the land - He gave them the right to all, and the actual possession of the greatest part of it, and power to possess the rest, as soon as it was needful for them, which was when their numbers were increased, and the absolute dominion of all the people remaining in it.

44. Gave them rest - Namely, all the days of Joshua; for afterwards it was otherwise with them.

45. All came to pass - Such an acknowledgment as this, here subscribed by Joshua, in the name of all Israel, we afterward find made by Solomon; and all Israel did in effect say amen to it, 1 Kings viii, 56. The inviolable truth of God's promise, and the performance of it to the uttermost, is what all believers in Christ have been always ready to bear their testimony to. And if in any thing it has seemed to come short, they have been as ready to take all the blame to themselves.

## XXII

Joshua's dismission of the two tribes and an half, and their return to their own country, ver. 1-9. The altar they built on that side of Jordan, which offended the other tribes, ver. 10-20. Their apology, with which the rest were satisfied, ver. 21-34.

4. Your tents - That is, to your settled habitations. Tho' their affections to their families could not but make them very desirous to return, yet like good soldiers, they would not move 'till they had orders from their general. So, tho' we desire to be at home with Christ ever so much, yet we must stay here till our warfare is accomplished, wait for a due discharge, and not anticipate the time of our removal.

5. Take heed - Watch over yourselves and all your actions. Commandment and law - Two words expressing the same thing, the law of commandments delivered by Moses. All your heart and soul - With the whole strength of your minds, and wills, and affections.

8. With your brethren - That is, with them who stayed beyond Jordan for the defense of their land, and wives, and children, who therefore were to have a share, though not an equal share with these. But for them, 1 Sam. xxx, 24, their share was equal, because their danger was equal.

10. Built an altar - About that time when they came to them, they designed it, and as soon as they were got over Jordan, which was in a very little time, they effected and perfected it. They built it, no doubt, on their own side of the water: for how could they build on other men's land, without their consent? And it is said, in the following verse, to be over against the land of Jordan. Nor would there have been cause to suspect that it was designed for sacrifice, if they had not built it among themselves.

11. At the passage - Where they passed over Jordan, either at their first entrance into Canaan, or afterwards, and usually.

12. The children of Israel - Not in their own persons, not by their elders, who used to transact all affairs of this kind in the name of all the people. Against them - As apostates from God, according to God's command in that case, Deut. xiii, 13. &c.

16. The congregation - Who do and are resolved to cleave unto that God from whom you have revolted. What trespass - How heinous a crime is this! This day - That is, so soon after God hath obliged you by such wonderful favours, and when God is now conducting you home to reap the fruits of all your pains and hazards. Rebel - With a design to rebel against God, and against his express command of worshipping him at one only altar.

17. Of Peor - That is, of our worshipping of Baal-peor, Num. xxv, 3. Probably this is mentioned the rather, because Phinehas, the first commissioner in this treaty, had signalized himself in that matter: and because they were now at or near the very place, where that iniquity was committed. Are not cleansed - For though God had pardoned it, as to the national punishment of it, Num. xxv, 11, yet they were not yet throughly purged from it; partly because the shame and blot of that odious practice was not yet wiped off: and partly, because some of that corrupt leaven still remained among them, and though smothered for a time, yet was ready to break forth upon all occasions, See chap. xxiv, 33. And God also took notice of these idolatrous inclinations in particular persons, and found out ways to punish them.

18. Tomorrow - That is, suddenly, as that word is often used. Congregation - With you for doing so, and with us for suffering, or not punishing it.

19. Be unclean - If you apprehend it to be so for want of the tabernacle and altar there; as the following words imply: if you now repent of your former choice in preferring the worldly commodities of that country before the advantage of God's presence, and more frequent opportunities of his service. Among us - We will readily resign part of our possessions to you for the prevention of this sin and mischief. Against us - For all the tribes were united in one body politick, and made one commonwealth, and one church; and each tribe was subject to the laws and commands of the whole society, and of the chief ruler or rulers thereof; so its disobedience to their just commands was properly rebellion against them.

20. Of Zerah - That is, one of his posterity. Not alone - But brought destruction upon his whole family, and part of our forces sent against Ai.

22. The Lord - That Jehovah, whom we no less than you acknowledge and adore as the God of gods, infinitely superior to all that are called gods. The multiplying of his titles, and the repetition of these words, shew their zeal and earnestness in this matter. He knoweth - To him we appeal who knoweth all things, and the truth of what we are now saying. Not only our present words, but our future and constant course shall satisfy all Israel of our perseverance in the true religion. In rebellion - If this have been done by us with such design, or in such a manner. Save us not - Thou, O Lord, to whom we have appealed, and without whom we cannot be saved and preserved, save us not from any of our enemies, nor from the sword of our brethren. It is a sudden apostrophe to God, usual in such vehement speeches.

23. Require it - That is, call us to an account and punish us for it.

24. With the Lord - You have no relation to him, nor interest in him, or his worship.

25. A border - To shut you out of the land of promise, and consequently from the covenant made between God and our fathers. No part - Nothing to do with him; no right to serve him or expect favour from him. Cease from fearing the Lord - For they that are cut off from public ordinances, usually by degrees lose all religion. It is true, the form and profession of godliness,

may be kept without the life and power of it. But the life and power will not long be kept, without the form and profession of it.

27. Before him - That we and ours may have and hold our privilege of serving and worshiping God, not upon this altar, but in the place of God's presence, in your tabernacle, and upon your altar.

28. The pattern - An exact representation and resemblance. A witness - That we both serve one God, and approve and make use of one and the same altar.

30. Pleased them - They were fully satisfied with this answer.

31. Is among us - By his gracious presence, and preventing goodness, in keeping you from so great an offense, and all of us from those calamities that would have followed it. Hand of the Lord - That is, from the wroth and dreadful judgments of God, by avoiding that sin which would have involved both you and us in a most bloody war; you have delivered us from the evils we feared. He that prevents an approaching disease or mischief, doth as truly deliver a man from it, as he that cures or removes it after it hath been inflicted.

33. Destroy the land - As they were by the law of God obliged to do, if they had been guilty and persisted therein; as afterwards they did the tribe of Benjamin for the same reason.

34. The altar Ed - That is, a witness: a witness of the relation they stood in to God and Israel, and of their concurrence with the other tribes in the common faith, that Jehovah he is God. It was a witness to posterity, of their care to transmit their religion pure and entire; and would be a witness against them, if ever they should turn from following the Lord their God.

## XXIII

Joshua reminds the people, assembled for that purpose, of what God had done, and what he would do for them, ver. 1-5. Exhorts them resolutely to persevere in their duty to God, ver. 6- 8. which he enforces by former benefits, and by promises, ver. 9- 11. and by threatnings, ver. 12-16.

1. A long time - About fourteen years after it.

2. Joshua called - Either to his own city, or rather to Shiloh, the usual place of such assemblies, where his words being uttered before the Lord, were likely to have the more effect upon them. All Israel - Not all the people in their own persons, but in their representatives, by their elders, heads, Judges and officers. Probably he took the opportunity, of one of the three great feasts. You will not have me long to preach to you; therefore observe what I say, and lay it up for the time to come.

3. Because of you - For your good, that you might gain by their losses.

4. That remain - Not yet conquered. An inheritance - You shall certainly subdue them, and inherit their hand, as you have done the rest, if you be not wanting to yourselves. All the nations - That is, with the land of those nations; the people put for their land, as we have seen before; and as sometimes on the contrary, the land is put for the people. The great sea - Where the Philistines, your most formidable adversaries yet survive; but them also and their land I have given to you, and you shall undoubtedly destroy them, if you will proceed vigourously in your work.

6. Very courageous - For it will require great courage and resolution to execute all the commands of Moses, and particularly, that of expelling and destroying the residue of the Canaanites. The right hand or the left - That is, in one kind or other, by adding to the law, or diminishing from it.

7. Come not - That is, avoid all familiar converse and contracts, but especially marriages with them. Name their gods - To wit, unnecessarily and familiarly, lest the mention of them breed discourse about them, and so by degrees bring to the approbation and worship of them. Nor cause - Nor require nor compel the Gentiles to swear by them, as they used to do; especially in leagues and contracts. It is pity, that among Christians, the name of the Heathen God's are so commonly used, especially in poems. Let those names which have been set up in rivalship with God, be forever loathed and lost. Nor bow - Neither give them any inward reverence, or outward adoration. Here is an observable gradation, whereby he shews what notable progress sin usually makes, and what need there is to look to the beginnings of it, forasmuch as a civil and common conversation with their persons was likely to bring them, and indeed did actually bring them, by insensible steps, to the worship of their gods. So it is no wonder, if some things not simply and in themselves evil, be forbidden by God, as here the naming of their gods is, because they are occasions and introductions to evil.

8. Cleave to the Lord - By constant obedience, entire affection, faithful service and worship of him alone. To this day - To wit, since you came in to Canaan; since which time the body of the people (for of them he speaks, not of every particular person) had behaved themselves much better than they did in the wilderness, and had not been guilty of any gross and general apostacy from God, or rebellion against him.

9. No man - To wit, whom you have invaded; otherwise some of those people did yet remain unconquered.

10. He fighteth - Impute not this therefore to your own valour, as you will be apt to do, but to God's gracious and powerful assistance.

11. Take heed - Now it requires more watchfulness and diligence than it did in the wilderness, because your temptations are now stronger; from the examples and insinuations of your bad neighbours, the remainders of this wicked people; and from your own peace and prosperity: and the pride, security, forgetfulness of God, and luxury, which usually attend that condition.

12. Go back - From God, and from his worship and service.

13. Traps to you - By your converse with them, you will be drawn by degrees into their errors, and impieties, and brutish lusts. Thorns in your eyes - When they have seduced, and thereby weakened you, then they will molest and vex you, no less than a severe scourge doth a man's sides which are lashed by it, or than a small thorn doth the eye when it is got within it. Till ye perish - They shall so persecute you, and fight against, you with such success, that you shall be forced to quit your own land, and wander you know not whither; which must needs be very terrible to them to think of, when they compared this present ease, and plenty and safety, with the pains, and weariness, and hazards, and wants of their former wanderings.

14. Of all the earth - That is, of all flesh, or of all men; the way which all men go; I am about to die, as all men must. To die is, to go a journey, a journey to our long home. And Joshua himself, tho' he could so ill be spared, cannot be exempted from this common lot. He takes notice of it, that they might look on these as his dying words, and regard them accordingly. Ye know - That is, you know assuredly; your own experience puts it out of all question.

15. Evil things - The accomplishment of God's promise is a pledge that he will also fulfil his threatnings; both of them depending upon the same ground, the faithfulness of God.

16. It will aggravate their perdition, that the land from which they shall perish is a good land, and a land which God himself had given them: and which therefore he would have secured to them, if they had not thrown themselves out of it. "Thus the goodness of the heavenly Canaan, says Mr. Henry, and the free and sure grant God has made of it, will aggravate the misery of those that shall forever be shut out and perish from it. Nothing will make them see how wretched they are, so much as to see, how happy they might have been." Might have been! What on the supposition of absolute decrees? How happy might a person not elected have been? And if he was elected, how could he be wretched for ever? What art of man can reconcile these things? Again, shall any of the elect perish for ever? or has God made to any others, a free and sure grant of the heavenly Canaan? If not, how can the misery of those that perish be aggravated, by a free and sure grant which they never had any share in?

## XXIV

Joshua assembling the people, recounts what great things God had done for them, ver. 1-13. Exhorts them to serve God, which they engage to do, ver. 14-28. His age, death, and burial, ver. 29-31. The burying of Joseph's bones, ver. 32. The death and burial of Eleazar, ver. 33.

1. All Israel - Namely, their representatives. Shechem - To the city of Shechem, a place convenient for the purpose, not only because it was a Levitical city, and a city of refuge, and a place near Joshua's city, but especially for the two main ends for which he summoned them thither.

1. For the solemn burial of the bones of Joseph, and the rest of the patriarchs, for which this place was designed.
2. For the solemn renewing of their covenant with God; which in this place was first made between God and Abraham, Gen. xii, 6, 7, and afterwards renewed by the Israelites at their first entrance into the land of Canaan, between the two mountains of Ebal and Gerizzim, chap. viii, 30, &c. which were very near Shechem: and therefore this place was most proper, both to remind them of their former obligations to God, and to engage them to a farther ratification of them. Before God - As in God's presence, to hear what Joshua was to speak to them in God's name, and to receive God's commands from his mouth. He had taken a solemn farewell before: but as God renewed his strength, he desired to improve it for their good. We must never think our work for God done, 'till our life is done.

2. The people - To the elders, by whom it was to be imparted to all the rest, and to as many of the people as came thither. He spake to them in God's name, and as from him, in the language of a prophet, Thus saith the Lord. Jehovah, the great God, and the God of Israel, whom you are peculiarly engaged to hear. The flood - Or, the river, namely, Euphrates, so called by way of eminency. They served - That is, Both Abraham and Nahor were no less idolaters than the rest of

mankind. This is said to prevent their vain boasting in their worthy ancestors, and to assure them that whatsoever good was in, or had been done by their progenitors, was wholly from God's free grace, and not for their own merit or righteousness.

3. I took - I snatched him out of that idolatrous place, and took him into acquaintance and covenant with myself, which was the highest honour and happiness he was capable of. And led - That is I brought him after his father's death into Canaan, Gen. xii, 1, and I conducted and preserved him in all his travels through the several parts of Canaan. And multiplied - That is, gave him a numerous posterity, not only by Hagar and Keturah, but even by Sarah and by Isaac. Gave Isaac - By my special power and grace to be heir of my covenant, and all my promises, and the seed in or by which all the nations were to be blessed.

4. Mount Seir - That he might leave Canaan entire to his brother Jacob and his posterity, Gen. xxxvi, 7, 8. Into Egypt - Where they long lived in grievous bondage; which God having delivered us from, I shall now pass it over. 7. Your eyes - He speaketh this to the elders, ver. 1, who were so, not only by power and dignity, but many of them by age; and there being now not sixty years past since those Egyptian plagues, it is very probable that a considerable number of those present, had seen those things in Egypt, and being not twenty years old, were exempted from that dreadful sentence passed upon all who were older, Num. xiv, 29.

9. Balak warred - Balak warred, tho' not by open force, yet by crafty counsel and warlike stratagems, by wicked devices.

10. Unto Balaam - Who hereby appears to have desired of God leave to curse Israel; and therefore it is not strange, that God who permitted him simply to go, was highly angry with him for going with so wicked an intent, Num. xxii, 20, 22, 32. Delivered you - That is, from Balak's malicious design against you.

11. Deliver them - Namely, successively; for in these few words he seems to comprise all their wars, which being so fresh in their memory, he thought it needless particularly to mention.

12. Sent the hornet - When they were actually engaged in battle with the Canaanites. These dreadful swarms which first appeared in their war with Sihon and Og, tormented them with their stings and terrified them with their noise, so that they became an easy prey to Israel. God had promised to do this for them, Exod. xxiii, 27, 28, and here Joshua observes the fulfilling the promise.

14. The gods - Whereby it appears, that although Joshua had doubtless prevented and purged out all public idolatry, yet there were some of them who practiced it in their private houses and retirements. Your fathers - Terah, and Nahor, and Abraham, as ver. 2, and other of your ancestors. In Egypt - See Ezek xxiii, 3, 8, 19, 21, 27. Under these particulars, no doubt he comprehends all other false gods, which were served by the nations amongst whom they were, but only mentions these, as the idols which they were in more danger of worshipping than those in Canaan; partly because those of Canaan had been now lately and palpably disgraced by their inability to preserve their worshippers from total ruin; and partly, because the other idols came recommended to them by the venerable name of antiquity, and the custom of their forefathers.

15. Seem evil - Unjust, unreasonable or inconvenient. Choose ye - Not that he leaves them to their liberty, whether they would serve God or idols; for Joshua had no such power himself, nor could give it to any other; and both he and they were obliged by the law of Moses, to give their worship to God only, and to forbear all idolatry in themselves, and severely to punish it in others; but it is a powerful insinuation, whereby he both implies, that the worship of God is so highly reasonable, necessary and beneficial; and the service of idols so absurd, and vain, and pernicious,

that if it were left free for all men to take their choice, every man in his right wits must needs chuse the service of God, before that of idols; and provokes them to bind themselves faster to God by their own choice. He will - But know this, if you should all be so base and brutish, as to prefer senseless and impotent idols, before the true and living God, it is my firm purpose, that I will, and my children, and servants (as far as I can influence them) shall be constant and faithful to the Lord. And that, whatever others do. They that resolve to serve God, must not start at being singular in it. They that are bound for heaven must be willing to swim against the stream, and must do, not as most do, but as the best do.

19. Ye cannot - He speaks not of an absolute impossibility, (for then both his resolution to serve God himself, and his exhortation to them had been vain) but of a moral impossibility, or a very great difficulty, which he alledgeth not to discourage them from God's service, but to make them more considerate in obliging themselves; and more resolved in answering their obligations. The meaning is, God's service is not, as you seem to fancy, a slight and easy thing, but it is a work of great difficulty, and requires great care, and courage and resolution; and when I consider the infinite purity of God, that he will not be mocked or abused; and withal your proneness to superstition and idolatry, even during the life of Moses, and in some of you, while I live, and while the obligations which God had laid upon you in this land, are fresh in remembrance; I cannot but fear that after my decease you will think the service of God burdensome, and therefore will cast it off and revolt from him, if you do not carefully avoid all occasions of idolatry. A jealous God - In the Hebrew, He is the holy Gods, holy Father, holy Son, holy Spirit. He will not endure a partner in his worship; you can not serve him and idols together. Will not forgive - If you who own yourselves his people and servants, shall wilfully transgress his laws, he will not let this go unpunished in you, as he doth in other nations; therefore consider what you do, when you take the Lord for your God; weigh your advantages and inconveniences together; for as if you be sincere and faithful in God's service, you will have admirable benefits by it; so if you be false to your professions, and forsake him whom you have so solemnly avouched to be your God, he will deal more severely with you than with any people in the world.

20. Will turn - That is, he will alter his course and the manner of his dealing with you, and will be as severe as ever he was kind and gracious. He will repent of his former kindnesses, and his goodness abused will be turned into fury.

21. The Lord - Namely, him only, and not strange gods.

22. Against yourselves - This solemn profession will be a swift witness against you, if hereafter you apostatize from God.

23. Strange gods - Those idols which you either brought out of Egypt, or have taken in Canaan, which some of you keep contrary to God's command, whether for the preciousness of the matter, or rather for some secret inclination to superstition and idolatry.

25. A statute - He set or established that covenant with them, that is, the people, for a statute or an ordinance, to bind themselves and their posterity unto God for ever.

26. These words - That is, this covenant or agreement of the people with the Lord. In the book - That is, in the volume which was kept in the ark, Deut. xxxi, 9, 26, whence it was taken and put into this book of Joshua: this he did for the perpetual remembrance of this great and solemn action, to lay the greater obligation upon the people to be true to their engagement; and as a witness for God, against the people, if afterward he punished them for their defection from God, to whom they had so solemnly and freely obliged themselves. Set it up - As a witness and monument of this great

transaction, according to the custom of those ancient times. Possibly this agreement was written upon this stone, as was then usual. By the sanctuary - That is, near the place where the ark and tabernacle then were; for tho' they were forbidden to plant a grove of trees near unto the altar, as the Gentiles did, yet they might for a time set up an altar, or the ark, near a great tree which had been planted there before.

27. It hath heard - It shall be as sure a witness against you, as if it had heard. This is a common figure, whereby the sense of hearing is often ascribed to the heavens and the earth, and other senseless creatures.

32. The bones of Joseph - Joseph died two hundred years before in Egypt, but gave commandment concerning his bones, that they should not rest in a grave, 'till Israel rested in the land of promise. Now therefore they were deposited in that piece of ground, which his father gave him near Shechem. One reason why Joshua called all Israel to Shechem, might be to attend Joseph's bones to the grave. So that he now delivered as it were both Joseph's funeral sermon, and his own farewell sermon. And if it was in the last year of his life, the occasion might well remind him, of his own death now at hand. For he was just of the same age with his illustrious ancestor, who died being one hundred and ten years old, Gen. i, 26.

33. Given him - By special favour, and for his better conveniency in attending upon the ark, which then was, and for a long time was to be in Shiloh, near this place: whereas the cities which were given to the priests, were in Judah. Benjamin, and Simeon, which were remote from Shiloh, tho' near the place where the ark was to have its settled abode, namely, at Jerusalem. It is probable Eleazar died about the same time with Joshua, as Aaron did in the same year with Moses. While Joshua lived, religion was kept up, under his care and influence, but after he and his contemporaries were gone, it swiftly went to decay. How well is it for the gospel church, that Christ, our Joshua, is still with it by his Spirit, and will be always, even to the end of the world?

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES

This book contains the history of the Israelites under the Judges, which lasted two hundred and ninety nine years: under Othniel, forty, under Ehud, eighty, under Barak, forty, under Gideon, forty, under Abimelek, three, under Tola, twenty-three, under Jair, twenty-two, under Jephtha, six, under Ibzan, seven, under Elon, ten, under Abdon, eight, under Samson, twenty. As for the years of their servitude, they coincide with the years of some or other of the Judges. In the five last chapters we have an account of some memorable events, which happened in the days when the Judges ruled. As to the state of Israel during this period,

1. They were miserably corrupted, and miserably oppressed. Yet we may hope, the tabernacle service was kept up, and that many attended it.
2. It seems, each tribe had its government within itself, and acted separately, without any common head. This occasioned many differences among themselves.
3. The government of the Judges was not constant but occasional. By their judging Israel is meant chiefly, their avenging Israel of their enemies, and purging them from their idolatries.

4. During the government of the Judges, God was in an especial manner the king of Israel.

It is not improbably supposed, that the prophet Samuel was the penman of this book.

## I

The conquests made by Judah and Simeon, ver. 1-20. Benjamin failed, ver. 21. The house of Joseph took Bethel, ver. 22-26. But Manasseh did not drive out the Canaanites, ver. 27, 28. Nor Ephraim, ver. 29. Nor Zebulun, ver. 30. Nor Asher, ver. 31, 32. Nor Naphtali, ver. 33. Nor Daniel, ver. 34-36.

1. After the death - Not long after it; for Othniel, the first judge, lived in Joshua's time. Asked the Lord - Being assembled together at Shiloh, they inquired of the high-priest by the Urim and the Thummim. Against the Canaanites first - Finding their people multiply exceedingly, and consequently the necessity of enlarging their quarters, they renew the war. They do not inquire who shall be captain general to all the tribes; but what tribe shall first undertake the expedition, that by their success the other tribes may be encouraged to make the like attempt upon the Canaanites in their several lots.

2. Judah - The tribe of Judah is chosen for the first enterprise, because they were both most populous, and so most needing enlargement; and withal most valiant, and therefore most likely to succeed: for God chooseth fit means for the work which he designs. Moreover the Canaanites were numerous and strong in those parts, and therefore to be suppressed, before they grew too strong for them.

3. To Simeon - As nearest to him both by relation, being his brother by both parents, and by habitation. The Canaanites - Specially so called, because they are distinguished from the Perizzites, ver. 4.

4. In Bezek - Not in the city, for that was not yet taken, ver. 5, but in the territory of it.

5. Adoni-bezek - The Lord or king of Bezek; as his name signifies. In Bezek - Whither he fled when he lost the field. Against him - That is, against the city wherein he had encamped himself, and the rest of his army.

6. Great toes - And this they did, either by the direction of God, or upon notice of his former tyranny and cruelty.

7. Threescore and ten - Which is not strange in those times and places. For it is well known, that anciently each ruler of a city, or great town, was called a king, and had kingly power in that place; and many such kings we meet with in Canaan: and it is probable, that some years before, kings were more numerous there, 'till the greater devoured many of the less. Under my table - An act of barbarous inhumanity thus to insult over the miserable, joined with abominable luxury.

8. And took - Yet some of the inhabitants retired into the castle, and held out there 'till David's time.

10. Judah went - Under the conduct of Caleb, as is recorded, ver. 14, &c., for that relation, and this, are doubtless one and the same expedition, and it is mentioned there by anticipation.

16. Moses's father-in-law - That is, of Jethro, so called from the people whom he descended, Num. xxiv, 21, 22. And, whatsoever he did, it is evident, that his posterity came into Canaan with the Israelites, and were there seated with them, see chap. iv, 11, 17; v, 24; 1 Sam. xv, 6; 1 Chron. ii, 1-54, 55. City of palm-trees - That is, from Jericho, so called, Deut. xxxiv, 3, not the city which was destroyed, but the territory belonging to it, where it seems they were seated, in a most pleasant, and fruitful, and safe place, according to the promise made by Moses to their father, Num. x, 29-32, and whence they might remove, either to avoid the neighbouring Canaanites; or out of love to the children of Judah. South of Arad - In the southern part of the land of Canaan, where Arad was, Num. xxi, 1. They went - That is some of them, for others of them dwelt in a contrary quarter, in the most northern part of the land. Among the people - Hebrew. that people, namely, those children of Judah that lived there.

17. Judah went with Simeon - According to his promise, ver. 3, and the laws of justice and gratitude. Hormah - Either,

1. The same place so called, Num. xxi, 3, and so what was there vowed, is here executed: or,
2. Some other place called by the same name upon the like occasion, which was frequent among the Hebrew. This seems more probable.

18. Judah took - It is only said, they took the cities, and probably contented themselves with making them tributary; but it is not said that they slew the people, as they ought to have done; and as it is said of the other cities here. And the people being thus spared, did by God's just judgment recover their strength, and expel the Jews out of their cities. It is farther observable, that Ekron here taken, was one of Dan's cities, ver. 43, and it was taken here by Judah and Simeon, partly out of love for their brother Daniel, and partly to secure their new conquests, and other adjoining territories, from such potent neighbours.

19. Could not drive - Because of their unbelief, whereby they distrusted God's power to destroy those who had chariots of iron, and so gave way to their own fear and sloth, whereby God was provoked to withdraw his helping hand.

22. House of Joseph - That is, the tribe of Ephraim.

24. The entrance - On which side it is weakest, that we might best invade and take it.

25. His family - Together with his estate, as the following verse manifests.

26. The Hittites - Where the Hittites seated themselves after they were driven out of Canaan, which seems to be northward from Canaan, and near upon it.

27. Manasseh - That is, that half of this tribe which dwelt in Canaan.

29. In Gezer - Which they possessed 'till Solomon's time, 1 Kings ix, 16.

34. The valley - That is, into the plain country; which was the occasion of that expedition for the getting new quarters, of which we read ver. 47, 48 and chap. xviii, 1-31.

35. House of Joseph - That is, of the Ephraimites, who helped their brethren the Danites against the Amorites.

36. Akrabbim - Which was in the southern part of Canaan, Josh. xv, 2, 3 , from whence it went up towards the north. This is added to shew the great power and large extent of this people.

## II

An angel reproves Israel, who bewail their sins, ver. 1-5. They served God during the life of Joshua and his contemporaries, ver. 4-9. Their frequent revolts to idolatry, ver. 10-19. God stops their success, ver. 20-23.

1. The angel - Christ the angel of the covenant, often called the angel of the Lord, to whom the conduct of Israel out of Egypt into Canaan, is frequently ascribed. He alone could speak the following words in his own name and person; whereas created angels and prophets universally usher in their message with, Thus saith the Lord, or some equivalent expression. And this angel having assumed the shape of a man, it is not strange that he imitates the motion of a man, and comes as it were from Gilgal to the place where now they were: by which motion he signified, that he was the person that brought them to Gilgal, the first place where they rested in Canaan, and there protected them so long, and from thence went with them to battle, and gave them success. Bochim - A place so called by anticipation; it seems to be no other than Shiloh, where it is probable, the people were met together upon some solemn festival. I said - That is, I promised upon condition of your keeping covenant with me.

2. Done this - That is, disobeyed these express commands.

3. I said - With myself, I have now taken up this peremptory resolution.

4. Wept - Some of them from a true sense of their sins; others from a just apprehension of their approaching misery.

5. Bochim - That is, Weepers. They sacrificed - For the expiation of their sins, by which they had provoked God to this resolution.

6. Let the people go - When he had distributed their inheritances, and dismissed them severally to take possession of them. This was done before this time, whilst Joshua lived; but is now repeated to discover the time, and occasion of the peoples defection from God, and of God's desertion of them.

10. Knew not - Which had no experimental, nor serious and affectionate knowledge of God, or of his works.

11. In the sight - Which notes the heinousness and impudence of their sins, above other peoples; because God's presence was with them, and his eye upon them in a peculiar manner, which also they were not ignorant of, and therefore were guilty of more contempt of God than other people. Baalim - False gods. He useth the plural number, because the gods of the Canaanites, and adjoining nations, which Israel worshipped, were most of them called by the name of Baal.

13. Baal and Ashtaroth - That is, the sun and moon, whom many Heathens worshipped, tho' under divers names; and so they ran into that error which God had so expressly warned them against, Deut. iv, 19. Baalim signifies lords, and Ashtaroth, blessed ones, he-gods and she-gods. When they forsook Jehovah, they had gods many and lords many, as a luxuriant fancy pleased to multiply them.

14. Sold them - That is, delivered them up, as the seller doth his commodities unto the buyer.

15. Whithersoever they went - That is, Whatsoever expedition or business they undertook; which is usually signified by going out, and coming in.

16. Raised up - By inward inspiration and excitation of their hearts, and by outward designation testified by some extra- ordinary action. Judges - Supreme magistrates, whose office it was, under God, and by his particular direction, to govern the commonwealth of Israel by God's laws, and to protect and save them from their enemies, to preserve and purge religion, and to maintain the liberties of the people against all oppressors.

17. Their Judges - Who admonished them of their sin and folly, and of the danger and misery which would certainly befall them.

18. It repented the Lord - That is, the Lord changed his course and dealings with them, as penitent men use to do; removed his judgments, and returned to them in mercy.

19. Returned - To their former, and usual course. Their fathers - In Egypt, or in the wilderness. Their own doings - That is, from their evil practices, which he calls their own, because they were agreeable to their own natures, which in all mankind are deeply and universally corrupted, and because they were familiar and customary to them.

22. May prove - That I may try and see whether Israel will be true and faithful to me, or whether they will suffer themselves to be corrupted by the counsels and examples of their bad neighbours.

## III

A general account of Israel's enemies, ver. 1-7. A particular account of Othniel, ver. 8-11, Of Ehud, ver. 12-30. and of Shamgar, ver. 31.

1. Had not known - That is, such as had no experience of those wars, nor of God's extraordinary power and providence manifested in them.

2. Teach them war - That by the neighbourhood of such warlike enemies, they might be purged from sloth and security, and obliged them to innure themselves to martial exercises, and to stand continually upon their guard, and consequently to keep close to that God whose assistance they had so great and constant need of.

3. Five lords - Whereof three had been in some sort subdued, chap. i, 18. but afterwards recovered their strength. Canaanites - Properly so called, who were very numerous, and dispersed through several parts of the land, whence they gave denomination to all the rest of the people. Zidonions - The people living near Zidon, and subject to its jurisdiction. Baal-hermon - Which was the eastern part about Lebanon.

4. To know - That is, that they and others might know by experience.

6. Served their gods - Were drawn to idolatry by the persuasions and examples of their yoke-fellows.

7. And the groves - That is, in the groves, in which the Heathens usually worshipped their Baalim or idols.

8. Served - That is, were made subject to him. Mesopotamia was that part of Syria which lay between the two great rivers, Tigris and Euphrates. This lay at such a distance, that one would not have thought Israel's trouble should have come from such a far country: which shews so much the more of the hand of God in it.

9. Cried - That is, prayed fervently for deliverance.

10. Came upon him - With extraordinary influence, endowing him with singular wisdom and courage, and stirring him up to this great undertaking. Judged Israel - That is, pleaded and avenged the cause of Israel against their oppressors.

11. Forty years - It rested about forty years, or the greatest part of forty years: it being most frequent in scripture to use numbers in such a latitude. Nor is it unusual either in scripture, or in other authors, for things to be denominated from the greater part; especially, when they enjoyed some degrees of rest and peace even in their times of slavery.

12. Strengthened Eglon - By giving him courage, and power, and success against them.

13. City of Palm-trees - That is, Jericho. Not the city which was demolished, but the territory belonging to it. Here he fixed his camp, for the fertility of that soil, and because of its nearness to the passage over Jordan, which was most commodious both for the conjunction of his own forces which lay on both sides of Jordan; to prevent the conjunction of the Israelites in Canaan with their brethren beyond Jordan; and to secure his retreat into his own country.

14. Eighteen years - The former servitude lasted but eight years; this eighteen: for if smaller troubles do not the work, God will send greater.

15. A Benjamite - This tribe was next to Eglon, and doubtless most afflicted by him; and hence God raiseth a deliverer. Left handed - Which is here noted, as a considerable circumstance in the following story.

16. A cubit length - Long enough for his design, and not too long for concealment. His right thigh - Which was most convenient both for the use of his left hand, and for avoiding suspicion.

17. The present - Which was to be paid to him as a part of his tribute.

18. Sent the people - He accompanied them part of the way, and then dismissed them, and returned to Eglon alone, that so he might have more easy access to him.

19. Turned again - As if he had forgot some important business. Keep silence - 'Till my servants be gone: whom he would not have acquainted with a business which he supposed to be of great importance.

20. A summer parlor - Into which he used to retire from company: which is mentioned as the reason why his servants waited so long ere they went in to him, ver. 25. A message - To be delivered not in words, but by actions. He designedly uses the name Elohim, which was common to the true God, and false ones; and not Jehovah, which was peculiar to the true God; because Ehud not knowing whether the message came; not from his own false God, he would more certainly rise, and thereby give Ehud more advantage for his blow; whereas he would possibly shew his contempt of the God of Israel by sitting still to hear his message. He arose - In token of reverence to God.

23. Went forth - With a composed countenance and gait, being well assured, that God, who by his extraordinary call had put him upon that enterprise, would by his special providence carry him through it. Upon him - Upon or after himself. Locked them - Either pulling it close after him, as we do when doors have spring locks; or taking the key with him.

24. Covereth his feet - This phrase is used only here, and 1 Sam. xxiv, 3. A late judicious interpreter expounds it, of composing himself to take a little sleep, as was very usual to do in the day- time in those hot countries. And when they did so in cool places, such as this summer parlor unquestionably was, they used to cover their feet. And this may seem to be the more probable, both because the summer parlor was proper for this use, and because this was a more likely reason of

their long waiting at his door, lest they should disturb his repose. And this sense best agrees with Saul's case in the cave, when being asleep, David could more securely cut off the lap of his garment.

25. Ashamed - Or, confounded, not knowing what to say or think; lest they should either disturb him, or be guilty of neglect towards him. A key - Another key, it being usual in princes courts to have divers keys for the same door.

27. The children of Israel - Whom doubtless he had prepared by his emissaries gathered together in considerable numbers.

28. Fords of Jordan - Where they passed over Jordan, that neither the Moabites that were got into Canaan, might escape, nor any more Moabites come over Jordan to their succor.

30. Fourscore years - Chiefly that part of it which lay east of Jordan: for the other side of the country, which lay southwest, was even then infested by the Philistines.

31. An ox goad - As Samson did a thousand with the jaw-bone of an ass; both being miraculous actions, and not at all incredible to him that believes a God, who could easily give strength to effect this. It is probable Shamgar was following the plough, when the Philistines made an inroad into the country. And having neither sword nor spear, when God put it into his heart to oppose them, he took the instrument that was next at hand. It is no matter how weak the weapon is, if God direct and strengthen the arm.

## IV

Israel revolting from God is oppressed by Jabin, ver. 1-3. Deborah concerts their deliverance with Barak, ver. 4-9. Barak takes the field and conquers, ver. 10-16. Sisera flies and is killed, ver. 17-21. Barak sees him, and Israel is delivered, ver. 22-24.

2. Of Canaan - That is, of the land where most of the Canaanites, strictly so called, now dwelt, which seems to be in the northern part of Canaan. This seems to be of the posterity of that Jabin, whom Joshua slew, Josh. xi, 11, who watched all opportunities to recover his ancient possessions, and to revenge his own and his father's quarrel. In Hazor - In the territory or the kingdom of Hazor, which might now be restored to its former largeness and power. Of the Gentiles - So called, because it was much frequented and inhabited by the Gentiles; either by the Canaanites, who being beaten out of their former possessions, seated themselves in those northern parts; or by other nations coming there for traffick, whence Galilee, where this was, is called Galilee of the Gentiles.

3. Mightily oppressed - More than former tyrants; from his malice and hatred against the Israelites; and from God's just judgment, the growing punishment being suitable to their aggravated wickedness.

4. A prophetess - As there were men-prophets, so there were also women-prophetesses, as Miriam, Exod. xv, 20. Huldah, 2 Kings xxii, 14, and divers others; but the word prophets or prophetesses is ambiguous, sometimes being used of persons extraordinarily inspired by God, and endowed with the power of working miracles, and foretelling things to come; and sometimes of persons endowed with special gifts or graces, for the better understanding and discoursing about the word and mind of God. Of this sort were the sons of the prophets, or such as were bred in the

schools of the prophets. who are often called prophets, as 1 Sam. x, 5, 10. And because we read nothing of Deborah's miraculous actions, perhaps she was only a woman of eminent holiness, and knowledge of the holy scriptures, by which she was singularly qualified for judging the people according to the laws of God. Judged Israel - That is, determined causes and controversies arising among the Israelites, as is implied, ver. 5. And this Jabin might suffer to be done, especially by a woman. Yet the frequent discharge of this part of the judge's office, whereby she gained great power and authority with the people, did notably (though not observed by the tyrant) prepare the way for her sliding into the other part of her office, which was to defend and rescue the people from their enemies.

5. And she dwelt - Or, she sat: she had her judgment-seat in the open air, under the shadow of that tree; which was an emblem of the justice she administered there: thriving and growing against opposition, as the palm-tree does under pressures. Came to her - To have their suits and causes determined by her sentence.

6. Called Barak - By virtue of that power which God had given her, and the people owned in her. Kedesh Naphtali - So called, to distinguish it from other places of that name, one in Judah, and another in Issachar. Hath not the Lord, &c. - That is, assuredly God hath commanded thee; this is not the fancy of a weak woman, which peradventure thou mayst despise; but the command of the great God by my mouth. Mount Tabor - A place most fit for his purpose, as being in the borders of divers tribes, and having a large plain at the top of it, where he might conveniently marshal and discipline his army. Naphtali and Zebulun - These she names because they were nearest and best known to Barak, and therefore soonest brought together, because they were nearest to the enemy, and therefore might speedily be assembled, whilst the other tribes, being at a distance, had better opportunity of gathering forces for their succor; and because these had most smarted under this oppressor, who was in the heart of their country; but these are not named exclusively, as appears by the concurrence of some other tribes.

7. Draw to Thee - By my secret and powerful providence, ordering and over-ruling his inclinations that way. In fixing the very place, she gave him a sign, which might confirm his faith, when he came to engage.

8. I will not go - His offer to go with her, shews the truth of his faith, for which he is praised, Hebrew xi, 32, but his refusal to go without her, shews the weakness of his faith, that he could not trust God's bare word, as he ought to have done, without the pledge of the presence of his prophetess.

10. Ten thousand at his feet - That is, who followed him; possibly he intimates that they were all foot-men; and so this is emphatically added, to signify by what contemptible means God overthrew Sisera's great host.

11. Heber - The husband of Jael. Of Hobab - Called also Jethro. The Kenites - From the rest of his brethren, who lived in the wilderness of Judah. His tent - That is, his dwelling, which probably was in tents, as shepherds used.

12. They - That is, this people dwelling there, or his spies.

14. Up - Hebrew. arise, delay not. If we have ground to believe, that God goes before us, we may well go on with courage and cheerfulness. Gone before thee - Namely, as general of thine army, to fight for thee. Went down - He doth not make use of the advantage which he had of the hill, where he might have been out of the reach of his iron chariots, but boldly marcheth down into the valley, to give Sisera the opportunity of using all his horses and chariots, that so the victory might he more glorious.

15. Discomfited - With great terror and noise, as the word signifies, probably with thunder and lightning, and hail-stones, poured upon them from heaven, as is implied, chap. v, 20. Edge of the sword - That is, by the sword of Barak and his army, whose ministry God used; but so, that they had little else to do, but to kill those whom God by more powerful arms had put to flight. On his feet - That he might flee away more secretly in the quality of a common soldier, whereas his chariot would have exposed him to more observation.

16. Left - In the field; for there were some who fled away, as Sisera did.

17. The tent of Jael - For women had their tents apart from their husbands. And here he thought to lurk more securely than in her husband's tent. Peace - Not a covenant of friendship, which they were forbidden to make with that cursed people, but only a cessation of hostilities, which he afforded them because they were peaceable people, abhorring war, and wholly minding pasturage, and were not Israelites, with whom his principal quarrel was; and especially by God's over-ruling disposal of his heart to favour them who were careful to keep themselves uncorrupted with Israel's sins, and therefore preserved from their plagues.

18. Fear not - This was a promise of security, and therefore she cannot be excused from dissimulation and treachery.

19. A bottle of milk - As a signification of greater respect. Covered him - Upon pretense of hiding him.

21. A nail of the tent - Wherewith they used to fasten the tent, which consequently was long and sharp. This might seem a very bold attempt, but it must be considered, that she was encouraged to it, by observing that the heavens and all the elements conspired against him, as one devoted to destruction. In the following son, Deborah doth not commend Jael's words, ver. 18. Turn in my Lord, fear not; but only her action: touching which, this one consideration may abundantly suffice to stop the mouths of objectors. It cannot be denied, that every discourse which is recorded in scripture, is not divinely inspired, because some of them were uttered by the devil, and others by holy men, but mistaken. This being so, the worst that any can infer from this place is, that this song, tho' indited by a good woman, was not divinely inspired, but only composed by a person transported with joy for the deliverance of God's people, but subject to mistake; who therefore, out of zeal to commend the instrument of so great a deliverance, might overlook the indirectness of the means, and commend that which should have been disliked, And if they farther object, that it was composed by a prophetess, and therefore must be divinely inspired; it may be replied, that every expression of a true prophet was not divinely inspired; as is evident from Samuel's mistake concerning Eliab, whom he thought to be the Lord's anointed, 1 Sam. xvi, 6. This is said upon supposition that Jael acted deceitfully in this affair; but if we suppose, which is much more likely, that Jael fully intended to afford Sisera the shelter and protection which he sought of her, but was afterwards by the immediate direction of heaven ordered to kill him, the whole difficulty vanishes, and the character both of Jael and of Deborah remains unimpeached.

## V

Deborah's song begins with praise, ver. 1-3. Compares God's present appearance for them with his appearance on mount Sinai, ver. 4-5. Describes the condition they were in before, ver. 6-8. Calls

all the delivered to join in praise, ver. 9-13. Commends those tribes that were forward in the war, and censures those that declined the service, ver. 14-19. Takes notice how God fought for them, and how Jael slew Sisera, ver. 20-30. Concludes with prayer, ver.. 31.

1. Deborah - The composer of this song.

2. The Lord-Give him the praise who hath done the work. The people - Chiefly Zebulun and Naphtali. Offered themselves - When neither Deborah nor Barak had any power to compel them.

3. The princes - You especially that live near, and have evil designs against Israel, know this for your caution, and terror too, if you presume to molest them. God of Israel - Who, as you see by this plain instance, is both able and resolved to defend them from all their enemies.

4. Edom - Seir and Edom are the same place; and these two expressions note the same thing, even God's marching in the head of his people, from Seir or Edom, towards the land of Canaan: while the Israelites were encompassing mount Seir, there were none of the following effects; but when once they had done that, and got Edom on their backs, then they marched directly forward towards the land of Canaan. The prophetess being to praise God for the present mercies, takes her rise higher, and begins her song with the commemoration of the ancient deliverances afforded by God to his people, the rather because of the great resemblance this had with them, in the miraculous manner of them. The earth trembled - God prepared the way for his people, and struck a dread into their enemies, by earth-quakes as well as by other terrible signs. Dropped water - That is, thou didst send storms and tempests, thunder and lightning, and other tokens of thy displeasure upon thine enemies.

5. Melted - Or, flowed, with floods of water powered out of the clouds upon them, and from them flowing down in a mighty stream upon the lower grounds, and carrying down part of the mountains with it. Sinai - She slides into the mention of a more ancient appearance of God for his people in Sinai; it being usual in scripture repetitions of former actions, to put divers together in a narrow compass. The sense is, No wonder that the mountains of the Amorites and Canaanites melted and trembled, when thou didst lead thy people toward them; for even Sinai itself could not bear thy presence, but melted in like manner before thee.

6. Jael - Jael, though an illustrious woman, effected nothing for the deliverance of God's people, 'till God raised me up. By-ways - Because of the Philistines and Canaanites, who, besides the public burdens which they laid upon them, waited for all opportunities to do them mischief secretly; their soldiers watching for travelers in common roads, as is usual with such in times of war; and, because of the robbers even of their own people, who having cast off the fear of God, and there being no king in Israel to punish them, broke forth into acts of injustice and violence, even against their own brethren.

7. Ceased - The people forsook all their unfortified towns, not being able to protect them from military insolence. A mother - That is, to be to them as a mother, to instruct, and rule, and protect them, which duties a mother owes to her children.

8. Chose - They did not only submit to idolatry when they were forced to it by tyrants, but they freely chose it. New gods - New to them, and unknown to their fathers, and new in comparison of the true and everlasting God of Israel, being but of yesterday. The gates - That is, in their walled cities, which have gates and bars; gates are often put for cities; then their strong holds fell into the

hands of their enemies. Was there a shield - There was not, the meaning is not, that all the Israelites had no arms, but, either they had but few arms among them, being many thousands of them disarmed by the Canaanites and Philistines, or that they generally neglected the use of arms, as being without all hope of recovering their liberty.

9. My heart is toward - I honour and love those, who being the chief of the people in wealth and dignity, did not withdraw themselves from the work, as such usually do; but exposed themselves to the same hazards, and joined with their brethren in this noble but dangerous attempt. The Lord - Who inclined their hearts to this undertaking, and gave them success in it. As she gives instruments their due, so she is careful the sovereign cause lose not his glory.

10. Speak - Celebrate the praise of our mighty God. That ride on white asses - That is, magistrates and nobles, who used to do so, chap. x, 4; xii, 14. That walk - That is, you that can safely travel in those high ways, which before you durst neither ride nor walk in: so great and mean persons are jointly excited to praise God.

11. From the noise - From the triumphant noise and shout of archers, rejoicing when they meet with their prey. Of drawing water - At those pits or springs of water, which were precious in those hot countries, to which the people's necessities forced them to resort, and nigh unto which the archers usually lurked, that they may shoot at them, and kill and spoil them. There - When they come to those places with freedom and safety, which before they could not, they shall with thankfulness rehearse this righteous and gracious work of God, in rescuing his people. Of the villages - Whom she mentions, because as their danger was greater, ver. 7, so was their deliverance. Gates - Of their cities, which were the chief places to which both city and country resorted for public business and matters of justice, from which they they had been debarred by their oppressors; but now they had free access and passage, either in or out of the gates, as their occasions required; and they who had been driven from their cities, now returned to them in peace and triumph; so the citizens deliverance is celebrated here, as the country-mens is in the foregoing words.

12. Awake - Stir up thyself and all that is within thee, to admire and praise the Lord. This work needs and well deserves the utmost liveliness and vigour of soul. Lead captivity captive - How could this be done, when there was none of them left? chap. iv, 16.

1. None were left to make head against them.
2. None is often put for few, and those few might be taken after the battle, and carried captive, and led in triumph.

13. He made him, &c. - Thus God did not only preserve the poor and despised remnant of his people, from the fury of the oppressor, and from the destruction which Sisera designed, but also gave them the victory, and thereby the dominion over the nobles of Canaan, who were combined against them. Me - Tho' but a weak woman.

14. Ephraim - Now she relates the carriage of the several tribes in the expedition; and she begins with Ephraim. A root - Of the Ephraimites. By root she seems to mean a branch, as that word is sometimes used. By which also she may note the fewness of those that came out of Ephraim, yielding but one branch or an handful of men to this service. Amalek - The constant enemy of the Israelites, who were confederate with their last oppressors the Moabites, chap. iii, 13, and in all probability took their advantage now against the Israelites in the southern or middle parts of Canaan, while their main force was drawn northward against Jabin and Sisera. Against these therefore Ephraim sent forth a party, and so did Benjamin. Benjamin - Benjamin followed Ephraim's example. The people - Among the people of Benjamin, with whom these few Ephraimites united themselves

in this expedition. Machir - That is, out of the tribe of Manasseh, which are elsewhere called by the name of Machir, namely, out of the half tribe which was within Jordan; for of the other she speaks, ver.

17. Governors - Either civil governors, princes and great persons, who were as ready to hazard themselves, as the meanest: or military officers, valiant and expert commanders, such as some of Machir's posterity are noted to have been. Writer - That is, even the Scribes, who gave themselves to study and writing, whereby they were exempted from military service, did voluntarily enter into this service.

15. With Deborah - Ready to assist her. Issachar - Hebrew. and Issachar, that is, the tribe or people of Issachar, following the counsel and example of their princes. Barak - That is, they were as hearty and valiant as Barak their general; and as he marched on foot against their enemies horses and chariots, and that into the valley, where the main use of horses and chariots lies; so did they with no less courage and resolution. Divisions - Or, separations, not so much one from another, (for they seem to be all so well agreed in abiding at home with their sheep) as all from their brethren, from whom they were divided no less in their designs and affections, than in their situation by the river Jordan: and they would not join their interests and forces with them in this common cause. Great thoughts - Or, great searchings, great and sad thoughts, and debates, and perplexities of mind among the Israelites, to see themselves deserted by so great and potent a tribe as Reuben was.

16. Why abodest - Why wast thou so unworthy and cowardly, that thou wouldest not engage thyself in so just, so necessary, and so noble a cause, but didst prefer the care of this sheep, and thy own ease and safety, before this generous undertaking? Reuben thought neutrality their wisest course; being very rich in cattle, Num. xxxii, 1. They were loath to run the hazard of so great a loss, by taking up arms against so potent an enemy as Jabin: and the bleatings of their sheep were so loud in their ears, that they could not hear the call of Deborah and Barak.

17. Gilead - Sometimes taken strictly for that part of the land beyond Jordan which fell to the half-tribe of Manasseh, and sometimes both for that part of Manasseh's, and for Gad's portion, as Josh. xiii, 24-25, 29-31, and so it seems to be understood here; and the land Gilead is here put for the people or inhabitants of it, Gad and Manasseh. Beyond Jordan - In their own portions, and did not come over Jordan to the help of the Lord, and of his people, as they ought to have done. In ships - Daniel, whose coast was near the sea, was wholly intent upon his merchandise, and therefore could not join in this land expedition. Sea-shore - Where their lot lay. His breaches - Either in the creeks of the sea, or, in their broken and craggy rocks and caves.

18. Jeoparded - Hebrew. despised, comparatively; they chose rather to venture upon a generous and honourable death, than to enjoy a shameful and servile life. High-places - That is, upon that large and eminent plain in the top of mount Tabor, where they put themselves in battle array, and expected the enemy; though when they saw they did not come up to them, they marched down to meet them.

19. The kings - There were divers petty kings in those parts who were subject to Jabin. Megiddo - Taanah and Megiddo were two eminent cities, not far from mount Tabor, nor from the river Kishon. No gain - They fought without pay, whether from mere hatred of the Israelites, and a desire to be revenged upon them: or from a full hope and confidence of paying themselves abundantly out of Israel's spoils.

20. From heaven - Or, they from heaven, or the heavenly host fought, by thunder, and lightning, and hail-stones, possibly mingled with fire. The stars - Raising these storms by their influences,

which they do naturally. Courses - Or, from their paths, or stations. As soldiers fight in their ranks and places assigned them, so did these.

21. River of Kishon - Which, though not great in itself, was now much swelled by the foregoing storm and rain, and therefore drowned those who being pursued by the hand of God, and by the Israelites, were forced into it, and thought to pass over it, as they did before. Ancient river - So called, either, first, in opposition to those rivers which are of a later date, being made by the hand and art of man. Or, secondly, because it was a river anciently famous for remarkable exploits, for which it was celebrated by the ancient poets or writers, though not here mentioned. Trodden down - Thou, O Deborah, though but a weak woman, hast by God's assistance subdued a potent enemy. Such abrupt speeches are frequent in poetical scriptures.

22. Horses hoofs - Their horses, in which they put most confidence, had their hoofs, which are their support and strength, broken, either by dreadful hail-stones, or rather, by their swift and violent running over the stony grounds, when they fled with all possible speed from God and from Israel. Pransings - Or because of their fierce or swift courses. Mighty ones - Of their strong and valiant riders, who forced their horses to run away as fast as they could.

23. Meroz - A place then, no doubt, eminent and considerable, tho' now there be no remembrance of it left, which possibly might be the effect of this bitter curse; as God curseth Amalek in this manner, that he would utterly blot out their remembrance. And this place above all others may be thus severely cursed; because it was near the place of the fight, and therefore had the greatest opportunity and obligation to assist their brethren. The angel, &c. - She signifies, that this curse proceeded not from her ill-will towards that place, but from divine inspiration; and that if all the rest of the song should be taken but for the breathings of a pious soul, but liable to mistake, yet this branch of it was immediately directed to her by the Lord, the angel of the covenant. Of the Lord - Of the Lord's people: for God takes what is done for, or against his people, as if it was done to himself. The cause between God and the mighty, the principalities and powers of the kingdom of darkness, will not admit of a neutrality.

24. Blessed - Celebrated, and endowed with all sorts of blessings more than they. In the tent - In her tent or habitation, in her house and family, and all her affairs: for she and hers dwelt in tents. The tent is here mentioned as an allusion to the place where the fact was done.

25. Butter - Or, cream, that is, the choicest of her milk: so the same thing is repeated in different words. Lordly dish - Which you are not to understand of such a costly dish as the luxury of after ages brought in, which is not agreeable to the simplicity either of this family, or of those ancient times; but of a comely and convenient dish, the best which she had, and such as the better sort of persons then used. Probably Jael at that time intended him no other than kindness, 'till God by an immediate impulse on her mind, directed her to do otherwise.

28. Looked out - Expecting to see him returning: for she concluded, that he went forth not so much to fight, as to take the spoil.

30. Have they not, &e. - That is, it is certain they have got the prey, only they tarry to distribute it, according to every man's quality and merit.

31. So let - That is, so suddenly, so surely, so effectual and irrecoverably. Deborah was a prophetess and this prayer was a prediction, that in due time all God's enemies shall perish. In his might - When he first riseth, and so goeth on in his course, which he doth with great might, even as a strong man that runneth a race, and so as no creature can stop, or hinder him; even so irresistible

let thy people be. Such shall be the honour and such the joy of all that love God in sincerity, and they shall shine for ever as the sun in the kingdom of their father.

## VI

The calamities of Israel by the Midianites, ver. 1-6. The message God sent them by a prophet, ver. 7-10. God's commission to Gideon, confirmed by a sign, ver. 11-24. He breaks down the altar of Baal, ver. 25-32. The preparation for war, and encouragement by another sign, ver. 33-40.

1. Of Midian - For although the generality of the Midianites had been cut off by Moses about two hundred years ago, yet many of them doubtless fled into the neighbouring countries, whence afterwards they returned into their own land, and in that time might easily grow to be a very great number; especially, when God furthered their increase, that they might be a scourge for Israel when they transgressed. Let all that sin, expect to suffer: let all that turn to folly, expect to return to misery.

3. Children of the east - That is, the Arabians, who are commonly called the children of the east. Not all the Arabians; but the eastern part of them.

4. Unto Gaza - That is, from the east, on which side they entered, to the well, where Gaza was, near the sea: so they destroyed the whole land.

5. Without number - That is, so many that it was not easy to number them. And not in a regular army to engage, but in a confused swarm, to plunder the country. Yet Israel, being forsaken of God, had not spirit to make head against them; God fighting against them with those very terrors, with which otherwise he would have fought for them.

8. A prophet - We have reason to hope, God is designing mercy for us, if we find he is by his grace preparing us for it.

10. Not obeyed my voice - He intends to bring them to repentance. And our repentance is then genuine, when he sinfulness of sin, as disobedience to God, is that in it which we chiefly lament.

11. In Ophrah - In Manasseh: there was another Ophrah in Benjamin, Josh. xviii, 23. The Abi-ezrite - Of the posterity of Abiezer. Threshed - Not with oxen, as the manner was, Deut. xxv, 4, but with a staff to prevent discovery. Wine-press - In the place where the wine-press stood, not in the common floor.

12. Is with thee - That is, will assist thee against thine enemies. Man of valour - To whom I have given strength and courage for this end.

13. With us - The angel had said, Peace be with Thee: but he expostulates for All: herding himself with all Israel, and admitting no comfort, but what they might be sharers in.

14. Looked - With a settled and pleasant countenance, as a testimony of his favour, and readiness to help him. Go - Or, go now, in thy might: in the strength which thou hast already received, and dost now farther receive from me. Have not I sent thee - I do hereby give thee command and commission for this work. God's fitting men for his work, is a sure evidence of his calling them to it.

15. My family - Hebrew. my thousand: for the tribes were distributed into several thousands, whereof each thousand had his peculiar governor. Is poor - That is, weak and contemptible. The least - Either for age, or fitness for so great a work.

16. As one man - As easily, as if they were all but one man.

17. That thou - That it is thou, an angel or messenger sent from God, that appears to me, and discourseth with me. Or, a sign of that which thou talkest with me; that is, that thou wilt by me smite the Midianites.

18. My present - A repast for the angel, whom he thought to be a man. Set it - That thou mayest eat and refresh thyself.

19. An ephah - The choicest part of a whole ephah; as also he brought to him the best part of a kid dressed; for a whole ephah, and a whole kid had been superfluous, and improper to provide for one man.

21. Consumed the flesh - By which, he shewed himself to be no man that needed such provisions, but the Son of God; and by this instance of his omnipotency, gave him assurance, that he both could, and would consume the Midianites.

22. Alas - I am an undone man: I must die, and that speedily; for that he feared, ver. 23, according to the common opinion in that case.

23. Said unto him - Perhaps by an audible voice. Peace be to thee - Thou shalt receive no hurt by this vision; but only peace, that is, all the blessings needful for thy own happiness, and for the present work.

24. There - On the top of the rock, as is evident from ver. 26, where that which is here expressed only in general, is more particularly described. Jehovah-shalom - That is, the Lord's peace; the sign or witness of God's speaking peace to me, and to his people: or the place where he spake peace to me, when I expected nothing but destruction.

25. The second bullock - He was to offer one for himself, the other for the sins of the people, whom he was to deliver. 'Till sin be pardoned thro' the great sacrifice, no good is to be expected. Thy father hath - Which thy father built in his own ground, tho' for the common use of the city. The grove - Planted by the altar for idolatrous uses, as the manner of idolaters was. This action might seem injurious to his father's authority; but God's command was a sufficient warrant, and Gideon was now called to be the supreme magistrate, whereby he was made his father's superior, and was authorized to root out all idolatry, and the instruments thereof.

26. Of this rock - Hebrew. of this strong hold: for in that calamitous time the Israelites retreated to such rocks, and hid and fortified themselves in them. Ordered place - That is, in a plain and smooth part of the rock, where an altar may be conveniently built. And offer - Gideon was no priest, nor was this the appointed place of sacrifice; but God can dispense with his own institutions, though we may not; and his call gave Gideon sufficient authority.

27. Ten men - Whom doubtless he had acquainted with his design, and the assurance of success in it, whereby they were easily induced to assist him. He feared - Not so much, lest he should suffer for it, as lest he should be prevented from doing it.

28. Was offered - Not upon Baal's altar, for which it was designed; but upon an altar erected in contempt of Baal.

30. They said - Probably some of the persons employed in it.

31. Will ye plead - Why are you so zealous in pleading for that Baal, for the worship whereof you suffer such grievous calamities at this day? It is plain, that Joash had been a worshipper of

Baal: but probably he was now convinced by Gideon. He that will plead - He that shall farther plead for such a God as this, deserves to die for his folly and impiety. It is not probable, that this was all which he said for his son: but it is usual in scripture to give only short hints of things which were more largely discoursed. While it is morning - That is, instantly, without delay. Let him plead - As the God of Israel hath often done when any indignity or injury hath been done him. But Baal hath now shewed, that he is neither able to help you, nor himself; and therefore is not worthy to be served any longer. This resolute answer was necessary to stop the torrent of the peoples fury; and it was drawn from him, by the sense of his son's extreme danger; and by the confidence he had, that God would plead his son's cause, and use him for the rescue of his people.

32. He called - Joash called Gideon so, chap. viii, 29, in remembrance of this noble exploit, and to put a brand upon Baal. Jerub-baal - That is, Let Baal plead. It is a probable conjecture, that that Jerombalus, whom Sanchoniathon, (one of the most ancient of all the Heathen writers) speaks of as a priest of Jao, (a corruption of Jehovah) and to whom he was indebted for a great deal of knowledge, was this Jerub-baal.

33. Of Jezreel - Not Jezreel in Judah, but another in the borders of Manasseh and Issachar, which was not far distant from Ophrah, where Gideon dwelt.

34. The spirit came - Inspiring him with extraordinary wisdom, and courage, and zeal to vindicate God's honour, and his country's liberty. The Hebrew is, The Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon; clothed him as a robe, to put honour upon him; clothed him as a coat of mail to put a defense upon him. Those are well clad that are thus clothed. Abiezer - That is, the Abiezrites, his kindred, and their servants, and others; who finding no harm coming to him for destroying Baal, but rather a blessing from God, in giving him strength and courage for so great an attempt, changed their minds, and followed him as the person by whose hands God would deliver them.

35. All Manasseh - On Both sides of Jordan. Unto Asher, &c. - Because these tribes were nearest, and so could soonest join with him; and were nearest the enemy also, ver. 33, and therefore were most sensible of the calamity, and would in all reason be most forward to rescue themselves from it.

36. Gideon said - In a way of humble supplication, for the strengthening his own faith, and for the greater encouragement of his soldiers in this great attempt.

37. On all the earth - That is, upon all that spot of ground which encompasses the fleece.

39. On the ground - Which was more preternatural than the former instance, because if there be any moisture, such bodies as fleeces of wool are likely to drink it up.

40. And God did so - See how tender God is, even of the weak; and how ready to condescend to their infirmities! These signs were very expressive. They are going to engage the Midianites. Could God distinguish between a small fleece of Israel, and the vast floor of Midian? Yes, by this token it appears that he can. Is Gideon desirous, that the dew of divine grace might descend on himself in particular? He sees the fleece wet with dew, to assure him of it. Does he desire, that God will be as the dew to all Israel? Behold all the ground is wet!

## VII

God's direction to Gideon for modelling his army, ver. 1-8. The dream of the Midianite, ver. 9-15. His manner of attacking the camp of Midian, ver. 16-20. Their total overthrow, ver. 21-25.

2. Too many - For my purpose; which is, so to deliver Israel, that it may appear to be my own act, that so I may have all the glory, and they may be the more strongly obliged to serve me. This may help us to understand those providences, which sometimes seem to weaken the church of Christ. Its friends are too many, too mighty, too wise, for God to work deliverance by. God is taking a course to lessen them, that he may be exalted in his own strength.

3. Mount Gilead - Not mount Gilead beyond Jordan; for both the camps of the Israelites and the Midianites were on this side Jordan: but another mount Gilead in the tribe of Manasseh. There returned - These finding their whole army very small, in comparison of their enemies, who were a hundred and thirty five thousand, chap. viii, 10, and they, no doubt well armed and disciplined, and encouraged by long success; whereas the Israelites were dispirited with long servitude, and many of them unarmed, lost the courage which they had at first.

4. The water - Either that which ran from the well of Harod, mentioned ver. 1, or some other brook.

6. That lapped - Taking up a little water in the palm of their hands.

7. His own place - That is, to his own home. By this farther distinction it was proved, that none should be made use of, but,

1. Men that were hardy, that could endure fatigue, without complaining of thirst or weariness:
2. Men that were hasty, that thought it long, 'till they were engaged with the enemy, and so just wetted their mouth and away, not staying for a full draught. Such as these God chuses to employ, that are not only well affected, but zealously affected to his work.

8. Their trumpets - That is the trumpets belonging to the whole army, which he retained for the use following.

9. The same night - After he had dismissed all but the three hundred. The Lord said - In a dream or vision of the night.

11. Thine hand strengthened - Thou wilt be encourage to proceed, notwithstanding the smallness of thy number.

13. A cake - A weak and contemptible thing; and in itself as unable to overthrow a tent, as to remove a mountain; but being thrown by a divine hand, it bore down all before it.

14. His fellow answered, &c. - As there are many examples of significant dreams, given by God to Heathens, so some of them had the gift of interpreting dreams; which they sometimes did by divine direction as in this case.

15. He worshipped-He praised God for this special encouragement.

16. Three companies - To make a shew of a vast army. Within the pitchers - Partly to preserve the flame from the wind and weather; and partly to conceal it, and surprise their enemy with sudden flashes of light.

17. Look on me - For though two hundred of his men were placed on other sides of the camp; yet they were so disposed, that some persons, set as watchmen, might see what was done, and give notice to the rest to follow the example.

18. Of Gideon - He mentions his own name, together with God's, not out of arrogance, as if he would equal himself with God; but from prudent policy, because his name was grown formidable to them, and so was likely to further his design. See ver. 14.

19. Middle watch - That is, of the second watch; for though afterward the night was divided into four watches by the Romans, Matt. xiv, 25, yet in more ancient times, and in the eastern parts, it was divided into three: he chose the dark and dead of the night, to increase their terror by the trumpets, whose sound would then be loudest, and the lamps, whose light would then shine most brightly, to surprise them, and conceal the smallness of their numbers.

21. They stood - As if they had been torch-bearers to the several companies.

22. Against his fellow - They slew one another, because they suspected treachery, and so fell upon those they first met with; which they might more easily do, because they consisted of several nations, because the darkness of the night made them unable to distinguish friends from foes, because the suddenness of the thing struck them with horror and amazement; and because God had infatuated them, as he had done many others.

24. The waters - That is, the passes over those waters to which they are like to come. Jordan - The fords of Jordan, which they must pass over into their own country.

25. The other side of Jordan - For Gideon in the pursuit had passed over Jordan. Oreb and Zeeb had probably taken shelter, the one in a rock, the other by a wine-press. But the places of their shelter were made the places of their slaughter, and the memory of it preserved in the names of the places.

## VIII

Gideon pacifies the Ephraimites, ver. 1-3. Pursues the Midianites, ver. 4-12. Chastises the men of Succoth and Penuel, ver. 13-17. Slays the two kings of Midian, ver. 18-21. Declines the government of Israel, ver. 22, 23. Makes an ephod, ver. 24-27. Keeps the country quiet forty years, ver. 28. Dies, leaving a numerous family, ver, 29-32. Israel quickly forget God and him, ver. 33-35.

1. Why haft thou, &c. - Why hast thou neglected and despised us, in not calling us in to thy help, as thou didst other tribes? These were a proud people, puffed up with a conceit of their number and strength, and the preference which Jacob gave them above Manasseh, of which tribe Gideon was, who by this act had seemed to advance his own tribe, and to depress theirs.

2. What have I, &c. - What I have done in cutting off some of the common soldiers, is not to be compared with your destroying their princes; I began the war, but you have finished. The gleaning - What you have gleaned or done after me, Of Abiezer - That is, of the Abiezrites, to whom he modestly communicates the honour of the victory, and does not arrogate it to himself.

3. Was abated - His soft and humble answer allayed their rage.

4. Passed over - Or, had passed over. 6. Are the hands, &c. - Art thou so foolish, to think with thy three hundred faint and weary soldiers, to conquer and destroy an host of fifteen thousand Men? Thus the bowels of their compassion were shut up against their brethren. Were these Israelites! Surely they were worshippers of Baal, or in the interest of Midian.

8. Penuel - Another city beyond Jordan; both were in the tribe of Gad.

9. Your tower - Your confidence in which makes you thus proud and presumptuous.

10. That drew sword - That is, persons expert and exercised in war, besides the retainers to them.

11. That dwelt in tents - That is, of the Arabians, so fetching a compass, and falling upon them where they least expected it. Was secure - Being now got safe over Jordan, and a great way from the place of battle; and probably, supposing Gideon's men to be so tired with their hard service, that they would have neither strength nor will to pursue them so far.

13. Before the sun was up - By which it might be gathered, that he came upon them in the night, which was most convenient for him who had so small a number with him; and most likely to terrify them by the remembrance of the last Night's sad work.

14. He described - He told him their names and qualities.

17. Slew the men of the city - Not all of them; probably those only who had affronted him.

18. What manner of men - For outward shape and quality. At Tabor - Whither he understood they fled for shelter, upon the approach of the Midianites; and where he learned that some were slain, which he suspected might be them. Resembled - Not for their garb, or outward splendour, but for the majesty of their looks: by which commendation they thought to ingratiate themselves with their conqueror.

19. I would not slay - For being not Canaanites, he was not obliged to kill them; but they having killed his brethren, and that in cool blood, he was by law the avenger of their blood.

20. Up, and slay - That he might animate him to the use of arms for his God and country, and that he might have a share in the honour of the victory.

21. So is his strength - Thou excellest him, as in age and stature, so in strength; and it is more honourable to die by the hands of a valiant man.

22. Rule - Not as a judge, for that he was already made by God; but as a king. Thy son's son - Let the kingdom be hereditary to thee, and to thy family. Thou hast delivered us - This miraculous and glorious deliverance by thy hands deserves no less from us.

23. I will not rule - As a king. The Lord shall rule - In a special manner, as he hath hitherto done, by Judges, whom God particularly appointed and directed, even by Urim and Thummim, and assisted upon all occasions; whereas Kings had only a general dependance upon God.

24. Ishmaelites - A mixture of people all called by one general name, Ishmaelites or Arabians, who used to wear ear-rings; but the greatest, and the ruling part of them were Midianites.

27. Thereof - Not of all of it; for then it would have been too heavy for use; but of part of it, the rest being probably employed about other things appertaining to it; which elsewhere are comprehended under the name of the ephod, as chap. xvii, 5. Put it - Not as a monument of the victory, for such monuments were neither proper nor usual; but for religious use, for which alone the ephod was appointed. The case seems to be this; Gideon having by God's command erected an altar in his own city, Ophrah, ch. vi, 24, for an extraordinary time and occasion, thought it might be continued for ordinary use; and therefore as he intended to procure priests, so he designed to make priestly garments, and especially an ephod, which was the chief and most costly; which

besides its use in sacred ministrations, was also the instrument by which the mind of God was inquired and discovered, 1 Sam. xxvi, 6, 9, and it might seen necessary for the judge to have this at hand, that he might consult with God upon all occasions. Went a whoring - Committed idolatry with it; or went thither to inquire the will of God; whereby they were drawn from the true ephod, instituted by God for this end, which was to be worn by the high- priest only. A snare - An occasion of sin and ruin to him and his, as the next chapter sheweth. Though Gideon was a good man, and did this with an honest mind, and a desire to set up religion in his own city and family; yet here seem to be many sins in it;

1. Superstition and will-worship, worshipping God by a device of his own, which was expressly forbidden.
2. Presumption, in wearing or causing other priests to wear this kind of ephod, which was peculiar to the high-priest.
3. Transgression of a plain command, of worshipping God ordinarily but at one place, and one altar, Deut. xii, 5, 11, 14.
4. Making a division among the people.
5. Laying a stumbling-block, or an occasion of idolatry before that people, whom he knew to be too prone to it.

28. Lifted up their head - That is, recovered not their former strength or courage, so as to conquer or oppress others. Forty years - To the fortieth year, from the beginning of the Midianitish oppression. The days, &c. - As long as Gideon lived.

29. His own house - Not in his father's house; as he did before; nor yet in a court like a king, as the people desired; but in a middle state, as a judge for the preservation and maintenance of their religion and liberties.

31. Shechem - She dwelt there, and he often came thither, either to execute judgment, or upon other occasions. Abimelech - That is, my father the king; so he called him, probably, to gratify his concubine, who desired it either out of pride, or design.

32. A good old age - His long life being crowned with the continuance of honour, tranquility, and happiness.

33. As soon as, &c. - Whereby we see the temper of this people, who did no longer cleave to God, than they were in a manner constrained to it, by the presence and authority of their Judges. Baalim - This was the general name including all their idols, one of which here follows. Baal-berith - That is, the Lord of the covenant; so called, either from the covenant wherewith the worshippers of this God bound themselves to maintain his worship, or to defend one another therein; or rather, because he was reputed the God and judge of all covenants, and promises, and contracts, to whom it belonged to maintain them, and to punish the violaters of them; and such a God both the Grecians and the Roman had.

## IX

Abimelech usurps the government at Shechem, ver. 1-6. Jotham's parable, ver. 7-21. Strife between Abimelech and the Shechemites, ver. 22-41. The slaughter of the Shechemites, ver. 42-49. The death of Abimelech, fulfilling Jotham's curse, ver. 50- 57.

2. Reign - He supposed they would take that government which their father refused; and that the multitude of his sons would occasion divisions, and confusions, which they might avoid by chusing him king; and so they might enjoy the monarchy which they had long desired. Your bone and flesh - Your kinsman, of the same tribe and city with you; which will be no small honour and advantage to you.

3. Brethren - That is, kinsmen. He is our brother - They were easily persuaded to believe what served their own interest.

4. Pieces of silver - Not shekels, which were too small a sum for this purpose; but far larger pieces, the exact worth whereof it is not possible for us now to know. The house of Baal-berith - Out of his sacred treasury; having since Gideon's death built this temple (which he would never have suffered whilst he lived) and endowed it with considerable revenues. Light persons - Unsettled, idle and necessitous persons, the proper instruments of tyranny and cruelty.

5. His brethren - The only persons who were likely to hinder him in establishing his tyranny. Threescore and ten - Wanting one, who is here expressed. Jotham was left - Whereby he would signify, that this was an act of justice, in cutting them all off in an orderly manner, for some supposed crime, probably, as designing sedition and rebellion.

6. House of Millo - Some eminent and potent family living in Shechem, or near it. King - Over all Israel, ver. 22, which was a strange presumption for the inhabitants of one city; but they had many advantages for it; as the eager, and general, and constant inclination of the Israelites to kingly government; Abimelech's being the son of Gideon, to whom, and to his sons, they offered the kingdom. And though the father could, and did refuse it for himself; yet they might imagine, that he could not give away his sons' right, conveyed to them by the Israelites, in their offer; the universal defection of the Israelites from God to Baal, whose great patron and champion Abimelech pretended to be; the power and prevalency of the tribe of Ephraim, in which Shechem was, whose proud and imperious spirit, would make them readily close with a king of their own brethren; and Abimelech's getting the start of all others, having the crown actually put upon his head, and an army already raised to maintain his tyranny. Of the pillar - Or, by the oak of the pillar, by the oak, where Joshua erected a pillar as a witness of the covenant renewed between God and Israel, Josh. xxiv, 26. This place they chose, to signify that they still owned God, and their covenant with him; and did not worship Baal in opposition to God, but in conjunction with him, or in subordination to him.

7. Mount Gerizim - Which lay near Shechem. The valley between Gerizim and Ebal, was a famous place, employed for the solemn reading of the law, and its blessings and curses: and it is probable it was still used, even by the superstitious and idolatrous Israelites for such occasions, who delighted to use the same places which their ancestors had used. Cried - So that they who stood in the valley might hear him, though not suddenly come at him to take him. Men of Shechem - Who were here met together upon a solemn occasion, as Josephus notes, Abimelech being absent. That God may hearken - When you cry unto him for mercy; so he conjures and persuades them to give him patient audience.

8. The trees, &c. - A parabolical discourse, usual among the ancients, especially in the eastern parts. To anoint - To make a king, which was done among the Israelites, and some others, with the ceremony of anointing. Olive-tree - By which he understands Gideon.

9. honour God - In whose worship oil was used for divers things; as, about the lamps, and offerings, and for anointing sacred persons and things. And man - For oil was used in the constitution of kings, and priests, and prophets, and for a present to great persons, and to anoint the head and

face. Promoted - Hebrew. to move hither and thither, to wander to and fro, to exchange my sweet tranquility, for incessant cares and travels.

10. Fig-tree - Gideon refused this honour, both for himself, and for his sons; and the sons of Gideon, whom Abimelech had slain, upon pretense of their affecting the kingdom, were as far from such thoughts as their father.

13. Cheareth God - Wherewith God is well pleased, because it was offered to God.

14. Bramble - Or, thorn, fitly representing Abimelech, the son of a concubine, and a person of small use, and great cruelty.

15. If in truth - If you deal truly and justly in making me king. Then trust - Then you may expect protection under my government. Devour the cedars - In stead of protection, you shall receive destruction by me; especially you cedars, that is, nobles, such as the house of Millo, who have been most forward in this work.

18. Ye have slain - Abimelech's fact is justly charged upon them, as done by their consent, approbation and assistance. Maidservant - His concubine, whom he so calls by way of reproach. Over Shechem - By which limitation of their power, and his kingdom, he reflects contempt upon him, and chargeth them with presumption, that having only power over their own city, they durst impose a king upon all Israel.

20. Devour Abimelech - This is not so much a prediction as an imprecation, which, being grounded upon just cause, had its effect, as others in like case had.

21. And fled - Which he might easily do, having the advantage of the hill, and because the people were not forward to pursue a man whom they knew to have such just cause to speak, and so little power to do them hurt. To Beer - A place remote from Shechem, and out of Abimelech's reach.

22. Over Israel - For though the men of Shechem were the first authors of Abimelech's advancement, the rest of the people easily consented to that form of government which they so much desired.

23. God sent - God gave the devil commission to work upon their minds.

24. The cruelty - That is, the punishment of the cruelty.

25. For him - To seize his person. Robbed all - Such as favoured or served Abimelech; for to such only their commission reached, though it may be, they went beyond their bounds, and robbed all passengers promiscuously.

26. Gaal - It is not known who he was; but it is evident, he was a man very considerable for wealth, and strength and interest; and ill-pleased with Abimelech's power. Went to Shechem - By his presence and council to animate and assist them against Abimelech.

27. Went out - Which, 'till his coming they durst not do, for fear of Abimelech. Made merry - Both from the custom of rejoicing, and singing songs in vintage time, and for the hopes of their redemption from Abimelech's tyranny. Their goals-Baal-berith, ver. 4, either to beg his help against Abimelech, or to give him thanks for the hopes of recovering their liberty. Eat and drink - To the honour of their idols, and out of the oblations made to them, as they used to do to the honour of Jehovah, and out of his sacrifices. Cursed - Either by reviling him after their manner, or, rather in a more solemn and religious manner, cursing him by their God, as Goliath did David.

28. Who is Abimelech - What is he but a base-born person, a cruel tyrant, and one every way unworthy to govern you? Who is Shechem - That is, Abimelech, named in the foregoing words, and described in those which follow. He is called Shechem for the Shechemite. The sense is, who

is this Shechemite? For so he was by the mother's side, born of a woman of your city, and she but his concubine and servant; why should you submit to one so basely descended? Of Jerubbaal - Of Gideon, a person famous only by his fierceness against that Baal which you justly honour and reverence, whose altar he overthrew, and whose worship he endeavoured to abolish. And Zebul - And you are so mean spirited, that you do not only submit to him, but suffer his very servants to bear rule over you; and particularly, this ignoble and hateful Zebul. Serve, &c. - If you love bondage, call in the old master and Lord of the place; chuse not an upstart, as Abimelech is; but rather take one of the old flock, one descended from Hamor, Gen. xxxiv, 2, who did not carry himself like a tyrant, as Abimelech did; but like a father of his city. This he might speak sincerely, as being himself a Canaanite and Shechemite, and possibly came from one of those little ones whom Simeon and Levi spared when they slew all the grown males, Gen. xxxiv, 29. And it may be that he was one of the royal blood, a descendent of Hamor, who hereby sought to insinuate himself into the government, as it follows, ver. 29. Would to God that this people were under my hand; which he might judge the people more likely to chuse both because they were now united with the Canaanites in religion; and because their present distress might oblige them to put themselves under him, a valiant and expert commander.

29. My hand - That is, under my command; I wish you would unanimously submit to me, as your captain and governor; for he found them divided; and some of them hearkening after Abimelech, whom they had lately rejected, according to the levity of the popular humour. I would remove - As you have driven him out of your city, I would drive him out of your country. He said - He sent this message or challenge to him. Increase thine army - I desire not to surprise thee at any disadvantage; strengthen thyself as much as thou canst, and come out into the open field, that thou and I may decide it by our arms.

35. And stood - To put his army in order, and to conduct them against Abimelech, whom he supposed to be at a great distance.

36. To Zebul - Who concealed the anger which he had conceived, ver. 30, and pretended compliance with him in this expedition, that he might draw him forth into the field where Abimelech might have the opportunity of fighting with him, and overthrowing him. The shadow - For in the morning, as this was, and in the evening, the shadows are longest, and move quickest.

38. Where is now, &c. - Now shew thyself a man, and fight valiantly for thyself and people.

40. He fled - Being surprised by the unexpected coming of Abimelech, and probably not fully prepared for the encounter.

41. Dwelt at Arumah - He did not prosecute his victory, but retreated to Arumah, to see whether the Shechemites would not of themselves return to his government, or else, that being hereby grown secure, he might have the greater advantage against them. Thrust out - It seems the same night. Probably the multitude, which is generally light and unstable, were now enraged against Gaal, suspecting him of cowardice or ill-conduct. Zebul's interest was not so considerable with them, that he could prevail with them either to kill Gaal and his brethren, or to yield themselves to Abimelech; and therefore he still complies with the people, and waits for a fairer opportunity.

42. Went out - to their usual employments about their land.

43. Three companies - Whereof he kept one with himself, ver. 44, and put the rest under other commanders.

44. Entering of the gate - To prevent their retreat into the city, and give the other two companies opportunity to cut them off.

45. With salt - In token of his desire of their utter and irrecoverable destruction.

46. The tower - A strong place belonging to the city of Shechem, made for its defense without the city. Berith - Or, Baal-berith, ver. 4. Hither they fled out of the town belonging to it, fearing the same event with Shechem; and here they thought to be secure; partly by the strength of the place, partly by the religion of it, thinking that either their God would protect them there, or that Abimelech would spare them out of pity to that God.

48. Zalmon - A place so called from its shadiness.

50. Thebez - Another town near to Shechem; and, as it seems, within its territory.

51. And all - All that were not slain in the taking of the town. Top of the tower - Which was flat and plain, after their manner of building.

53. Mill-stone - Such great stones no doubt they carried up with them, whereby they might defend themselves, or offend those who assaulted them. Here the justice of God is remarkable in suiting the punishment to his sin. He slew his brethren upon a stone, ver. 5, and he loseth his own life by a stone.

54. A women - Which was esteemed a matter of disgrace.

56. Wickedness - In rooting out, as far as he could, the name and memory of his father.

57. Render upon their heads - Thus God preserved the honour of his government, and gave warning to all ages, to expect blood for blood.

## X

The government of Tola and Jair, ver. 1-5. Israel's sin and trouble, ver. 6-9. Their repentance and reformation, which found acceptance with God, ver. 10-16. Preparation for their deliverance, ver. 17, 18.

1. There arose - Not of himself, but raised by God, as the other Judges were. To defend - Or, to save, which he did not by fighting against, and overthrowing their enemies, but by a prudent and pious government of them, whereby he kept them from sedition, oppression, and idolatry. In Shamir - Which was in the very midst of the land.

3. A Gileadite - Of Gilead beyond Jordan.

4. And he had thirty sons - They were itinerant Judges, who rode from place to place, as their father's deputies to administer justice. Havoth-jair - These villages were called so before this time from another Jair, but the old name was revived and confirmed upon this occasion.

6. Forsook the Lord - They grew worse and worse, and so ripened themselves for ruin. Before they worshipped God and idols together, now they forsake God, and wholly cleave to idols.

7. Philistines, &c. - The one on the west, the other on the east; so they were molested on both sides.

8. That year - Or, that year they had vexed and oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years - This was the eighteenth year from the beginning of that oppression. And these eighteen years are not to be reckoned from Jair's death, because that would enlarge the time of the Judges beyond the just bounds; but from the fourth year of Jair's reign: so that the greatest part of Jair's reign was

contemporary with this affliction. The case of Jair and Samson seem to be much alike. For as it is said of Samson, that he judged Israel in the days of the tyranny of the Philistines, twenty years, chap. xv, 20, by which it is evident, that his judicature, and their dominion, were contemporary; the like is to be conceived of Jair, that he began to judge Israel, and endeavoured to reform religion, and purge out all abuses; but being unable to effect this through the backwardness of the, people, God would not enable him to deliver the people, but gave them up to this sad oppression; so that Jair could only determine differences amongst the Israelites, but could not deliver them from their enemies.

10. And served also - Because not contented to add idols to thee, we have preferred them before thee.

11. The Lord said - Either by some prophet whom he raised and sent for this purpose: or by the high-priest, who was consulted in the case. From the Amorites - Both Sihon and Og, and their people, and other kings of the Amorites within Jordan. Of Ammon - Who were confederate with the Moabites, chap. iii, 13, 14.

12. The Zidonians - We do not read of any oppression of Israel, particularly, by the Zidonians. But many things were done, which are not recorded. The Maonites - Either first, those who lived in, or near the wilderness of Maon, in the south of Judah, 1 Sam. xxiii, 25; xxv, 2, whether Edomites or others. Or, secondly, the Mehunims, a people living near the Arabians, of whom, 2 Chron. xxvi, 7. For in the Hebrew, the letters of both names are the same, only the one is the singular, the other the plural number.

13. No more - Except you repent in another manner than you yet have done; which when they performed, God suspended the execution of this threatning.

14. Chosen - You have not been forced to worship those gods by your oppressors; but you have freely chosen them before me.

15. Do thou unto us - Do not give us up into the hands of these cruel men, but do thou chastise us with thine own hand as much as thou pleasest; if we be not more faithful and constant to thee, than we have hitherto been.

16. They put away - This was an evidence of the sincerity of their sorrow, that they did not only confess their sins, but also forsake them. His soul, &c. - He acted towards them, like one that felt their sufferings; he had pity upon them, quite changed his carriage towards them, and punished their enemies as sorely as if they had grieved and injured his own person.

17. Mizpeh - That Mizpeh which was beyond Jordan.

## XI

The birth of Jephthah, rejected by his brethren, ver. 1-3. The Gileadites chuse him for their general, ver. 4-11. His treating with the king of Ammon, ver. 12-28. His war with, and victory over the Ammonites, ver. 29-33. His vow and the performance of it, ver. 34-40.

1. Gileadite - So called, either from his father Gilead, or from the mountain, or city of Gilead, the place of his birth. Son of a harlot - That is, a bastard. And though such were not ordinarily to

enter into the congregation of the Lord, Deut. xxiii, 2. Yet God can dispense with his own laws, and hath sometimes done honour to base-born persons, so far, that some of them were admitted to be the progenitors of the Lord Jesus Christ. And Gilead - One of the children of that ancient Gilead, Num. xxxii, 1.

3. Of Tob - The name either of the land, or of the man who was the owner or ruler of it. This place was in, or near Gilead, as appears by the speedy intercourse which here was between Jephthah and the Israelites. Vain men - Idle persons, who desired rather to get their living by spoil and rapine, than by honest labour. These evil persons Jephthah managed well, employing them against the enemies of God, and of Israel, that bordered upon them; and particularly upon parties of the Ammonites, which made the Israelites more forward to chuse him for their chieftain in this war. Went out - When he made excursions and attempts upon the enemy.

4. Made war - The Ammonites had vexed and oppressed them eighteen years, and now the Israelites begin to make opposition, they commence a war against them.

5. Went - By direction from God, who both qualified him for, and called him to the office of a judge, otherwise they might not have chosen a bastard.

7. Expel me - And deprive me of all share in my father's goods, which, though a bastard, was due to me. This expulsion of him was the act of his brethren; but he here ascribes it to the elders of Gilead; either because some of them were among these elders, as is very probable from the dignity of this family; or because this act, though desired by his brethren, was executed by the decree of the elders, to whom the determination of all controversies about inheritance belonged; and therefore it was their faults they did not protect him from the injuries of his brethren.

8. Therefore - Being sensible that we have done thee injury, we come now to make thee full reparation.

9. If, &c. - If you recall me from this place where I am now settled, to the place whence I was expelled. Shall I, &c. - Will you really make good this promise? Jephthah was so solicitous in this case, either from his zeal for the public good, which required that he should be so; or from the law of self-preservation, that he might secure himself from his brethren; whose ill-will he had experienced, and whose injuries he could not prevent, if, after he had served their ends, he had been reduced to his private capacity.

10. The Lord be witness - The Lord be an hearer: so the Hebrew word is. Whatever we speak it concerns us to remember, that God is an hearer!

11. All his words - Or, all his matters, the whole business. Before the Lord - That is, before the public congregation, wherewith God was usually, and then especially present.

12. Messengers - That is, ambassadors, to prevent blood-shed, that so the Israelites might be acquitted before God and men, from all the sad consequences of this war; herein he shewed great prudence, and no less piety. What hast thou, &c. - What reasonable cause hast thou for this invasion? In my land - He speaks this in the name of all the people.

13. My land - That is, this land of Gilead, which was mine, but unjustly taken from me, by Sihon and Og, the kings of the Ammonites; and the injury perpetuated by Israel's detaining it from me. This land, before the conquests of Sihon and Og, belonged partly to the Ammonites, and partly to the Moabites. And indeed, Moab and Ammon did for the most part join their interests and their forces.

16. The Red-sea - Unto which they came three times; once, Exod. xiii, 18, again, a little after their passage over it, and a third time, long after, when they came to Ezion Geber, which was upon the shore of the Red-Sea, from whence they went to Kadesh; of this time he speaks here.

17. Abode - Peaceably, and did not revenge their unkindness as they could have done.

19. My place - That is, unto the land of Canaan, which God hath given me.

20. Sihon fought - So Sihon was the aggressor, and the Israelites were forced to fight in their own defense.

22. The coasts - Or, borders; together with all the land included within those borders. Wilderness - Namely, the desert of Arabia.

23. So the Lord - God, the sovereign Lord of all lands, hath given us this land; this he adds, as a farther and convincing reason; because otherwise it might have been alledged against the former argument, that they could gain no more right to that land from Sihon, than Sihon himself had.

24. Wilt not thou - He speaks according to their absurd opinion: the Ammonites and Moabites got their land by conquest of the old inhabitants, whom they cast out; and this success, though given them by the true God, for Lot's sake, Deut. ii, 9, 19, they impiously ascribe to their God Chemosh, whose gift they owned to be a sufficient title.

25. Than Balak - Art thou wiser than he? Or hast thou more right than he had? Balak, though he plotted against Israel, in defense of his own land, which he feared they would invade and conquer, yet never contended with them about the restitution of those lands which Sihon took from him or his predecessors.

26. Three hundred years - Not precisely, but about that time, either from their coming out of Egypt; or, from their first conquest of those lands. He urges prescription, which is by all men reckoned a just title, and it is fit it should be so for the good of the world, because otherwise the door would be opened both to kings, and to private persons, for infinite contentions and confusions.

27. I have not - I have done thee no wrong. Be judge - Let him determine this controversy by the success of this day and war.

29. Spirit came - Indued him with a more than ordinary courage and resolution. Manasseh - That is, Bashan, which the half tribe of Manasseh beyond Jordan inhabited. Mizpeh of Gilead - So called to distinguish it from other cities of the same name, having gathered what forces he suddenly could, he came hither to the borders of the Ammonites.

33. Minnith - A place not far from Rabbah, the chief city of the Ammonites. Subdued before Israel - It does not appear, that he offered to take possession of the country. Tho' the attempt of others to wrong us, will justify us in the defense of our own right, yet it will not authorize us to do them wrong.

34. His daughter - In concert with other virgins, as the manner was.

35. Trouble me - Before this, I was troubled by my brethren; and since, by the Ammonites; and now most of all, tho' but occasionally, by thee. Opened my mouth - That is, I have vowed. Cannot go back - That is, not retract my vow; I am indispensably obliged to perform it.

36. Do to me - Do not for my sake make thyself a transgressor; I freely give my consent to thy vow.

37. Mountains - Which she chose as a solitary place, and therefore fittest for lamentation. Bewail - That I shall die childless, which was esteemed both a curse and a disgrace for the Israelites, because such were excluded from that great privilege of increasing the holy seed, and contributing to the birth of the Messiah.

39. Did with her - Jephthah's daughter was not sacrificed, but only devoted to perpetual virginity. This appears,

1. From ver. 37, 38, where we read, that she bewailed not her death, which had been the chief cause of lamentation, if that had been vowed, but her virginity:
2. From this ver. 39, where, after he had said, that he did with her according to his vow; he adds, by way of declaration of the matter of that vow, and she knew no man. It is probably conceived, that the Greeks, who used to steal sacred histories, and turn them into fables, had from this history their relation of Iphigenia (which may be put for Jephtigenia) sacrificed by her father Agamemnon, which is described by many of the same circumstances wherewith this is accompanied.

40. The daughter of Jephthah - It is really astonishing, that the general stream of commentators, should take it for granted, that Jephthah murdered his daughter! But, says Mr. Henry, "We do not find any law, usage or custom, in all the Old Testament, which doth in the least intimate, that a single life was any branch or article of religion." And do we find any law, usage or custom there, which doth in the least intimate, that cutting the throat of an only child, was any branch or article of religion? If only a dog had met Jephthah, would he have offered up that for a burnt-offering? No: because God had expressly forbidden this. And had he not expressly forbidden murder? But Mr. Poole thinks the story of Agamemnon's offering up Iphigenia took its rise from this. Probably it did. But then let it be observed, Iphigenia was not murdered. Tradition said, that Diana sent an hind in her stead, and took the maid to live in the woods with her.

## XII

Jephthah's encounter with, and slaughter of the Ephraimites, ver. 1-6. His death, ver. 7 A short account of three other Judges ver. 8-15.

1. Northward - Over Jordan, where Jephthah was, in the northern part of the land beyond Jordan. And said - Through pride and envy, contending with him as they did before with Gideon. Over - Not over Jordan, for there he was already; but over the borders of the Israelites land beyond Jordan.

2. When I called - Hence it appears, that he had craved their assistance, which they had denied; though that be not elsewhere expressed.

3. Put my life - That is, I exposed myself to the utmost danger; as a man that carries a brittle and precious thing in his hand, which may easily either fall to the ground, or be snatched from him. Wherefore - Why do you thus requite my kindness in running such hazards to preserve you and yours?

4. Ye Gileadites - These words are a contemptuous expression of the Ephraimites concerning the Gileadites, whom they call fugitives of Ephraim; the word Ephraim being here taken largely, as it comprehends the other neighbouring tribes, of which Ephraim was the chief; and especially their brethren of Manasseh, who lived next to them, and were descended from the same father, Joseph. By Gileadites here they seem principally to mean the Manassites beyond Jordan, who dwelt in Gilead. And although other Gileadites were joined with them, yet they vent their passion against

these; principally, because they envied them most; as having had a chief hand in the victory. These they opprobriously call fugitives, that is, such as had deserted their brethren of Ephraim and Manasseh, planted themselves beyond Jordan, at a distance from their brethren, and were alienated in affection from them.

5. Said Nay - To avoid the present danger.

6. Shibboleth - Which signifies a stream or river, which they desired to pass over: so it was a word proper for the occasion, and gave them no cause to suspect the design, because they were required only to express their desire to go over the Shibboleth or river. Sibboleth - It is well known, that not only divers nations, but divers provinces, or parts of the same nation who use the same language, differ in their manner of pronunciation. Could not frame - Or rather, he did not frame to speak right; so as he was required to do it. The Hebrew text doth not say, that he could not do it, but that he did it not, because suspecting not the design he uttered it speedily according to his manner of expression. There fell - Not in that place, but in that expedition, being slain either in the battle, or in the pursuit, or at Jordan. See the justice of God! They had gloried, that they were Ephraimites: But how soon are they afraid to own their country? They had called the Gileadites, fugitives: And now they are in good earnest become fugitives themselves. It is the same word, ver. 5, used of the Ephraimites that fled, which they had used in scorn of the Gileadites. He that rolls the stone, or reproach unjustly on another, it may justly return upon himself.

9. Took in - That is, took them home for wives to his sons. What a difference between his and his predecessor's family! Ibzan had sixty children, and all married: Jephthah but one, and she dies unmarried. Some are increased, others diminished: all is the Lord's doing.

15. Mount of the Amalekites - So called from some remarkable exploit, done by, or upon the Amalekites in that place. It is strange, that in the history of all these Judges, there is not so much as once mention of the high-priest, or of any other priest or Levite, appearing either for council or action in any public affair, from Phinehas to Eli, which may well be computed two hundred and fifty years! Surely this intimates, that the institution was chiefly intended to be typical, and that the benefits which were promised by it, were to be chiefly looked for in its anti-type, the everlasting priesthood of Christ, in comparison of which that priesthood had no glory.

## XIII

Samson was an eminent believer, Heb. xi, 13, 32, and a glorious type of him who with his own arm wrought salvation. The occasion of raising him up, ver. 1. His birth foretold by an angel, ver. 2-5. His mother relates this to his father, ver. 6, 7. The angel repeats it to them both, ver. 8-14. Manoah offers to entertain him and asks his name, ver. 15-18. He discovers himself at parting, ver. 19-23. Samson is born, ver. 24, 25.

1. Did evil - That is, fell into idolatry, not after the death of Abdon the last judge, but in the days of the former Judges. Forty years - To be computed, not from Abdon's death, but before that time. And it is probable that great slaughter of the Ephraimites made by Jephthah, greatly encouraged the Philistines to rise against Israel, when one of their chief bulwarks was so much weakened; and

therefore began to domineer over them not long after Jephthah's death. These were a very inconsiderable people. They had but five cities of any note. And yet when God used them as the staff in his hand, they were very oppressive and vexatious.

2. Of the family - That is, of the tribe or people. Bare not - An emphatical repetition of the same thing in other words, which is an usual elegancy both in scripture and other authors.

3. The angel - The Son of God, yet distinguished from the Lord, because he appeared here in the form of a servant, as a messenger sent from God. The great Redeemer did in a particular manner concern himself about this typical redeemer.

4. Beware - Because the child was to be a Nazarite from the womb, ver. 5, and from the conception; and because the mother's pollution extends to the child, she is enjoined from this time to observe the following rules belonging to the Nazarites. Strong drink - Under which are comprehended the other particulars mentioned, Num. vi, 2-4. Nor eat - Any of those meats forbidden, Levit xi, 1-47, which were forbidden to all, but especially to the Nazarites.

5. A Nazarite - A person consecrated to God's service. Begin to deliver - And the deliverance shall be carried on and perfected by others, as it was by Eli, Samuel, and Saul; but especially by David. God chuses to carry on his work gradually and by several hands. One lays the foundation of a good work, another builds, and perhaps a third brings forth the top stone.

6. Man of God - A prophet, or sacred person, sent with a message from God. Terrible - Or, venerable, awful, full of Majesty.

12. Let thy words - Or, thy words shall come to pass: I firmly believe thy promises shall be fulfilled. How - What rules shall we observe about his education?

13. Let her - Whilst the child is in her womb, and after the child is born let him observe the same orders.

15. Made ready - Supposing him to be a man and a prophet, to whom he would in this manner express his respect, as was usual to strangers.

16. Bread - That is, meat, as bread is commonly taken in scripture. To the Lord - Not unto a man, as thou apprehendest me to be; but unto the Lord, as thou wilt by and by perceive me to be.

17. honour - Either by making honourable mention of thee, or by shewing respect to thee, by a present, which they usually gave to prophets.

18. Secret - Hidden from mortal men: or, wonderful, such as thou canst not comprehend: my nature and essence, (which is often signified by name in scripture) is incomprehensible. This shews, that this was the angel of the covenant, the Son of God.

19. Meal-offering - Which were generally joined with the chief sacrifices. A Rock - The angel's presence and command being a sufficient warrant for the offering of sacrifice by a person who was no priest, and in a place otherwise forbidden.

20. The altar - That is, from that part of the rock which served instead of an altar, upon which the sacrifice was laid. Ascended - To manifest his nature and essence to be spiritual. Fell - Partly in reverence to that glorious presence manifested in so wonderful a manner: and partly, out of a religious horror and fear of death; for the prevention thereof they fell down in way of supplication to God.

23. Nor would, &c. - This expression seems to have some emphasis in it, to enhance God's mercy to them, as being afforded them in a time of such grievous calamity; and in a time when the word of the Lord was precious; and there was no open vision.

24. Blessed him - That is, endowed him with all those graces and gifts of mind and body which were necessary for the work he was designed for.

25. To move - That is, to stir him up to heroical designs; to shew forth its power in the frame of his mind, and in the strength of his body, discovered to his neighbours in extraordinary actions; to encline his heart to great attempts for the help and deliverance of God's people, to give some essays of it to his brethren, and to seek all opportunities for it. Of Daniel - A place so called, either from the expedition of the Danites, chap. xviii, 11, 12, which though placed after this history, was done before it: or from some other camp which the Danites had formed there, to give some check to the incursions of the Philistines.

## XIV

Samson's marriage with a Philistine, and killing a lion, ver. 1-7. He finds honey in the carcase, ver. 8, 9. His riddle, ver. 10- 14. Unriddled by means of his wife, ver. 15-18. He kills thirty Philistines, and leaves her, ver. 19,

1. Went - After he was come to mature age. Timnath - A place not far from the sea.

2. To wife - Herein he is an example to all children, conformable to the fifth commandment. Children ought not to marry, nor to move toward it without the advice and consent of their parents. They that do, as Bishop Hall speaks, unchild themselves. Parents have a property in their children, as parts of themselves. In marriage this property is transferred. It is therefore not only unkind and ungrateful, but palpably unjust, to alienate this property, without their concurrence. Who so thus robbeth his father or mother, stealing himself from them who is nearer and dearer to them than their goods, and yet saith, It is no transgression, the same is the companion of a destroyer, Prov. xxviii, 24.

3. Philistines - With whom the Israelites were forbidden to marry. For although the Philistines were not Canaanites in their original, yet they were so in their concurrence with them in wickedness, and therefore were liable to the same judgments with them. Get her - This action of Samson's, though against common rules, seems to be warranted, by the direction of God, (mentioned in the following words) which was known to Samson, but not to his parents. Pleaseth me - Not so much for her beauty, as for the design mentioned in the next verse.

5. Father and mother - Who accompanied him, either because they were now acquainted with his design; or, to order the circumstances of that action which they saw he was set upon.

6. Came mightily - Increased his courage and bodily strength. A kid - As soon and as safely. Told not, &c. - Lest by their means it should be publickly known; for he wisely considered, that it was not yet a fit time to awaken the jealousies and fears of the Philistines concerning him, as this would have done.

8. After a time - Hebrew. after days; that is, either after some days: or, rather, after a year, as that word often signifies; when the flesh of the lion, (which by its strong smell is offensive to bees) was wholly consumed, and nothing was left but the bones. Bees - Settling themselves there, as they have sometimes done in a man's skull, or in a sepulchre.

9. Came to, &c. - From whom he had turned aside for a season, ver. 8.

11. Saw him - Or, observed him, his stature, and strength, and countenance, and carriage, which were extraordinary. Brought - Partly in compliance with the custom of having bride-men; though they were not so numerous; but principally by way of caution, and as a guard put upon him under a pretense of respect and affection.

12. Seven days - For so long marriage-feasts lasted. Sheets - Fine linen-clothes, which were used for many purposes in those parts. Changes - Suits of apparel.

15. Seventh day - They had doubtless spoken to her before this time, but with some remissness, supposing that they should find it out; but now their time being nigh slipped, they put her under a necessity of searching it out. To take that we have - That is, to strip us of our garments.

17. The seven days - That is, on the residue of the seven days; namely, after the third day.

18. If ye had not &c. - If you had not employed my wife to find it out, as men plough up the ground with an heifer, thereby discovering its hidden parts; he calls her heifer, because she was joined with him in the same yoke.

19. The spirit came - Though he had constant strength and courage; yet that was exceedingly increased upon special occasions, by the extraordinary influences of God's spirit. To Ashkelon - Either to the territory; or to the city itself, where he had both strength and courage enough to attempt what follows; and upon the doing hereof they were doubtless struck with such terror, that every one sought only to preserve himself, and none durst pursue him. His anger was kindled - For the treachery of his wife and companions. He went - Without his wife. It were well for us, if the unkindnesses we meet with from the world, and our disappointments therein has this good effect on us, to oblige us to return by faith and prayer, to our heavenly father's house.

20. Was given - By her father. Whom he had used - That is, to the chief of the bride-men, to whom he had shewed most respect and kindness.

## XV

From the treachery of his wife and her father, Samson takes occasion to burn their corn, ver. 1-5. He smites the Philistines with a great slaughter, ver. 6-8. He slays a thousand of them with the jaw-bone of an ass, ver. 9-17. He is distressed, and supplied with water, ver. 18-20.

1. Wheat harvest - Which was the proper season for what follows. With a kid - As a token of reconciliation. Into the chamber - Into her chamber, which the women had separate from the mens.

2. Hated her - Because thou didst desert her: but this was no sufficient cause; for he should have endeavoured a reconciliation, and not have disposed of another man's wife without his consent.

3. Now shall I, &c. - Because they have first provoked me by an irreparable injury: but although this may look like an act of private revenge; yet it is plain Samson acted as a judge (for so he was) and as an avenger of the publick injuries of his people.

4. Foxes - Of which there were great numbers in Canaan. But it is not said that Samson caught them all, either at one time, or by his own hands; for being so eminent a person, and the judge of Israel, he might require assistance of as many persons as he pleased. And it must be allowed, that

the God who made the world, and by his singular providence watched over Israel, and intended them deliverance at this time, could easily dispose things so that they might be taken. He chose to do this not by his brethren, whom he would preserve from the hatred and mischief which it might have occasioned them, but by brute creatures, thereby to add scorn to their calamity, and particularly by foxes; partly, because they were fittest for the purpose, being creatures very fearful of fire; and having such tails as the fire-brands might most conveniently be tied to; and not going directly forward, but crookedly, whereby the fire would be dispersed in more places. Fire-brands - Made of such matter as would quickly take fire, and keep it for a long time; which was easy to procure. And put, &c. - That the foxes might not make too much haste, nor run into their holes, but one of them might delay another, and so continue longer in the places where they were to do execution.

5. Let them go - Successively at several times; and in divers places, so that they might not hinder one another, nor all run into the same field; but being dispersed in all parts, might spread the plague farther; and withal might be kept at a distance from the fields and vineyards of the Israelites.

6. Burnt her - For the mischief which she had occasioned them; thus she brought upon herself that mischief which she studied to avoid. The Philistines had threatened to burn her and her father's house with fire. To avoid this she betrayed her husband. And now the very thing she feared comes upon her!

8. Hip and thigh - It seems to be a phrase, to express a desperate attack, attended with the utmost hurry and confusion: and perhaps intimates, that they all fled before him. So he smote them in the hinder parts. Rock Etam - A natural fortress, where he waited to see what steps the Philistines would take.

11. Unto us - Thou hast by these actions punished not them only, but us, who are sure to smart for it.

12. Bind thee - Why not rather, to fight under thy banner? Because sin dispirits men, nay, it infatuates them, and hides from their eyes the things that belong to their peace. Swear - Not that he feared them, or could not as easily have conquered them, as he did the host of the Philistines; but because he would be free from all temptation of doing them harm, though it were in his own defense.

13. And they bound him - Thus was he a type of Christ, who yielded himself to be bound, yea and led as a lamb to the slaughter. Never were men so besotted as these men of Judah, except those who thus treated our blessed saviour. The rock - That is, from the cave in the rock, in which he had secured himself, out of which he was first brought up, and then carried down from the rock to the plain.

14. Shouted - Because they had now their enemy, as they supposed, in their hands. Loosed - Hebrew. were melted; that is, were dissolved, as things which are melted in the fire. This typified the resurrection of Christ, by the power of the Spirit of holiness. In this he loosed the bands of death, it being impossible he should be holden of them. And thus he triumphed over the powers of darkness, which had shouted against him.

15. New jaw-bone - And therefore the more tough and strong.

16. Slain a thousand men - What could be too hard for him to do, on whom the Spirit of the Lord came mightily? It was strange the men of Judah did now at least come in to his assistance. But he was to be a type of him, who trod the wine-press alone.

17. Ramath-Lehi - That is, the lifting up of the jaw-bone; by contraction Lehi, ver. 14, as Salem is put for Jerusalem.

18. Sore a thirst - A natural effect of the great pains he had taken. And perhaps there was the hand of God therein, to chastise him for not making mention of God in his song, and to keep him from being proud of his strength. One would have thought that the men of Judah would have met him with bread and wine: but they so little regarded him, that he is fainting for want of a draught of water! Thus are the greatest slights often put upon those that do the greatest services! Shall I die - Wilt thou not finish what thou hast begun? Wilt thou undo what thou hast done.

19. In the Jaw - Either causing the jaw-bone to send forth water, as the rock formerly did, causing a spring to break forth in that Lehi, mentioned ver. 14, for Lehi is both the name of a place, and a jaw-bone. En-hakkore - That is, the fountain of him that cried for thirst; or, that called upon God for deliverance; that is, the fountain which was given in answer to my prayer. In Lehi - According to this translation, Lehi is the name of a place.

20. He judged - That is, he pleaded their cause, and avenged them against the Philistines. Of the Philistines - That is, whilst the Philistines had the power and dominion, from which he was not fully to deliver, but only to begin to deliver them. From this place it is manifest, that in the computation of the times of the Judges, the years of servitude or oppression are not to be separated from the years of the Judges, but added to them, and are comprehended within them; which proposition is of great importance for clearing this difficult part of scripture-chronology.

## XVI

Samson is greatly endangered by his intercourse with an harlot, ver. 1-3. Betrayed by Delilah to the Philistines thrice, ver. 4-14. Weakened and effectually betrayed, ver. 15-20. Seized, blinded, bound, imprisoned and made sport of, ver. 21-25. Avenged of the Philistines, ver. 26-31.

1. And saw - Going into an house of publick entertainment to refresh himself. He there saw this harlot accidentally; and by giving way to look upon her, was ensnared, Gen. iii, 6.

2. In the morning - This they chose to do, rather than to seize upon him in his bed by night; either, because they knew not certainly in what house he was; or, because they thought that might cause great terror, and confusion, and mischief among their own people; whereas in the day-time they might more fully discover him, and more certainly use their weapons against him. O that all who indulge any unholy desire, might see themselves thus surrounded, and marked for destruction by their spiritual enemies! The more secure they are, the greater is their danger.

3. Arose - Perhaps warned by God in a dream; or rather by the checks of his own conscience. Went away - The watch-men not expecting him 'till morning, and therefore being now retired into the sides, or upper part of the gate-house, as the manner now is, to get some rest, to fit themselves for their hard service intended in the morning: nor durst they pursue him, whom they now again perceived to have such prodigious strength, and courage; and to be so much above the fear of them, that he did not run away with all speed, but went leisurely. Hebron - Which was above twenty miles from Gaza. And Samson did this not out of vain ostentation, but as an evidence of his great strength, for the encouragement of its people to join with him vigourously; and for the greater terror and contempt of the Philistines. It may seem strange that Samson immediately after so foul a sin should

have courage and strength from God, for so great a work. But first, it is probable, that Samson had in some measure repented of his sin, and begged of God pardon and assistance. 2.This singular strength and courage was not in itself a grace, but a gift, and it was such a gift as did not so much depend on the disposition of his mind, but on the right ordering of his body, by the rule given to him, and others of that order.

4. Loved - Probably as an harlot: because the dreadful punishment now inflicted upon Samson for this sin, whom God spared for the first offense, is an intimation, that this sin was not inferior to the former.

5. The lords - The lords of their five principal cities, who were leagued together against him as their common enemy. Afflict - To chastise him for his injuries done to us. They mean to punish him severely, but they express it in mild words, lest it might move her to pity him. Pieces of silver - Shekels, as that phrase is commonly used.

7. Samson said - Samson is guilty both of the sin of lying, and of great folly in encouraging her enquiries, which he should at first have checked: but as he had forsaken God, so God had now forsaken him, otherwise the frequent repetition and vehement urging of this question might easily have raised suspicion in him.

9. With her - That is, in a secret chamber within her call. Nor is it strange that they did not fall upon him in his sleep, because they expected an opportunity for doing their work more certainly, and with less danger.

13. Web - Or, thread which is woven about a weaver's loom: or, with a weaver's beam. If my hair, which is all divided into seven locks, be fastened about a weaver's beam; or interwoven with weaver's threads: then I shall be weak as another man.

15. Not with me - Not open to me.

16. Vexed - Being tormented by two contrary passions, desire to gratify her, and fear of betraying himself. So that he had no pleasure of his life.

17. If I be shaven - Not that his hair was in itself the cause of his strength, but because it was the chief condition of that covenant, whereby God was pleased to ingage himself to fit him for, and assist him in that great work to which he called him: but upon his violation of the condition, God justly withdraws his help. (EFN Isaiah xl, 31 Psalm xxix, 11)

18. And brought money in their hand - See one of the bravest men then in the world bought and sold, as a sheep for the slaughter. How does this instance sully all the glory of man, and forbid the strong man ever to boast of his strength!

19. Sleep - By some sleepy potion. Knees - Resting his head upon her knees. To weaken or hurt, tho' he felt it not.

20. Said - Within himself. Shake myself - That is, put forth my strength. Knew not - Not distinctly feeling the loss of his hair, or not considering what would follow. Many have lost the favourable presence of God, and are not aware of it. They have provoked God to withdraw from them; but are not sensible of their loss.

21. His eyes - Which was done both out of revenge and policy, to disable him from doing them harm, in case he should recover his strength; but not without God's providence, punishing him in that part which had been instrumental to his sinful lusts. Gaza - Because this was a great and strong city, where he would be kept safely; and upon the sea-coast, at sufficient distance from Samson's people; and to repair the honour of that place, upon which he had fastened so great a scorn. God also ordering things thus, that where he first sinned, ver. 1, there he should receive his punishment.

Grind - As slaves use to do. He made himself a slave to harlots, and now God suffers men to use him like a slave. Poor Samson, how art thou fallen! How is thine honour laid in the dust! Wo unto him, for he hath sinned! Let all take warning by him, carefully to preserve their purity. For all our glory is gone, when the covenant of our separation to God, as spiritual Nazarites, is profaned.

22. The hair - This circumstance, though in itself inconsiderable, is noted as a sign of the recovery of God's favour, and his former strength, in some degree, upon his repentance, and renewing his vow with God, which was allowed for Nazarites to do.

23. Dagon - An idol, whose upper part was like a man, and whose lower part was like a fish: probably one of the sea-gods of the Heathens.

25. Made sport - Either being made by them the matter of their sport and derision, of bitter scoffs, and other indignities: or, by some proofs of more than ordinary strength yet remaining in him, like the ruins of a great and goodly building: whereby he lulled them asleep, until by this complaisance he prepared the way for that which he designed.

26. Whereon the house standeth-Whether it were a temple, or theatre, or some slight building run up for the purpose.

27. The roof - Which was flat, and had window's through which they might see what was done in the lower parts of the house.

28. Samson called - This prayer was not an act of malice and revenge, but of faith and zeal for God, who was there publickly dishonoured; and justice, in vindicating the whole common- wealth of Israel, which was his duty, as he was judge. And God, who heareth not sinners, and would never use his omnipotence to gratify any man's malice, did manifest by the effect, that he accepted and owned his prayer as the dictate of his own Spirit. And that in this prayer he mentions only his personal injury, and not their indignities to God and his people, must be ascribed to that prudent care which he had, upon former occasions, of deriving the rage of the Philistines upon himself alone, and diverting it from the people. For which end I conceive this prayer was made with an audible voice, though he knew they would entertain it only with scorn and laughter.

30. Two pillars - Instances are not wanting of more capacious buildings than this, that have been supported only by one pillar. Pliny in the 15th chapter of the 36th Book of his Natural History, mentions two theatres built by C. Curio, in Julius Caesar's time; each of which was supported only by one pillar, tho' many thousands of people sat in it together. Let me die - That is, I am content to die, so I can but contribute to the vindication of God's glory, and the deliverance of God's people. This is no encouragement to those who wickedly murder themselves: for Samson did not desire, or procure his own death voluntarily, but by mere necessity; he was by his office obliged to seek the destruction of these enemies and blasphemers of God, and oppressors of his people; which in these circumstances he could not effect without his own death. Moreover, Samson did this by Divine direction, as God's answer to his prayer manifests, and that he might be a type of Christ, who by voluntarily undergoing death, destroyed the enemies of God, and of his people. They died, just when they were insulting over an Israelite, persecuting him whom God had smitten. Nothing fills up the measure of the iniquity of any person or people faster, than mocking or misusing the servants of God, yea, tho' it is by their own folly, that they are brought low. Those know not what they do, nor whom they affront, that make sport with a good man.

31. Buried - While the Philistines were under such grief, and consternation, that they had neither heart nor leisure to hinder them.

## XVII

Micah provides an image for his God, ver. 1-6. And a Levite for his priest, ver. 7-13.

1. There was, &c. - The things mentioned here, and in the following chapters, did not happen in the order in which they are put; but much sooner, even presently after the death of the elders that over-lived Joshua, as appears, because Phinehas the son of Eleazar was priest at this time, chap. xx, 28, who must have been about 350 years old, if this had been done after Samson's death.

2. Cursedst - That is, didst curse the person who had taken them away. I took it - The fear of thy curse makes me acknowledge mine offense, and beg thy pardon. Blessed - I willingly consent to, and beg from God the removal of the curse, and a blessing instead of it. Be thou free from my curse, because thou hast so honestly restored it.

3. The Lord - In the Hebrew it is, Jehovah, the incommunicable name of God. Whereby it is apparent, that neither she, nor her son, intended to forsake the true God; as appears from his rejoicing when he had got a priest of the Lord's appointment, but only to worship God by an image; which also both the Israelites, Exod. xxxii, 1, &c. and Jeroboam afterwards, designed to do. For my son - For the benefit of thyself and family; that you need not be continually going to Shiloh to worship, but may do it at home. To thee - To dispose of, as I say.

4. Restored - Though his mother allowed him to keep it, yet he persisted in his resolution to restore it, that she might dispose of it as she pleased. Two hundred - Reserving nine hundred shekels, either for the ephod or teraphim, or for other things relating to this worship.

5. Of gods - That is, an house consecrated for the service of God in this manner. Teraphim - A sort of images so called. One of his sons - Because the Levites in that corrupt estate of the church, neglected the exercise of their office, and therefore they were neglected by the people, and others put into their employment.

6. No king - No judge to govern and control them. The word king being used largely for a supreme magistrate. God raised up Judges to rule and deliver the people, when he saw fit; and at other times for their sins he suffered them to be without them, and such a time this was; and therefore they ran into that idolatry, from which the Judges usually kept them; as appears by that solemn and oft- repeated passage in this book, that after the death of such or such a judge, the people forsook the Lord, and turned to idols. His own eyes - That is, not what pleased God, but what best suited his own fancy.

7. Bethlehem-judah - So called here, as Matt. ii, 1, 5, to difference it from Bethlehem in Zebulun. There he was born and bred. Of Judah - That is, of or belonging to the tribe of Judah; not by birth, for he was a Levite; but by his habitation and ministration. For the Levites were dispersed among all the tribes; and this man's lot fell into the tribe of Judah. Sojourned - So he expresseth it, because this was not the proper place of his abode, this being no Levitical city.

8. To sojourn - For employment and a livelihood; for the tithes and offerings, which were their maintenance, not being brought into the house of God, the Levites and priests were reduced to straights.

10. A father - That is, a priest, a spiritual father, a teacher or instructor. He pretends reverence and submission to him; and what is wanting in his wages, he pays him in titles.

11. Content - Being infected with the common superstition and idolatry of the times. His sons - That is, treated with the same degree of kindness and affection.

12. Consecrated - To be a priest, for which he thought a consecration necessary, as knowing the Levites were no less excluded from the priest's office than the people. The young man - Instead of his son, whom he had consecrated, but now seems to restrain him from the exercise of that office, and to devolve it wholly upon the Levite, who was nearer akin to it.

13. Do me good - I am assured God will bless me. So blind and grossly partial he was in his judgment, to think that one right circumstance would answer for all his substantial errors, in making and worshipping images against God's express command, in worshipping God in a forbidden place, by a priest illegally appointed.

## XVIII

The Danish spies call at Micah's house, ver. 1-6. The report they bring back, ver. 7-10. The Danites send forces, who by the way plunder Micah of his gods, ver. 11-26. They take Laish and set up idolatry there, ver. 27-31.

1. Those days - Not long after Joshua's death. The tribe - A part of that tribe, consisting only of six hundred men of war, with their families, ver. 16, 21. Inheritance - The lot had fallen to them before this time, but not the actual possession, because the Philistines and Amorites opposed them.

2. There - Not in the same house, but near it.

3. Knew - By the acquaintance which some of them formerly had with him.

5. Ask - By thine Ephod, and Teraphim, or images, which they knew he had, ver. 14.

6. Before the Lord - That is, your design is under the eye of God; that is, under his care, protection and direction. This answer he either feigns to gratify their humour; or, did indeed receive from the devil, who transformed himself into an angel of light, and in God's name gave him answers, and those not sometimes very true, which God suffered for the trial of his people. But it is observable, his answer was, as the devil's oracles usually were, ambiguous, and such as might have been interpreted either way.

7. Manner of the Zidonians - Who living in a very strong place, and abounding in wealth, and perceiving that the Israelites never attempted anything against them, were grown secure and careless. Put to shame - Or, that might rebuke or punish any thing, that is, any crime. Putting to shame seems to be used for inflicting civil punishment, because shame is generally the effect of it. Zidonians - Who otherwise could have succored them, and would have been ready to do it. No business-No league or confederacy, nor much converse with other cities, it being in a pleasant and plentiful soil, between the two rivulets of Jor and Daniel, not needing supplies from others, and therefore minding only their own ease and pleasure.

10. Given - This they gather partly from God's promise which they supposed they had from the Levite's mouth; and partly from his providence, which had so disposed them, that they would be an easy prey.

12. Mahaneh-dan - That is, the camp of Daniel.

13. To the house - That is, to the town in which his house was, for they were not yet entered into it.

14. Answered - That is, spake, the word answering being often used in scripture of the first speaker. These houses - That is, in one of these houses. What to do - Whether it be not expedient to take them for your farther use.

17. Thither - Into the house, and that part of it, where those things were. The gate - Whither they had drawn him forth, that they might without noise or hindrance take them away.

18. These - The five men.

19. Lay thy hand - That is, be silent. A family - Namely, a tribe, that is, a family.

20. Was glad - Being wholly governed by his own interest. The midst - Both for the greater security of such precious things, and that Micah might not be able to come at him, to injure or upbraid him; and, it may be, because that was the place where the ark used to be carried.

21. Before them - For their greater security, if Micah should pursue them.

24. I made - So far was he besotted with superstition and idolatry, that he esteemed those gods, which were man's work. But he could not be so stupid, as to think these were indeed the great Jehovah that made heaven and earth; but only a lower sort of gods, by whom, as mediators, he offered up his worship to the true God, as divers of the Heathen did. What have I - I value nothing I have in comparison of what you have taken away. Which zeal for idolatrous trash may shame multitudes that call themselves Christians, and yet value their worldly conveniences more than all the concerns of their own salvation. Is Micah thus fond of his false gods? And how ought we to be affected toward the true God? Let us reckon our communion with God our greatest gain; and the loss of God the sorest loss. Wo unto us, if He depart! For what have we more.

25. Thy voice - Thy complaints and reproaches. Angry fellows - The soldiers, who are in themselves sharp and fierce, and will soon be enflamed by thy provoking words. Thy Life - Which, not withstanding all thy pretenses, thou dost value more than thy images.

27. Burnt - Not wholly, but in great measure, to make their conquest more easy.

28. And they built a city - That is, rebuilt it.

29. Of Daniel - That it might be manifest, that they belonged to the tribe of Daniel, though they were seated at a great distance from them, in the most northerly part of the land; whereas the lot of their tribe was in the southern part of Canaan.

30. Image - Having succeeded in their expedition according to the prediction which, as they supposed, they had from this image, they had a great veneration for it. The captivity - When the whole land of the ten tribes, whereof Daniel was one, was conquered, and the people carried captive by the Assyrian, 2 Kings xvii, 6, 23, which is called by way of eminency, the captivity. It is not said, that the graven image was there so long, for that is restrained to a shorter date, even to the continuance of the ark in Shiloh, ver. 31, which was removed thence, 1 Sam. iv, 3-5. But only that Jonathan's posterity, (so his name is at last mentioned) were priests to this tribe or family of Daniel, which they might be under all the changes, even 'till the Assyrian captivity, sometimes more openly, sometimes more secretly, sometimes in one way of idolatry, and sometimes in another.

## XIX

The adultery of the Levite's concubine, ver. 1, 2. The reconciliation to her, and entertainment at her father's, ver. 3-9. His journey homeward as far as Gibeah, ver. 10-15. An Ephraimite takes him in, ver. 16-21. The men of Gibeah assault the house, ver. 22-24. They force his concubine to death, ver. 25- 28. He sends notice of it to all the tribes of Israel, ver. 29, 30

1. A. concubine - Hebrew. a wife, a concubine, that is, such a concubine as was also his wife: called a concubine, only because she was not endowed. Perhaps he had nothing to endow her with, being himself only a sojourner.

2. Against him - That is, against her faith given to him. Went away - Either for fear of punishment; or, because her heart was alienated from him; wherein not only she sinned, but her father by connivance at her sin, and neglect of just endeavours for her reconciliation to her husband.

3. Friendly - To offer her pardon and reconciliation.

12. A stranger - That is, of a strange nation: which the Canaanites possess; for though the city Jerusalem had been taken by Caleb, chap. i, 8, yet the strong fort of Zion was still in their hands, whence it is likely they did much molest, and afterwards by God's permission, drive out the Israelites who dwelt there.

15. To lodge - Though they were soft and effeminate in other respects, yet they were hard-hearted to strangers, and at that time there were no public-houses in that country.

16. Ephraim - Whence also the Levite was, which enclined him to shew the more kindness to his country-man. Benjamites - This was indeed one of the cities belonging to the priests; but the cities which were given to the priests, and whereof they were owners, were not inhabited by the priests or Levites only, especially at this time when they were but few in number, but by many other persons of different professions.

18. House of the Lord - Which was in Shiloh. Thither he went, either because he lived there, for that was in the tribe of Ephraim; or, rather, because he would there offer prayers and praises, and sacrifices to God, for his mercy in reconciling him and his wife.

20. Let all, &c. - It matters not whether thou wantest nothing or everything, I will take care to supply all thy wants.

21. Washed - As they used to do to travelers in those hot countries.

22. Merry - That is, refreshing themselves with the provisions set before them. Sons of belial - Children of the devil, wicked and licentious men.

23. Into my house - And therefore I am obliged to protect him by the laws of hospitality.

26. Fell down - Namely, dead; killed partly with grief of heart, and partly with excessive abuse. Thus the sin she formerly chose, ver. 2, is now her destruction; and though her husband pardoned her, God would punish her, at least as to this life.

29. Sent - By several messengers, with a relation of the fact.

30. Speak - Let us meet together, and seriously consider, and every one freely speak what is to be done in this case.

## XX

The Levite's case heard in a general convention of the tribes, ver. 1-7. They resolve to avenge his quarrel, ver. 8-11. The Benjamites assemble in defense of the criminals, ver. 12-17. The defeat of Israel in the two first battles, ver. 18-25. They humble themselves before God, ver. 26-28. The total rout of the Benjamites, ver. 29-48.

1. All - That is, a great number, and especially the rulers of all the tribes, except Benjamin, ver. 3, 12. One man - That is, with one consent. Daniel, &c. - Daniel was the northern border of the land, near Lebanon; and Beersheba the southern border. Gilead - Beyond Jordan, where Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh were. To the Lord - As to the Lord's tribunal: for God was not only present in the place where the ark and tabernacle was, but also in the assemblies of the gods, or Judges, Psalm lxxxii, 1, and in all places where God's name is recorded, Exod. xx, 24, and where two or three are met together in his name. Mizpeh - A place on the borders of Judah and Benjamin. This they chose, as a place they used to meet in upon solemn occasions, for its convenient situation for all the tribes within and without Jordan; and the being near the place where the fact was done, that it might be more throughly examined; and not far from Shiloh, where the tabernacle was, whither they might go or send.

2. Four hundred thousand - The number is here set down, to shew their zeal and forwardness in punishing such a villainy; the strange blindness of the Benjamites that durst oppose so great and united a Body; and that the success of battles depends not upon great numbers, seeing this great host was twice defeated by the Benjamites.

3. Heard - Like persons unconcerned and resolved, they neither went nor sent thither: partly for their own pride, and stubbornness; partly because as they were loth to give up any of their brethren to justice, so they presumed the other tribes would never proceed to war against them; and partly, from a Divine infatuation hardening that wicked tribe to their own destruction. Tell us - They speak to the Levite, and his servant, and his host, who doubtless were present upon this occasion.

5. Slain me - Except I would either submit to their unnatural lust, which I was resolved to withstand even unto death: or deliver up my concubine to them, which I was forced to do.

6. Folly - That is, a lewd folly; most ignominious and impudent wickedness.

7. Ye are - The sons of that holy man, who for one filthy action left an eternal brand upon one of his own sons: a people in covenant with the holy God, whose honour you are obliged to vindicate, and who hath expressly commanded you to punish all such notorious enormities.

8. His tent - That is, his habitation, until we have revenged this injury.

10. According, &c. - That we may punish them as such a wickedness deserves. In Israel - This is added as an aggravation, that they should do that in Israel, or among God's peculiar people, which was esteemed abominable even among the Heathen.

12. All the tribe - They take a wise and a just course, in sending to all the parts of the tribe, to separate the innocent from the guilty, and to give them a fair opportunity of preventing their ruin, by doing what their duty, honour, and interest obliged them to; by delivering up those vile malefactors, whom they could not keep without bringing the curse of God upon themselves.

13. Evil - Both the guilt and the punishment, wherein all Israel will be involved, if they do not punish it. Would not hearken - From the pride of their hearts, which made them scorn to submit to their brethren; from a conceit of their own valour; and from God's just judgment.

15. Were numbered - "How does this agree with the following numbers? For all that were slain of Benjamin were twenty-five thousand and one hundred men, ver. 35, and there were only six hundred that survived, ver. 47, which make only twenty-five thousand and seven hundred." The other thousand men were either left in some of their cities, where they were slain, ver. 48, or were cut off in the two first battles, wherein it is unreasonable to think they had an unbloody victory: and as for these twenty-five thousand and one hundred men, they were all slain in the third battle.

16. Not miss - An hyperbolical expression, signifying, that they could do this with great exactness. And this was very considerable and one ground of the Benjamites confidence.

17. Men of Israel - Such as were here present, for it is probable they had a far greater number of men, being six hundred thousand before their entrance into Canaan.

18. Children of Israel - Some sent in the name of all. House of God - To Shiloh, which was not far from Mizpeh. Which - This was asked to prevent emulations and contentions: but they do not ask whether they should go against them, or no, for that they knew they ought to do by the will of God already revealed: nor yet do they seek to God for his help by prayer, and fasting, and sacrifice, as in all reason they ought to have done; but were confident of success, because of their great numbers, and righteous cause.

21. Destroyed, &c. - Why would God suffer them to have so great a loss in so good a cause? Because they had many and great sins reigning among themselves, and they should not have come to so great a work of God, with polluted hands, but should have pulled the beam out of their own eye, before they attempted to take that out of their brother Benjamin's eye: which because they did not, God doth it for them, bringing them through the fire, that they might he purged from their dross; it being probable that the great God who governs every stroke in battle, did so order things, that their worst members should be cut off, which was a great blessing to the whole common - wealth. And God would hereby shew, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. We must never lay that weight on an arm of flesh, which only the Rock of Ages will bear.

22. Encouraged - Hebrew. strengthened themselves, supporting themselves with the consciousness of the justice of their cause, and putting themselves in better order for defending themselves, and annoying their enemies.

23. Wept - Not so much for their sins, as for their defeat and loss. My brother-They impute their ill success, not to their own sins, but to their taking up arms against their brethren. But still they persist in their former neglect of seeking God's assistance in the way which he had appointed, as they themselves acknowledged presently, by doing those very things which now they neglected.

26. Fasted - Sensible of their not being truly humbled for their sins, which now they discover to be the cause of their ill success. Burnt, &c. - To make atonement to God for their own sins. Peace- offerings - To bless God for sparing so many of them, whereas he might justly have cut off all of them when their brethren were slain: to implore his assistance, yea and to give thanks for the victory, which now they were confident he would give them.

28. Phinehas - This is added to give us light about the time of this history, and to shew it was not done in the order in which it is here placed, after Samson's death, but long before. Stood - That is ministered as high-priest. The Lord said - When they sought God after the due order, and truly humbled themselves for their sins, he gives them a satisfactory answer.

29. Liers in wait - Though they were assured of the success, by a particular promise, yet they do not neglect the use of means; as well knowing that the certainty of God's promises doth not excuse, but rather require man's diligent use of all fit means for the accomplishment of them.

30. The children of Israel - That is, a considerable part of them, who were ordered to give the first onset, and then to counterfeit flight, to draw the Benjamites forth from their strong-hold. See ver. 32.

34. Chosen men - Selected out of the main body, which was at Baal-tamar; and these were to march directly to Gibeah on the one side, whilst the liers in wait stormed it on the other side, and whilst the great body of the army laboured to intercept the Benjamites, who having pursued the Israelites that pretended to flee, now endeavoured to retreat to Gibeah.

37. Drew along - Or, extended themselves; whereas before they lay close and contracted into a narrow compass, now they spread themselves, and marched in rank and file as armies do.

44. There fell - Namely, in the field, of battle.

45. Gleaned - That is, a metaphor from those who gather grapes or corn so clearly and fully, that they leave no relicks for those who come after them.

46. Twenty and five thousand - Besides the odd hundred expressed ver.

35, but here only the great number is mentioned, the less being omitted, as inconsiderable. Here are also a thousand more omitted, because he speaks only of them who fell in that third day of battle.

48. Turned again - Having destroyed those that came to Gibeah, and into the field, now they follow them home to their several habitations. Men - Comprehensively taken, so as to include women and children. If this seem harsh and bloody, either it may be ascribed to military fury; or perhaps it may be partly justified, from that command of God in a parallel case, Deut. xiii, 15, and from that solemn oath by which they had devoted to death all that came not up to Mizpeh, chap. xxi, 5, which none of the Benjamites did.

## XXI

The lamentation of Israel over Benjamin, ver. 1-7. They procure wives for the remaining Benjamites of the virgins of Jabesh-Gilead, ver. 8-15. And of the daughters of Shiloh, ver. 16- 25.

1. Had sworn - In the beginning of this war, after the whole tribe had espoused the quarrel of the men of Gibeah. Saying - They do not here swear the utter extirpation of the tribe, which fell out beyond their expectation, but only not to give their daughters to those men who should survive; justly esteeming them for their villainy, to be as bad as Heathens, with whom they were forbidden to marry.

4. An altar - Not for a monument of the victory, but for sacrifices, as the next words shew. There might be in that place more altars than one, when the multitude of sacrifices be required, which was the case, 1 Kings viii, 64, and probably at this time, when all the tribes being met, they had many sacrifices to offer, some in common for all, and some peculiar to every tribe.

5. Great oath - That is a solemn oath joined with some terrible execration against the offenders herein. Put to death - Because by refusing to execute the vengeance due to such malefactors, they were justly presumed guilty of the crime, and therefore liable to the same punishment, as was the case of that city that would not deliver up an Idolater dwelling among them, to justice.

6. Repented - Not for the war, which was just and necessary, but for their immoderate severity in the execution of it. That is no good divinity which swallows up humanity. Even necessary justice is to be done with compassion.

15. The Lord, &c. - The Benjamites were the only authors of the sin, but God was the chief author of the punishment, and the Israelites were but his executioners.

17. An inheritance - The inheritance promised by Jacob and Moses, and given by Joshua to the tribe of Benjamin, doth all of it belong to those few who remain of that tribe, and cannot be possessed by any other tribe; and therefore we are obliged to procure wives for them all, that they may make up this breach, and be capable of possessing and managing all their land: that this tribe, and their inheritance may not be confounded with, or swallowed up by any of the rest.

19. A feast - Probably it was the feast of tabernacles, which they celebrated with more than ordinary joy. And that feast was the only season, at which the Jewish virgins were allowed to dance. But even this was not mixed dancing. No men danced with these daughters of Shiloh. Nor did the married women so forget their gravity, as to join with them. However their dancing thus in public, made them an easy prey: whence Bishop Hall observes, "The ambushes of evil spirits carry away many souls from dancing to a fearful desolation."

21. Daughters of Shiloh - By whom we may understand not those only who were born or settled inhabitants there, but all those who were come thither upon this occasion, and for a time sojourned there: for although only the males were obliged to go up to the three solemn feasts; yet the women had liberty to go, and those who were most devout did usually go. Vineyards - Which were near to the green where they danced. Catch - Take them away by force, which they might the better do, because the women danced by themselves.

23. And took, &c. - That is, each man his wife. By which we may see, they had no very favourable opinion of polygamy, because they did not allow it in this case, when it might seem most necessary for the reparation of a lost tribe. Repaired - By degrees, increasing their buildings as their number increased.

25. Right in his own eyes - What wonder was it then, if all wickedness overflowed the land? Blessed be God for magistracy!

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF RUTH

This short history fitly follows the book of Judges, the events related therein happening in the time of the Judges. It was probably wrote by Samuel. The design of it is,

1. To lead us to Providence, acknowledging God in all our ways;
2. To lead to Christ, who descended from Ruth, and part of whose genealogy concludes the book

**I**

Naomi removes to Moab, ver. 1, 2. Her husband and sons die, ver. 3-5. Designing to return to Bethlehem, she addresses her daughters-in-law, ver. 6-13. Orpah stays, but Ruth returns with her, ver. 14-18. They came to Bethlehem, ver. 19-22.

1. In the land - Of Canaan. It must be early: for Boaz was born of Rahab. So Christ descended from two Gentile mothers.

2. Ephrathites - Bethlehem was otherwise called Ephratha. Naomi signifies my amiable or pleasant one: Mahlon and Chilon signify sickness and consumption. Probably they were sickly children, and not likely to be long-lived. Such are the products of our pleasant things, weak and infirm, fading and dying.

4. Took wives - Either these were Proselytes when they married them, or they sinned in marrying them, and therefore were punished with short life, and want of issue.

5. Was left of her two sons, and her husband - Loss of children and widowhood are both come upon her. By whom shall she be comforted? It is God alone that is able to comfort those who are thus cast down.

6. Bread - That is, food; so she staid no longer there than necessity forced her.

8. Mother's house - Because daughters used to converse more frequently with their mothers, and to dwell in the same apartments with them, which then were distinct from those parts of the house where the men dwelt. The dead - With my sons, your husbands, while they lived.

11. Your husbands - According to the ancient custom, Gen. xxxviii, 8, and the express law of God, Deut. xxv, 5, which doubtless she had acquainted them with before, among other branches of the Jewish religion.

13. It grieveth me - That you are left without the comfort of husbands or children; that I must part with such affectionate daughters; and that my circumstances are such, that I cannot invite you to go alone with me. For her condition was so mean at this time, that Ruth, when she came to her mother's city, was forced to glean for a living. It is with me, that God has a controversy. This language becomes us, when we are under affliction; tho' many others share in the trouble, yet we are to hear the voice of the rod, as if it spake only to us. But did not she wish to bring them to the worship of the God of Israel? Undoubtedly she did. But she would have them first consider upon what terms, lest having set their hand to the plow, they should look back.

14. Kissed - Departed from her with a kiss. Bade her farewell for ever. She loved Naomi, but she did not love her so well, as to quit her country for her sake. Thus many have a value for Christ, and yet come short of salvation by him, because they cannot find in their hearts, to forsake other things for him. They love him, and yet leave him, because they do not love him enough, but love other things better.

15. To her gods - Those that forsake the communion of saints, will certainly break off their communion with God. This she saith, to try Ruth's sincerity and constancy, and that she might intimate to her, that if she went with her, she must embrace the true religion.

17. There will I be buried - Not desiring to have so much as her dead body carried back into the land of Moab: but Naomi and she having joined souls, she desires they may mingle dust, in

hopes of rising together, and remaining together for ever. 18. Left speaking unto her - See the power of resolution! Those who are half- resolved, are like a door a-jar, which invites a thief. But resolution shuts and bolts he door, and then the devil flees from us.

19. Is this - Is this she that formerly lived in so much plenty and honour? How marvelously is her condition changed?

20. Naomi - Which signifies pleasant, and chearful. Mara - Which signifies bitter or sorrowful.

21. Full - With my husband and sons, and a plentiful estate for our support. Testified - That is, hath born witness, as it were, in judgment, and given sentence against me.

## II

Providence directs Ruth to glean in Boaz's field, ver. 1-3. The favour which Boaz shewed her, ver. 4-16. Her return to Naomi, ver. 17-23.

2. Glean - Which was permitted to the poor, and the stranger, Deut. xxiv, 19, nor was she ashamed to confess her poverty, nor would she eat the bread of idleness. In whose sight - For though it was their duty to permit this, yet she thought it might perhaps be denied her; at least, that it became her modestly and humbly to acknowledge their kindness herein.

3. Her hap - It was a chance in reference to second causes, but ordered by God's providence. God wisely orders small events, even those that seem altogether contingent. Many a great affair is brought about by a little turn, fortuitous as to men, but designed by God.

4. Said,&c. - They expressed their piety, even in their civil conversation, and worldly transactions; which now so many are ashamed of.

7. I pray - She did not boldly intrude herself, but modestly ask leave of us. 'Till now - She is not retired through idleness, for she hath been diligent and constant in her labours. The house - In the little house or tent, which was set up in the fields at these times, and was necessary in those hot countries, where the labourers might retire for a little repose or repast. Being weary with her continued labours, she comes hither to take a little rest.

8. Maidens - Not by the young men, to avoid both occasion of sin, and matter of scandal. Herein he shews his piety and prudence.

9. Touch - So as to offer any incivility or injury to thee.

10. Fell - This was the humblest posture of reverence, either civil when performed to men, or religious, when to God. Take knowledge - That is, shew any respect and kindness to me.

12. Wings - That is, protection and care. An allusion either to hens, which protect and cherish their young ones under their wings; or to the wings of the Cherubim, between which God dwelt.

13. Tho' I be not - I humbly implore the continuance of thy good opinion of me, though I do not deserve it, being a person more mean, necessitous, and, obscure, a stranger, and one born of heathen parents, and not of the holy and honourable people of Israel, as they are.

14. She sat - Not with or among them, but at some little distance from them, as one inferior to them. It is no disparagement to the finest hand, to be reached forth to the needy.

17. An Ephah - About a bushel.

18. Reserved - At dinner, after she had eaten and was sufficed, or satisfied.

19. Where hast thou gleaned today? - It is a good question to ask ourselves in the evening, "Where have I gleaned today?" What improvements have I made in grace or knowledge? What have I learned or done, which will turn to account?

20. To the dead - That is, which he formerly shewed to those who are now dead, my husband and his sons whilst they were living, and now continues to us.

21. Harvest - Both barley-harvest, and wheat-harvest. She tells what kindness Boaz had shewed her; but not, how he had commended her. Humility teaches not only not to praise ourselves, but not to be forward in repeating the praise which others have given us.

22. Other field - Whereby thou wilt both expose thyself to many inconveniences, which thou mayst expect from strangers; and incur his displeasure, as if thou didst despise his kindness.

## III

The directions Naomi gives to Ruth, ver. 1-5. Her punctual observance of them, ver. 6, 7. The honourable treatment which Boaz gave her, ver. 8-15. Her return to Naomi, ver. 16-18.

1. Rest - A life of rest, and comfort, and safety, under the care of a good husband.

2. Threshing-floor - Which was in a place covered at the top, but open elsewhere, whither Ruth might easily come. And this work of winnowing corn was usually ended with a feast.

3. Raiment - Thy best raiment. Known - In so familiar a way, as thou mayest do hereafter.

4. Uncover his feet - Remove the clothes that were upon his feet; thereby to awaken him. Will tell thee - What course thou shalt take to obtain that marriage which belongs unto thee.

8. At midnight - He did not discover her sooner.

9. Spread thy Skirt - That is, take me to be thy wife, and perform the duty of an husband to me.

10. Shewed kindness - Both to thy deceased husband, the continuance of whose name and memory thou seekest; and to thy mother-in-law, whose commands thou hast punctually obeyed. Followedst not - To seek thy marriage here, or in thy own country, as thou wouldst have done if thou hadst not preferred obedience to God's command, before pleasing thyself.

13. Perform, &c. - Take thee to wife, to raise up seed to his brother. Bishop Hall sums up the matter thus. "Boaz, instead of touching her as a wanton, blesseth her as a father, encourages her as a friend, promises her as a kinsman, rewards her as a patron, and sends her away laden with hopes and gifts, no less chast, but more happy than she came. O admirable temperance, worthy the progenitor of him, in whose lips and heart there was no guile!"

14. Let it not, &c. - He takes care to preserve not only his conscience towards God, but his reputation, and hers also, among men.

15. Veil - Or, the apron.

16. Who art thou? - This is not a question of doubting, but of wonder, as if she had said, Art thou in very deed my daughter? I can hardly believe it. How camest thou hither in this manner, and thus early?

**IV**

The next kinsman refuses to marry Ruth, ver. 1-8. Boaz marries her, ver. 9-12. Their issue, ver. 13-22.

2. Ten men - To be witnesses: for though two or three witnesses were sufficient, yet in weightier matters they used more. And ten was the usual number among the Jews, in causes of matrimony and divorce, and translation of inheritances; who were both Judges of the causes, and witnesses of the fact.

3. Naomi - Both Naomi and Ruth had an interest in this land during their lives, but he mentions only Naomi, because all was done by her direction; lest the mention of Ruth should raise a suspicion of the necessity of his marrying Ruth, before he had given his answer to the first proposition.

5. Buy it - According to the law, Deut. xxv, 5. To raise,&c. - To revive his name, which was buried with his body, by raising up a seed to him, to be called by his name.

6. Mar - Either because having no children of his own, he might have one, and but one son by Ruth, who, though he should carry away his inheritance, yet would not bear his name, but the name of Ruth's husband; and so by preserving another man's name, he should lose his own. Or, because as his inheritance would be but very little increased by this marriage, so it might be much diminished by being divided amongst his many children, which he possibly had already, and might probably have more by Ruth. My right - Which I freely resign to thee.

7. All things - That is, in all alienation of lands. So that it is no wonder if this ceremony differ a little from that, Deut. xxv, 9, because that concerned only one case, but this is more general. Besides, he pleads not the command of God, but only ancient custom, for this practice. Gave it - He who relinquished his right to another, plucked off his own shoe and gave it to him. This was symbolical, and a significant and convenient ceremony, as if he said, take this shoe wherewith I used to go and tread upon my land, and in that shoe do thou enter upon it, and take possession of it. This was a testimony - This was admitted for sufficient evidence in all such cases.

10. From the gate - That is, from among the inhabitants dwelling within the gate of this city, which was Bethlehem-judah.

11. Rachel and Leah - Amiable and fruitful. These two are singled out, because they were of a foreign original, and yet ingrafted into God's people, as Ruth was; and because of that fertility which God vouchsafed unto them above their predecessors, Sarah and Rebecca. Rachel is placed before Leah, because she was his most lawful, and best-beloved wife. Did build - That is, increase the posterity. Ephratah and Bethlehem - Two names of one and the same place.

12. Pharez - As honourable and numerous as his family was; whom, though be also was born of a stranger, God so blessed, that his family was one of the five families to which all the tribe of Judah belonged, and the progenitor of the inhabitants of this city.

13. Took Ruth - Which he might do, though she was a Moabite, because the prohibition against marrying such, is to be restrained to those who continue Heathens; whereas Ruth was a sincere proselyte and convert to the God of Israel. Thus he that forsakes all for Christ, shall find more than all with him.

14. Which hath not, &c. - The words may be rendered, Which hath not made, or suffered thy kinsman to fail thee; that is, to refuse the performances of his duty to thee and thine, as the other kinsman did. Famous - Hebrew. and his name shall be famous in Israel, for this noble and worthy action.

15. Thy life - That is, of the comfort of thy life. Born him - Or, hath born to him; that is, to thy kinsman a son. Better than seven sons - See how God sometimes makes up the want of those relations from whom we expected most comfort, in those from whom we expected least! The bonds of love prove stronger than those of nature.

17. A name - That is, they gave her advice about his name; for otherwise they had no power or right to do so. Obed - A servant, to thee, to nourish, and comfort, and assist thee; which duty children owe to their progenitors.

# NOTES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL

This book and the following bear the name of Samuel, (tho' he wrote only part of the former, and some other of the prophets, perhaps Nathan, the rest) because they contain first a large account of Samuel, and then the history of the reigns of Saul and David, who were both anointed by him.

## I

The affliction of Hannah, ver. 1-8. Her prayer to God, with Eli's blessing, ver. 9-18. The birth and nursing of Samuel, ver. 19-23. The presenting of him to God, ver. 24-28.

1. Ramathaim-zophim - Called Ramah, ver. 19. Eparathite - That is, one of Bethlehem-judah, by his birth and habitation, though by his original a Levite.

2. Two wives - As many had in those ages, tho' it was a transgression of the original institution of marriage. And it is probable that he took his second wife, namely, Peninnah, because Hannah was barren.

3. Yearly - At the three solemn feasts, when he, together with all other males were obliged to go to worship God in the place appointed; and at other times, when he as a Levite, was to go thither in his course. To sacrifice - Not in his own person, which the Levites could not do, but by the priests. Were there - Or, were the priests of the Lord there, under their father Eli, who is generally conceived to have been the high-priest, but being very old and infirm, his sons ministered in his stead. This is the first time in scripture, that God is called the Lord of hosts or Armies. Probably Samuel was the first who used this title of God, for the comfort of Israel, at the time when their armies were few and feeble, and those of their enemies many and mighty.

4. Portions - Out of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings, the greatest part whereof fell to the offerer, and was eaten by him, and his friends or guests, before the Lord. And out of this he gave them all portions, as the master of the feast used to do to the guests.

5. Shut up her womb - Yet Elkanah did not withdraw his love from her. To abate out just love to any relation, for the sake of any infirmity which they cannot help, is to add affliction to the afflicted.

6. Her adversary - Peninnah: so her envy or jealousy made her though so nearly related.

7. When she went-This circumstance is noted as the occasion of the contention, because at such times they were forced to more society with one another, by the way, and in their lodgings; whereas at home they had distinct apartments, where they might be asunder; and then her husband's extraordinary love and kindness was shewed to Hannah, whereby Peninnah was the more exasperated; then also Hannah prayed earnestly for a child, which hitherto she had done in vain; and this possibly she reproached her with. Did not eat - Being overwhelmed with grief, and therefore unfit to eat of the sacred food. Which they were not to eat in their mourning.

8. Ten sons - Oughtest thou not to value my hearty love to thee, more than the having of as many sons as Penninah hath? She would willingly change conditions with thee.

9. A seat - Or, throne; for it is manifest it was raised higher than ordinary, chap. iv, 18. Here he might sit, either as the judge; or rather as high-priest, to hear and answer such as came to him for advice, and to inspect and direct the worship of God. Temple - That is, of the tabernacle, which is frequently so called.

10. Bitterness - That is, oppressed with grief. Prayed unto the Lord - They had newly offered their peace-offerings, to obtain the favour of God, and in token of their communion with him, they had feasted upon the sacrifice: and now it was proper to put up her prayer, in virtue of the sacrifice. For the peace-offerings typified Christ's mediation, as well as the sin-offerings: since by this not only atonement is made for sin, but an answer to our prayers obtained.

11. Give him - That is, consecrate him to God's service in his temple. No razor - That is, he shall be a perpetual Nazarite.

12. Continued - Hebrew. multiplied to pray. By which it appears that she said much more than is here expressed. And the like you are to judge of the prayers and sermons of other holy persons recorded in scripture, which gives us only the sum and substance of them. This consideration may help us much to understand some passages of the bible.

13. Drunken - Because of the multitude of her words, and those motions of her face and body, which the vehemency of her passion, and the fervency in prayer occasioned.

16. Count not, &c. - Thus when we are unjustly censured, we should endeavour not only to clear ourselves, but to satisfy our brethren, by giving them a just and true account of that which they misapprehended.

18. Find grace - That favourable opinion and gracious prayer which thou hast expressed on my behalf, be pleased to continue towards me. Sad - Her heart being cheared by the priest's comfortable words, and especially by God's spirit setting them home upon her, and assuring her that both his and her prayers should be heard, it quickly appeared in her countenance.

19. Remembered - Manifested his remembrance of her by the effect.

20. Samuel - That is, Asked of God.

21. His house - Hannah only and her child excepted. His vow - By which it appears, though it was not expressed before, that he heard and consented to her vow, and that he added a vow of his own, if God answered his prayers.

22. Weaned - Not only from the breast, but also from the mother's knee and care, and from childish food; 'till the child be something grown up, and fit to do some service in the tabernacle: for it seems that as soon as he was brought up he worshipped God, ver. 28, and presently after ministered to Eli, chap. ii, 11.

23. His word - His matter or thing; the business concerning the child, what thou hast vowed concerning him, that be may grow up, and be accepted and employed by God in his Service.

24. Three bullocks - One for a burnt-offering, the second for a sin- offering, and the third for a peace offering; all these sorts being expedient for this work and time. Flour - For the meal-offerings belonging to the principal sacrifices, which to each bullock were three tenth-deals, or three tenth parts of an ephah, and so nine parts of the ephah were spent, and the tenth part was given to the priest. Wine - For drink-offerings.

25. A bullock - The three bullocks mentioned ver. 24, the singular number being put for the plural, which is frequent.

26. Soul liveth - As surely as thou livest. Which asseveration seems necessary, because this was some years after it.

28. Lent him - But not with a purpose to require him again. Whatever we give to God, may upon this account be said to be lent to him, that tho' we may not recall it, yet he will certainly repay it, to our unspeakable advantage. He worshipped - Not Eli, but young Samuel, who is spoken of in this and the foregoing verse, and who was capable of worshipping God in some sort, at least with external adoration.

## II

Hannah's song of thanksgiving, ver. 1-10. Elkanah leaves Samuel to minister before the Lord, ver. 11. The wickedness of Eli's sons, ver. 12-17. A farther account of Samuel and his parents, ver. 18-21. Eli's too mild reproof of his sons, ver. 22-25. Samuel's growth, ver. 26. God's dreadful message to Eli, ver. 27- 36.

1. Prayed - That is, praised God; which is a part of prayer. Rejoiceth - Or, leapeth for joy: for the words note not only inward joy, but also the outward demonstrations of it. In the Lord - As the author of my joy, that he hath heard my prayer, and accepted my son for his service. Horn - My strength and glory (which are often signified by an horn,) are advanced and manifested to my vindication, and the confusion of mine enemies. Mouth enlarged - That is, opened wide to pour forth abundant praises to God, and to give a full answer to all the reproaches of mine adversaries. Enemies - So she manifests her prudence and modesty, in not naming Peninnah, but only her enemies in the general. Salvation - Because the matter of my joy is no trivial thing, but that strange and glorious salvation or deliverance which thou hast given me from my oppressing care and grief, and from the insolencies and reproaches of mine enemies.

2. None holy - None so perfectly, unchangeably and constantly holy. None beside - Not only none is so holy as thou art, but in truth there is none holy besides thee; namely, entirely, or independently, but only by participation from thee. Any rock - Thou only art a sure defense and refuge to all that flee to thee.

3. Talk no more - Thou Peninnah, boast no more of thy numerous off-spring, and speak no more insolently and scornfully of me. She speaks of her in the plural number, because she would not expose her name to censure. Of knowledge - He knoweth thy heart, and all that pride, and envy, and contempt of me, which thy own conscience knows; and all thy perverse carriage towards me. Actions - That is, he trieth all mens thoughts and actions, (for the Hebrew word signifies both) as a just judge, to give to every one according to their works.

4. Bows - The strength of which they boasted. Stumbled - Or, were weak, or feeble, in body and spirit.

5. Hired themselves out for bread - It is the same thing which is expressed both in divers metaphors in the foregoing, and following verses. Ceased - That is, ceased to be hungry. Seven - That is, many, as seven is often used. She speaks in the prophetick style, the past time, for the future; for though she had actually born but one, yet she had a confident persuasion that she should have more, which was grounded either upon some particular assurance from God; or rather upon the prayer or prediction of Eli. She - That is, Peninnah. Feeble - Either because she was now past child-bearing: or, because divers of her children, which were her strength and her glory, were dead, as the Hebrew doctors relate.

6. Killeth - The same person whom he first killeth, or bringeth nigh unto death, he afterwards raiseth to life. Me, who was almost consumed with grief, he hath revived. The name of death both in sacred scripture, and profane writers, is often given to great Calamities.

8. From the dunghill - From the most sordid place, and mean estate. Inherit - Not only possess it themselves, but transmit it to their posterity. Throne - That is, a glorious throne or kingdom. Pillars - The foundations of the earth, which God created, and upholds, and wherewith he sustains the earth, and all its inhabitants, as a house is supported with pillars; and therefore it is not strange if he disposeth of persons and things therein as he pleaseth.

9. Feet - That is, the steps or paths, their counsels and actions; he will keep; that is, both uphold, that they may not fall into ruin; and direct and preserve from wandering, and from those fatal errors that wicked men daily run into. Silent - Shall be put to silence: they who used to open their mouths wide against heaven, and against the saints, shall be so confounded with the unexpected disappointment of all their hopes, and with God's glorious appearance and operations for his people, that they shall have their mouths quite stopped. Darkness - Both inward, in their own minds, not knowing what to say or do; and outward, in a stat e of deep distress. Prevail - Namely, against God, or against his saints, as the wicked were confident they should do, because of their great power, and wealth, and numbers.

10. Exalt - Increase, or advance the strength. Of his anointed - Of his king. This may respect Christ, the singular anointed one of God, and the special king of his people. In this sense also, the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth: David's victories and dominions reached far. But God will give to the Son of David, the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. And he will give strength unto his king, for the accomplishing his great undertaking, and exalt the horn, of the power and honour of his anointed, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.

11. Minster - In some way agreeable to his tender years, as in singing, or playing upon instruments of musick, or lighting the lamps. Before Eli the priest - That is, under the inspection, and by the direction of Eli.

12. Knew not - They did not honour, love, or serve God.

13. Boiling - As the Lord's part of the peace-offerings was burnt upon the altar, so the priest's and offerer's parts were to be boiled.

14. Took - Not contented with the breast and shoulder which were allotted them by God, they took also part of the offerer's share; besides which they snatched their part before it was heaved and waved; contrary to Levit vii, 34.

15. The fat - And the other parts to be burnt with it. So this was all additional injury; for they took such parts as they best liked whilst it was raw.

17. Abhorred - But we know the validity and efficacy of the sacraments does not depend on the goodness of those that administer them. It was therefore folly and sin in the people, to think the worse of God's institutions. But it was the much greater sin of the priests, that gave them occasion so to do.

18. Ministered - That is, performed his ministration carefully and faithfully. Before the Lord - In God's tabernacle. Ephod - A garment used in God's service, and allowed not only to the inferior priests and Levites but also to eminent persons of the people, and therefore to Samuel, who, though no Levite, was a Nazarite, from his birth.

21. Grew - Not only in age and stature; but especially in wisdom and goodness. Before the Lord - Not only before men, who might he deceived, but in the presence and judgment of the all-seeing God.

22. Very old - And therefore unfit either to manage his office himself, or to make a diligent inspection into the carriage of his sons, which gave them opportunity for their wickedness. To Israel - Whom they injured in their offerings, and alienated from the service of God. The door - The place where all the people both men and women waited when they came up to the service of God, because the altar on which their sacrifices was offered, was by the door.

23. He said, &c. - Eli's sin was not only that he reproved them too gently, but that he contented himself with a verbal rebuke, and did not restrain them, and inflict those punishments upon them which such high crimes deserved by God's law, and which he as judge and high-priest ought to have done, without respect of persons.

25. The judge - If only man be wronged, man can right it, and reconcile the persons. Against the Lord - As you have done wilfully and presumptuously. Who shall, &c. - The offense is of so high a nature, that few or none will dare to intercede for him, but will leave him to the just judgment of God. The words may be rendered, Who shall judge for him? Who shall interpose as umpire, between God and him? Who shall compound that difference? None can or dare do it, and therefore he must be left to the dreadful, but righteous judgment of God. They had now sinned away their day of grace. They had long hardened their hearts. And God at length gave them up to a reprobate mind, and determined to destroy them, 2 Chron. xxv, 16.

27. Man of God - That is, a prophet sent from God.

29. Kick ye - Using them irreverently, and profanely; both by abusing them to your own luxury, and by causing the people to abhor them. He chargeth Eli with his sons faults. honourest thy sons - Permitting them to dishonour and injure me, by taking my part to themselves; chusing rather to offend me by thy connivance at their sin, than to displease them by severe rebukes, and just

punishments. Fat - To pamper yourselves. This you did not out of necessity, but out of mere luxury. Chiefest - Not contented with those parts which I had allotted you, you invaded those choice parts which I reserved for myself.

30. I said - Where, or when did God say this? To Eli himself, or to his father, when the priesthood was translated from Eleazar's to Ithamar's family. Walk - That is, minister unto me as high-priest. Walking is often put for discharging ones office; before me; may signify that he was the high-priest, whose sole prerogative it was to minister before God, or before the ark, in the most holy place. For ever - As long as the Mosaical law and worship lasts. Far from me - To fulfil my promise, which I hereby retract.

31. Arm - That is, I will take away thy strength, or all that in which thou placest thy confidence, either,

1. the ark, which is called God's strength, Psalm lxxviii, 61, and was Eli's strength, who therefore was not able to bear the very tidings of the loss of it. Or,
2. his priestly dignity or employment, whence he had all his honour and substance. Or rather,
3. his children, to whom the words following here, and in the succeeding verses, seem to confine it. Father's house - That is, thy children's children, and all thy family which was in great measure accomplished, chap. xxii, 16, &c.

32. Shalt see,&c. - The words may be rendered; thou shalt see, in thy own person, the affliction, or calamity of my habitation; that is, either of the land of Israel, wherein I dwell; or of the sanctuary, called the habitation by way of eminency, whose greatest glory the ark was, chap. iv, 21, 22, and consequently, whose greatest calamity the loss of the ark was; for, or instead of all that good wherewith God would have blessed Israel, having raised up a young prophet Samuel, and thereby given good grounds of hope that he intended to bless Israel, if thou and thy sons had not hindered it by your sins. So this clause of the threatning concerns Eli's person, as the following concerns his posterity. And this best agrees with the most proper signification of that phrase, Thou shalt see.

33. Of thine - That is, of thy posterity. Shalt grieve - Shall be so forlorn and miserable, that if thou wast alive to see it, it would grieve thee at the heart, and thou wouldst consume thine eyes with weeping for their calamities. Increase - That is, thy children. Flower - About the thirtieth year of their age, when they were to be admitted to the full administration of their office.

35. Raise a priest - Of another line, as it necessarily implied by the total removal of that office from Eli's line. The person designed is Zadok, one eminent for his faithfulness to God, and to the king, who, when Abiather, the last of Eli's line, was deposed by Solomon, was made high-priest in his stead. Build,&c. - That is, give him a numerous posterity, and confirm that sure covenant of an everlasting priesthood made to Phinehas, of Eleazar's line, Num. xxv, 13, and interrupted for a little while by Eli, of the line of Ithamar, unto him and his children for ever. Anointed - Before Jesus Christ, who is the main scope and design, not only of the New, but of the Old Testament, which in all its types and ceremonies represented him; and particularly, the high-priest was an eminent type of Christ, and represented his person, and acted in his name and stead, and did mediately, what John Baptist did immediately, go before the face of the Lord Christ; and when Christ came, that office and officer was to cease. The high-priest is seldom or never said to walk or minister before the kings of Israel or Judah, but constantly before the Lord, and consequently, before Christ, who, as he was God blessed for ever, Rom. ix, 5, was present with, and the builder and governor of the ancient church of Israel, and therefore the high-priest is most properly said to walk before him.

## III

God's first manifestation of himself to Samuel, ver. 1-10. God's message to Eli, ver. 11-14. His faithful delivery of that message, and Eli's submission to God, ver. 15-18. The establishment of Samuel to be a prophet, ver. 19-21

1. Before Eli - That is, under his inspection and direction. Word - The word of prophecy, or the Revelation of God's will to and by the prophets. Precious - Rare or scarce, such things being most precious in mens' esteem, whereas common things are generally despised. Open vision - God did not impart his Mind by way of vision or Revelation openly, or to any public person, to whom others might resort for satisfaction, though he might privately reveal himself to some pious persons for their particular direction. This is premised, as a reason why Samuel understood not, when God called him once or twice.

2. His place - In the court of the tabernacle.

3. Went out - Before the lights of the golden candlestick were put out in the morning.

7. Did not know - He was not acquainted with God in that extraordinary or prophetical way. And this ignorance of Samuel's served God's design, that his simplicity might give Eli the better assurance of the truth of God's call, and message to Samuel.

10. Came and stood - Before, he spake to him at a distance, even from the holy oracle between the cherubim: but now, to prevent all farther mistake, the voice came near to him, as if the person speaking had been standing near him.

12. In that day - In that time which I have appointed for this work, which was about twenty or thirty years after this threatning. So long space of repentance God allows to this wicked generation. When I begin, &c. - Tho' this vengeance shall be delayed for a season, to manifest my patience, and incite them to repentance; yet when once I begin to inflict, I shall not desist 'till I have made a full end.

13. Restrained them not - He contented himself with a cold reproof, and did not punish, and effectually restrain them. They who can, and do not restrain others from sin, make themselves partakers of the guilt. Those in authority will have a great deal to answer for, if the sword they bear be not a terror to evil-doers.

14. Have sworn - Or, I do swear: the past tense being commonly put for the present in the Hebrew tongue. Unto - Or, concerning it. Purged - That is, the punishment threatened against Eli and his family, shall not he prevented by all their sacrifices, but shall infallibly be executed.

15. Doors - Altho' the tabernacle, whilst it was to be removed from place to place in the wilderness, had no doors, but consisted only of curtains, and had hangings before the entrance, instead of doors; yet when it was settled in one place, as now it was in Shiloh, it was enclosed within some solid building, which had doors and posts, and other parts belonging to it. Feared - The matter of the vision or Revelation, partly from the reverence he bore to his person, to whom he was loth to be a messenger of such sad tidings; partly, lest if he had been hasty to utter it, Eli might think him guilty of arrogancy or secret complacency in his calamity.

17. God do so, &c. - God inflict the same evils upon thee, which I suspect he hath pronounced against me, and greater evils too.

18. It is the Lord - This severe sentence is from the sovereign Lord of the world, who hath an absolute right to dispose of me and all his creatures; who is in a special manner the ruler of the people of Israel, to whom it properly belongs to punish all mine offenses; whose chastisement I therefore accept.

19. Fail, &c. - That is, want its effect: God made good all his predictions. A metaphor from precious liquors, which when they are spilt upon the ground, are altogether useless.

20. From Daniel, &c. - Thro' the whole Land, from the northern bound Daniel, to the southern, Beersheba; which was the whole length of the Land.

## IV

Israel smitten by the Philistines, ver. 1, 2. They bring the ark into the camp, which affrights the Philistines, ver. 3-9. Israel beaten and the ark taken, ver. 10, 11. The news brought to Shiloh and the death of Eli, ver. 12-18. The travail and death of his daughter-in-law, 19-22.

1. The word - That is, the word of the Lord revealed to Samuel, and by him to the people. A word of command, that all Israel should go forth to fight with the Philistines, as the following words explain it, that they might he first humbled and punished for their sins, and so prepared for deliverance. Went out - To meet the Philistines, who having by this time recruited themselves after their loss by Samson, and perceiving an eminent prophet arising among them, by whom they were likely to be united, and assisted, thought fit to suppress them in the beginning of their hopes.

3. Wherefore, &c. - This was strange blindness, that when there was so great a corruption in their worship and manners, they could not see sufficient reason why God should suffer them to fall by their enemies. The ark - That great pledge of God's presence and help, by whose conduct our ancestors obtained success. Instead of humbling themselves for, and purging themselves from their sins, for which God was displeased with them, they take an easier and cheaper course, and put their trust in their ceremonial observances, not doubting but the very presence of the ark would give them the victory.

4. Bring the ark - This they should not have done without asking counsel of God.

5. Shouted - From their great joy and confidence of success. So formal Christians triumph in external privileges and performances: as if the ark in the camp would bring them to heaven, tho' the world and the flesh reign in the heart.

7. Heretofore - Not in our times; for the fore-mentioned removals of the ark were before it came to Shiloh.

8. Wo, &c. - They secretly confess the Lord to be greater than their gods, and yet presume to oppose him. Wilderness - They mention the wilderness, not as if all the plagues of the Egyptians came upon them in the wilderness, but because the last and sorest of all, which is therefore put for all, the destruction of Pharaoh and all his host, happened in the wilderness, namely, in the Red-sea, which having the wilderness on both sides of it, may well be said to be in the wilderness. Altho' it is not strange if these Heathens did mistake some circumstance in relation of the Israelitish affairs, especially some hundreds of years after they were done.

10. Tent - To his habitation, called by the ancient name of his tent. There fell - Before, they lost but four thousand, now in the presence of the ark, thirty thousand, to teach them that the ark and ordinances of God, were never designed as a refuge to impenitent sinners, but only for the comfort of those that repent.

11. The ark - Which God justly and wisely permitted, to punish the Israelites for their profanation of it; that by taking away the pretenses of their foolish confidence, he might more deeply humble them, and bring them to true-repentance: and that the Philistines might by this means he more effectually convinced of God's almighty power, and of their own, and the impotency of their gods, and so a stop put to their triumphs and rage against the poor Israelites. Thus as God was no loser by this event, so the Philistines were no gainers by it; and Israel, all things considered, received more good than hurt by it. If Eli had done his duty, and put them from the priesthood, they might have lived, tho' in disgrace. But now God takes the work into his own hands, and chases them out of the world by the sword of the Philistines.

13. The ark - Whereby he discovered a public and generous spirit, and a fervent zeal for God, and for his honour, which he preferred before all his natural affections, not regarding his own children in comparison of the ark, tho' otherwise he was a most indulgent father. And well they might, for beside that this was a calamity to all Israel, it was a particular loss to Shiloh; for the ark never returned thither. Their candlestick was removed out of its place, and the city sunk and came to nothing.

18. He fell - Being so oppressed with grief and astonishment, that he had no strength left to support him. The gate - The gate of the city, which was most convenient for the speedy understanding of all occurrences. Old - Old, and therefore weak and apt to fall; heavy, and therefore his fall more dangerous. So fell the high- priest and judge of Israel! So fell his heavy head, when he had lived within two of an hundred years! So fell the crown from his head, when he had judged Israel forty years: thus did his sun set under a cloud. Thus was the wickedness of those sons of his, whom he had indulged, his ruin. Thus does God sometimes set marks of his displeasure on good men, that others may hear and fear. Yet we must observe, it was the loss of the ark that was his death, and not the slaughter of his sons. He says in effect, Let me fall with the ark! Who can live, when the ordinances of God are removed? Farewell all in this world, even Life itself, if the ark be gone!

20. Fear not - Indeed the sorrows of her travail would have been forgotten, for joy that a child was born into the world. But what is that joy to one that feels herself dying? None but spiritual joy will stand us in stead then. Death admits not the relish of any earthly joy: it is then all flat and tasteless. What is it to one that is lamenting the loss of the ark? What can give us pleasure, if we want God's word and ordinances? Especially if we want the comfort of his gracious presence, and the light of his countenance?

21. I-chabod - Where is the glory? The glory - That is, the glorious type and assurance of God's presence, the ark, which is often called God's glory, and which wast the great safeguard and ornament of Israel, which they could glory in above all other nations.

22. The ark - This is repeated to shew, her piety, and that the public loss lay heavier upon her spirit, than her personal or domestic calamity.

## V

The Philistines carry the ark into the temple of Dagon, ver. 1, 2. Dagon is overthrown, ver. 3-5. The men of Ashdod and Gath plagued, ver. 6-9. The Philistines determine to send it back, ver. 10-12.

2. By Dagon - By way of reproach, as a spoil and trophy set there to the honour of Dagon, to whom doubtless they ascribed this victory.

3. They - The priests of Dagon. Set him - Supposing his fall was casual.

4. Cut off - The head is the seat of wisdom; the hands the instruments of action: both are cut off to shew that he had neither wisdom nor strength to defend himself or his worshippers. Thus the priests by concealing Dagon's shame before, make it more evident and infamous. The stump - Hebrew. only dagon, that is, that part of it from which it was called Dagon, namely the fishy part, for Dag in Hebrew signifies a fish. It - Upon the threshold; there the trunk abode in the place where it fell, but the head and hands were slung to distant places.

5. This day - When this history was written, which if written by Samuel towards the end of his life, was a sufficient ground for this expression.

6. Emerods - The piles.

8. To Gath - Supposing that this plague was confined to Ashdod for some particular reasons, or that it came upon them by chance, or for putting it into Dagon's temple, which they resolved they would not do.

9. Hidden parts - In the inwards of their hinder parts: which is the worst kind of emerods, as all physicians acknowledge, both because its pains are far more sharp than the other; and because the malady is more out of the reach of remedies.

11. The city - In every city, where the ark of God came.

## VI

The Philistines send the ark back, ver. 1-12. The Israelites receive it, ver. 13-18. The people of Beth-shemesh, smitten for looking into the ark, desire those of Kirjath-jearim to fetch it, ver. 19-21.

1. Seven months - So long they kept it, as loath to lose so great a prize, and willing to try all ways to keep it.

3. It shall be known - You shall understand, what is hitherto doubtful, whether he was the author of these calamities, and why they continued so long upon you.

4. Emerods - Figures representing the disease. These they offered not in contempt of God, for they fought to gain his favour hereby; but in testimony of their humiliation, that by leaving this monument of their own shame and misery, they might obtain pity from God. Mice - Which marred their land by destroying the fruits thereof; as the other plague afflicted their Bodies.

5. Give glory - The glory of his power in conquering you, who seemed to have conquered him; of his justice in punishing you, and of his goodness if he relieve you.

6. Wherefore, &c. - They express themselves thus, either because some opposed the sending home the ark, though most had consented to it; or because they thought they would hardly send it away in the manner prescribed, by giving glory to God, and taking shame to themselves.

7. Milch kine, &c. - In respect to the ark; and for the better discovery, because such untamed heifers are apt to wander, and keep no certain and constant paths, as oxen accustomed to the yoke do, and therefore were most unlikely to keep the direct road to Israel's land. From them - Which would stir up natural affection in their dams, and cause them rather to return home, than to go to a strange country.

9. His own coast - Or Border, that is, the way that leadeth to his coast, or border, namely, the country to which it belongs. Then he, &c. - Which they might well conclude, if such heifers should against their common use, and natural instinct, go into a strange path, and regularly and constantly proceed in it, without any man's conduct.

12. Beth-shemesh - A city of the priests, who were by office to take care of it. Loving - Testifying at once both their natural and vehement inclination to their calves, and the supernatural power which over-ruled them to a contrary course. The lords went - To prevent all imposture, and to get assurance of the truth of the event. All which circumstances tended to the greater illustration of God's glory.

14. They - Not the lords of the Philistines, but the Beth-shemites, the priest that dwelt there. Offered the kine - There may seem to be a double error in this act. First, that they offered females for a burnt-offering, contrary to Levit i, 3. Secondly, that they did it in a forbidden place, Deut. xii, 5, 6. But this case being extraordinary, may in some sort excuse it, if they did not proceed by ordinary rules.

18. Villages - This is added for explication of that foregoing phrase, all the cities; either to shew, that under the name of the five cities were comprehended all the villages and territories belonging to them, in whose name, and at whose charge these presents were made; or to express the difference between this and the former present, the emerods being only five, according to the five cities mentioned, ver. 17, because it may seem, the cities only, or principally, were pestered with that disease; and the mice being many more according to the number of all the cities, as is here expressed: the word city being taken generally so, as to include not only fenced cities, but also the country villages, and the fields belonging to them. Abel - This is mentioned as the utmost border of the Philistines territory, to which the plague of mice extended. And this place is here called Abel, by anticipation from the great mourning mentioned in the following verse. It is desirable, to see the ark in its habitation, in all the circumstances of solemnity. But it is better to have it on a great stone, and in the fields of the wood, than to be without it. The intrinsic grandeur of divine ordinances ought not to be diminished in our eyes, by the meanness and poverty of the place, where they are administered.

19. Had looked - Having now an opportunity which they never yet had, it is not strange they had a vehement curiosity to see the contents of the ark. Of the people - In and near Beth-shemesh and coming from all parts on this occasion.

20. Who is able, &c. - That is, to minister before the ark where the Lord is present. Since God is so severe to mark what is amiss in his servants, who is sufficient to serve him? It seems to be a complaint, or expostulation with God, concerning this great instance of his severity. And to whom,

&c. - Who will dare to receive the ark with so much hazard to themselves. Thus when the word of God works with terror on men's consciences, instead of taking the blame to themselves, they frequently quarrel with the word, and endeavour to put it from them.

21. Kirjath-jearim - Whither they sent, either because the place was not far off from them, and so it might soon be removed: or because it was a place of eminency and strength, and somewhat farther distant from the Philistines, where therefore it was likely to be better preserved from any new attempts of the Philistines, and to be better attended by the Israelites, who would more freely and frequently come to it at such a place, than in Beth-shemesh, which was upon the border of their enemies land.

## VII

The ark remains at Kirjath-jearim twenty years, ver. 1, 2. Samuel reforms Israel from idolatry, and Judg. Israel, ver. 3-6. The Philistines come up against Israel, are overthrown, and restore the cities they had taken, ver. 7-14. Samuel administers justice thro' all the land, ver. 15-17.

1. Fetch up - That is, by the priests appointed to that work. Hill - This place they chose, both because it was a strong place, where it would be the most safe; and an high place, and therefore visible at some distance, which was convenient for them, who were at that time to direct their prayers and faces towards the ark. And for the same reason David afterwards placed it in the hill of Sion. Sanctified Eleazar - Not that they made him either Levite or Priest; for in Israel persons were not made but born such; but they devoted, or set him apart wholly to attend upon this work. His son - Him they chose rather than his father, because he was younger and stronger, and probably freed from domestic cares, which might divert him from, or disturb him in this work. To keep the ark - To keep the place where it was, clean, and to guard it that none might touch it, but such as God allowed to do so.

2. Kirjath-jearim - Where it continued, and was not carried to Shiloh its former place, either because that place was destroyed by the Philistines when the ark was taken, or because God would hereby punish the wickedness of the people of Israel, by keeping it in a private place near the Philistines, whether the generality of the people durst not come. Twenty years - He saith not, that this twenty years was all the time of the ark's abode there, for it continued there from Eli's time 'till David's reign, 2 Sam. vi, 2, which was forty years: but that it was so long there before the Israelites were sensible of their sin and misery. Lamented - That is, they followed after God with Lamentations for his departure, and prayers for his return.

3. Spake - To all the rulers and people too, as he had occasion in his circuit, described below, mixing exhortation to repentance, with his judicial administrations. If - If you do indeed what you profess, if you are resolved to go on in that which you seem to have begun. With all your heart - Sincerely and in good earnest. Put - Out of your houses, where some of you keep them; and out of your hearts, where they still have an interest in many of you. Ashtaroth - And especially, Ashtaroth, whom they, together with the neighbouring nations, did more eminently worship. Prepare your hearts - By purging them from all sin, and particularly from all inclinations to other gods.

6. Poured it out - As an external sign, whereby they testified, both their own filthiness and need of washing by the grace and Spirit of God, and blood of the covenant, and their sincere desire to pour out their hearts before the Lord, in true repentance, and to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. Before the Lord - That is, in the public assembly, where God is in a special manner present. Judged - That is, governed them, reformed all abuses against God or man, took care that the laws of God should be observed, and wilful transgressions punished.

7. Went up - With an army, suspecting the effects of their general convention, and intending to nip them in the bud. Afraid - Being a company of unarmed persons, and unfit for battle. When sinners begin to repent and reform, they must expect Satan will muster all his forces against them, and set his instruments at work to the uttermost, to oppose and discourage them.

8. Cease not, &c. - We are afraid to look God in the face, because of our great wickedness: do thou therefore intercede for us, as Moses did for his generation. They had reason to expect this, because he had promised to pray for them, had promised them deliverance from the Philistines, and they had been observant of him, in all that he had spoken to them from the Lord. Thus they who receive Christ as their lawgiver and judge, need not doubt of their interest in his intercession. O what a comfort is it to all believers, that he never ceaseth, but always appears in the presence of God for us.

9. Cried - And he cried unto the Lord. He made intercession with the sacrifice. So Christ intercedes in virtue of his satisfaction. And in all our prayers we must have an eye to his great oblation, depending on him for audience and acceptance.

12. A stone - A rude unpolished stone, which was not prohibited by that law, Lev. xxvi, 1, there being no danger of worshipping such a stone, and this being set up only as a monument of the victory. Eben-ezer - That is, the stone of help. And this victory was gained in the very same place where the Israelites received their former fatal loss. Helped us - He hath begun to help us, though not compleatly to deliver us. By which wary expression, he exciteth both their thankfulness for their mercy received, and their holy fear and care to please and serve the Lord, that he might help and deliver them effectually.

13. Came no more - That is, with a great host, but only with straggling parties, or garrisons. All the days, &c. - All the days of Samuel that is, while Samuel was their sole judge, or ruler; for in Saul's time they did come.

14. Peace - An agreement for the cessation of all acts of hostility. Amorites - That is, the Canaanites, often called Amorites, because these were formerly the most valiant of all those nations, and the first Enemies which the Israelites met with, when they went to take possession of their land. They made this peace with the Canaanites, that they might he more at leisure to oppose the Philistines, now their most potent enemies.

15. Samuel judged - For though Saul was king in Samuel's last days, yet Samuel did not cease to be a judge, being so made by God's extraordinary call, which Saul could not destroy; and therefore Samuel did sometimes, upon great occasions, tho' not ordinarily, exercise the office of judge after the beginning of Saul's reign; and the years of the rule of Saul and Samuel are joined together, Acts xiii, 20, 21.

16. In all places - He went to those several places, in compliance with the people, whose convenience he was willing to purchase with his own trouble, as an itinerant judge and preacher; and by his presence in several parts, he could the better observe, and rectify all sorts of miscarriages.

17. Built an altar - That by joining sacrifices with his prayers, he might the better obtain direction and assistance from God upon all emergencies. And this was done by prophetical inspiration, as appears by God's acceptance of the sacrifices offered upon it. Indeed Shiloh being now laid waste, and no other place yet appointed for them to bring their offerings to, the law which obliged them to one place, was for the present suspended. Therefore, as the patriarchs did, he built an altar where he lived: and that not only for the use of his own family, but for the good of the country who resorted to it.

## VIII

Samuel's decay and the degeneracy of his sons, ver. 1-3. The people petition him for a king, who refers it to God, ver. 4-6. God directs him what answer to give, ver. 7-18. They insist upon their petition, ver. 19, 20. Which he promises, shall be granted, ver. 21, 22.

1. Old - And so unfit for his former travels and labours. He is not supposed to have been now above sixty years of age. But he had spent his strength and spirits in the fatigue of public business: and now if he thinks to shake himself as at other times, he finds he is mistaken: age has cut his hair. They that are in the prime of their years, ought to be busy in doing the work of life: for as they go into years, they will find themselves less disposed to it, and less capable of it. Judges - Not supreme Judges, for such there was to be but one, and that of God's chusing; and Samuel still kept that office in his own hands, chap. vii, 15, but his deputies, to go about and determine matters, but with reservation of a right of appeals to himself. He had doubtless instructed them in a singular manner, and fitted them for the highest employments; and he hoped that the example he had sent them, and the authority he still had over them, would oblige them to diligence and faithfulness in their trust.

2. Beer-sheba - In the southern border of the land of Canaan, which were very remote from his house at Ramah; where, and in the neighbouring places Samuel himself still executing the office of judge.

3. Took bribes - Opportunity and temptation discovered that corruption in them which 'till now was hid from their father. It has often been the grief of holy men, that their children did not tread in their steps. So far from it, that the sons of eminently good men, have been often eminently wicked.

5. A king - Their desires exceed their reasons, which extended no farther than to the removal of Samuel's sons from their places, and the procuring some other just: and prudent assistance to Samuel's age. Nor was the grant of their desire a remedy for their disease, but rather an aggravation of it. For the sons of their king were likely to be as corrupt as Samuel's sons and, if they were, would not be so easily removed. Like other nations - That is, as most of the nations about us have. But there was not the like reason; because God had separated them from all other nations, and cautioned them against the imitation of their examples, and had taken them into his own immediate care and government; which privilege other nations had not.

6. Displeased - Because God was hereby dishonoured by that distrust of him, and that ambition, and itch after changes, which were the manifest causes of this desire; and because of that great

misery, which he foresaw the people would hereby bring upon themselves. Prayed - For the pardon of their sin, and direction and help from God in this great affair.

7. Hearken - God grants their desire in anger, and for their punishment. Rejected me - This injury and contumely, reflects chiefly upon me and my government. Should not reign - By my immediate government, which was the great honour, safety, and happiness of this people, if they had had hearts to prize it.

8. So do they - Thou farest no worse than myself. This he speaks for Samuel's comfort and vindication.

9. Ye protest - That, if it be possible, thou mayst yet prevent their sin and misery. The manner - That is, of the kings which they desire like the kings of other nations.

11. Will take - Injuriously and by violence.

12. Will appoint - Hebrew. To, or for himself; for his own fancy, or glory, and not only when the necessities of the kingdom require it. And though this might seem to be no incumbrance, but an honour to the persons so advanced, yet even in them that honour was accompanied with great dangers, and pernicious snares of many kinds, which those faint shadows of glory could not recompense; and as to the public, their pomp and power proved very burdensome to the people, whose lands and fruits were taken from them, and bestowed upon these, for the support of their state. Will set them - At his own pleasure, when possibly their own fields required all their time and pains. He will press them for all sorts of his work, and that upon his own terms.

13. Daughters - Which would be more grievous to their parents, and more dangerous to themselves, because of the tenderness of that sex, and their liableness to many injuries.

14. Your fields - By fraud or force, as Ahab did from Naboth. His servants - He will not only take the fruits of your lands for his own use, but will take away your possessions to give to his servants.

15. The tenth - Besides the several tenths which God hath reserved for his service, he will, when he pleaseth, impose another tenth upon you. Officers - Hebrew. To his eunuchs, which may imply a farther injury, that he should against the command of God, make some of his people eunuchs; and take those into his court and favour, which God would have cast out of the congregation.

16. Will take - By constraint, and without sufficient recompense.

17. His servants - That is, he will use you like slaves, and deprive you of that liberty which now you enjoy.

18. Cry out - Ye shall bitterly mourn for the sad effects of this inordinate desire of a king. Will not hear - Because you will not hear, nor obey his counsel in this day.

20. Be like - What stupidity! It was their happiness that they were unlike all other nations, Num. xxiii, 9 Deut. xxxiii, 28, as in other glorious privileges, so especially in this, that the Lord was their immediate king and lawgiver. But they will have a king to go out before them, and to fight their battles. Could they desire a battle better fought for them than the last was, by Samuel's prayers and God's thunders? Were they fond to try the chance of war, at the same uncertainty that others did? And what was the issue? Their first king was slain in battle: and so was Joshua, one of the last and best.

21. Rehearsed - He repeated them privately between God and himself; for his own vindication and comfort: and as a foundation for his prayers to God, for direction and assistance.

22. Go - Betake yourselves to your several occasions, till you hear more from me in this matter.

## IX

A short account of Saul, ver. 1, 2. Seeking his father's asses, he is advised to consult Samuel, ver. 3-10. He is directed to him, ver. 11-14. Samuel being informed of God concerning him, treats him with respect, and prepares him for the news, that he must be king, ver. 15-27.

2. Goodly - Comely and personable. Higher - A tall stature was much valued in a king in ancient times, and in the eastern countries.

3. The asses - Which were there of great price, because of the scarcity of horses, and therefore not held unworthy of Saul's seeking, at least in those ancient times, when simplicity, humility, and industry were in fashion among persons of quality.

6. honourable men - One of great reputation for his skill and faithfulness. Acquaintance with God and serviceableness to the kingdom of God, makes men truly honourable. The way - The course we should take to find the asses. He saith, peradventure, because he doubted whether so great a prophet would seek, or God would grant him a Revelation concerning such mean matters: although sometimes God was pleased herein to condescend to his people, to cut off all pretense or occasion of seeking to heathenish divination.

7. A present - Presents were then made to the prophets, either as a testimony of respect: or, as a grateful acknowledgement: or, for the support of the Prophets themselves: or, of the sons of the prophets: or, of other persons in want, known to them.

9. Seer - Because he discerned and could discover things secret and unknown to others. And these are the words, either of some later sacred writer, who after Samuel's death, inserted this verse. Or, of Samuel, who, being probably fifty or sixty years old at the writing of this book, and speaking of the state of things in his first days, might well call it before time.

12. Came today to the city - He had been travelling abroad, and was now returned to his own house in Ramah. High place - Upon the hill mentioned ver. 11, and near the altar which Samuel built for this use.

13. Find him - At home and at leisure. To eat - The relicks of the sacrifices. Doth bless - The blessing of this sacrifice seems to have consisted both of thanksgiving, this being a thank-offering, and of prayer to God for its acceptance.

15. His ear - That is, secretly, perhaps by a still small voice.

16. Philistines - For though they were now most pressed with the Ammonites, yet they looked upon these as a land-flood, soon up, and soon down again: but the Philistines, their constant and nearest enemies, they most dreaded. And from these did Saul in some measure save them, and would have saved them much more, if his and the people's sins had not hindered.

20. On whom - Who is he that shall be that, which all Israel desire to have, namely, a king. Father's house - That honour is designed for thee, and, after thy death, for thy family or posterity, is by thy sin thou dost not cut off the entail.

21. The smallest - For so indeed this was, having been all cut off except six hundred, Judg. xx, 46-48, which blow they never recovered, and therefore they were scarce reckoned as an entire tribe, but only as a remnant of a tribe; and being ingrafted into Judah, in the division between the ten

tribes and the two, they in some sort lost their name, and together with Judah were accounted but one tribe.

22. Chief place - Thereby to raise their expectation, and to prepare them for giving that honour to Saul, which his approaching dignity required.

24. I said - When I first spake that I had invited the people to join with me in my sacrifice, and then to partake with me of the feast, I then bade the cook reserve this part for thy use.

25. Communed - Concerning the kingdom designed for him by God.

27. Pass on - That thou and I may speak privately of the matter or the kingdom. Which Samuel hitherto endeavoured to conceal, lest he should be thought now to impose a king upon them, as before he denied one to them; and that it might appear by the lot mentioned in the next chapter, that the kingdom was given to Saul by God's destination, and not by Samuel's contrivance. Word of God - That is, a message delivered to me from God, which now I shall impart to thee.

## X

The anointing of Saul, ver. 1. Samuel gives him signs and instruction, ver. 2-8. The signs accomplished, ver. 9-13. His return to his father's house, ver. 14-16. He is elected, solemnly inaugurated, and returns to his own city, ver. 17-27.

1. Poured it - Which Is was the usual rite in the designation, as of priests and prophets, so also of kings, whereby was signified the pouring forth of the gifts of God's spirit upon him, to fit him for the administration of his office. These sacred unctions then used, pointed at the great Messiah, or anointed One, the King of the church, and High-priest of our profession, who was anointed with the oil of the spirit without measure, above all the priests and princes of the Jewish church. Kissed - As a testimony of his sincere friendship and affection to him. His inheritance - That is, over his own peculiar people. Whereby he admonisheth Saul, that this people were not so much his, as God's; and that he was not to rule them according his own will, but according to the will of God.

2. Rachel's sepulchre - In the way to Bethlehem, which city was in Judah; her sepulchre might be either in Judah, or in Benjamin; for the possessions of those two tribes were bordering one upon another. The first place he directs him to was a sepulchre, the sepulchre of one of his ancestors. There he must read a lecture of his own mortality, and now he had a crown in his eye, must think of his grave, in which all his honour would be laid in the dust.

3. Plain - Not that at the foot of mount Tabor, which was far from these parts; but another belonging to some other place. Bethel - Properly so called, which was in Ephraim, where there was a noted high-place, famous for Jacob's vision there, Gen. xxviii, 19, where it is probable they offered sacrifices, in this confused state of things, when the ark was in one place, and the tabernacle in another.

5. Prophets - By prophets he understands persons that wholly devoted themselves to religious studies and exercises. For the term of prophesying is not only given to the most eminent act of it, foretelling things to come; but also to preaching, and to the making or singing of psalms, or songs of praise to God. And they that wholly attended upon these things, are called sons of the prophets,

who were commonly combined into companies or colleges, that they might more conveniently assist one another in God's work. This institution God was pleased so far to honour and bless, that sometimes he communicated unto those persons the knowledge of future things. Psaltery - Such instruments of musick being then used by prophets and other persons, for the excitation of their spirits in God's service. Prophesy - Either sing God's praises, or speak of the things of God, by a peculiar impulse of his spirit.

6. Will come - Hebrew. will leap, or rush upon thee. Another man - That is, thou shalt be suddenly endowed with another spirit, filled with skill of divine things, with courage, and wisdom, and magnanimity; and other qualifications befitting thy dignity.

7. Thou do - Hebrew. do what they hand findeth to do; that is, as thou shalt have a call and opportunity. He doth not intend that he should take the kingly government upon him, before his call to it was owned by the people, but that he should dispose his mind to a readiness of undertaking any public service when he should be called to his office.

8. Till I come - This, though now mentioned and commanded, was not immediately to be performed; as is evident, partly from the whole course of the story, (which shews, that Saul and Samuel, and the people, first met at Mizpeh, ver. 17, &c. where Saul was chosen by God, and accepted by the people as king; and afterwards went to Gilgal once before the time here spoken of, chap. xi, 14, 15,) and partly, by comparing this place with chap. xiii, 8, &c. where we find Saul charged with the violation of this command, two years after the giving of it. It seems this is given as a standing rule for Saul to observe while Samuel and he lived; that in case of any great future difficulties, as the invasion of enemies, Saul should resort to Gilgal, and call the people thither, and tarry there seven days, which was but a necessary time for gathering the people, and for the coming of Samuel thither. And Gilgal was chosen for this purpose, because that place was famous for the solemn renewing of the covenant between God and Israel, Josh. iv, 19-24, and for other eminent instances of God's favour to them, the remembrance whereof was a confirmation of their faith; and because it was a very convenient place for he tribes within and without Jordan to assemble, and consult, and unite their forces together upon such occasions.

10. Prophesied - The accomplishment of the two former signs is supposed, and this only is expressed, because this was more eminent than the former; the other were only transient acts, which passed in private between two or three persons meeting together; but this was a more permanent and notorious sign, done in a more solemn manner, and before many witnesses.

11. Is Saul - A man never instructed, nor exercised in, nor inclined to these matters.

12. Who is, &c. - Who is the father of all these prophets, among whom Saul now is one? Who is it that instructs and inspires them but God? They have it not from their parents, nor from their education, but by inspiration from God, who, when he pleaseth, can inspire Saul, or any other man with the same skill. And therefore wonder not at this matter, but give God the glory of it. A proverb - Used when any strange, or unexpected thing happened.

13. High place - Returning thither with the prophets, to praise God for these wonderful favours, and to beg counsel and help from God in this high business.

16. Told not - In obedience to Samuel, who obliged him to secrecy: and from an humble modesty.

19. Now therefore, &c. - He puts them upon chusing their king by lot, that all might know God had chosen Saul (for the disposal of the lot is of the Lord) and to prevent all dispute and exception.

20. Benjamin - Which tribe was now preferred before Judah, because the kingdom was freely promised by God to Judah, and was to be given to him in love; but now the kingdom was in a manner forced from God, and given them in anger and therefore conferred upon an obscure tribe.

22. Inquired - Either by Urim or Thummim, which was the usual way of enquiry. Or, by Samuel, who by his prayer procured an answer. Stuff - Among the carriages or baggage of the people there assembled. This he probably did, from a sense of his own unworthiness.

24. None like him - As to the height of his bodily stature, which was in itself, commendable in a king, and some kind of indication of great endowments of mind. God save the king - Hebrew. let the king live; that is, long and prosperously. Hereby they accept him for their king, and promise subjection to him. None will be losers in the end by their humility and modesty. honour, like the shadows, follows them that flee from it, but flees from them that pursue it.

25. Manner of the kingdom - The laws and rules by which the kingly government was to be managed; agreeable to those mentioned Deut. xvii, 16, &c. Before the Lord - Before the ark, where it was kept safe from depravation.

26. Went home - Not being actually inaugurated into his kingdom, he thought fit to retire to his former habitation, and to live privately 'till he had an occasion to shew himself in a more illustrious manner. Then went - To give him safe and honourable conduct to his house, though not to abide with him there, which did not suit his present circumstance.

27. No presents - As subjects in those times used to do to their kings. This was an evidence both of his humility, and the mercifulness of his disposition. So Christ held his peace, in the day of his patience. But there is a day of recompense coming.

## XI

The distress of Jabesh-gilead, ver. 1-3. Saul's readiness to relieve them, and success, ver. 4-11. His tenderness to them that opposed him, ver. 12-13. He is confirmed in his kingdom, ver. 14- 15.

1. Then - That is, about that time; for that this happened before, and was the occasion of their desire of a king, may seem from chap. xii, 12, although it is possible, that Nahash's preparation, might cause that desire, and that he did not actually come 'till their king was chosen. Will serve - The occasion of this offer was, that they saw no likelihood of relief from their brethren in Canaan.

2. Thrust out, &c. - Partly for a reproach, as it here follows; and partly, to disable them. He leaves them one eye, that they might be fit to serve in any mean and base office.

5. After the herd - For being only anointed king, and not publickly inaugurated, nor having yet had opportunity of doing any thing worthy of his place, he thought fit to forbear all royal state, and to retire to his former private life, which, howsoever despised in this latter ages, was anciently in great esteem. Good magistrates are in pain, if their subjects are in tears.

7. Sent them - Wisely considering, that the sight of mens eyes does much more affect their hearts, than what they only hear with their ears. Samuel - Whom he joins with himself, both because he was present with him; and that hereby he might gain the more authority. Fear - A fear sent upon them by God, that they should not dare to deny their help. The fear of God will make men good

subjects, good soldiers, and good friends to their country. They that fear God will make conscience of their duty to all men, particularly to their rulers.

8. Men of Judah - Who are numbered apart to their honour, to shew how readily they, to whom the kingdom was promised, Gen. xlix, 10, submitted to their king, though of another tribe; and how willing they were to hazard themselves for their brethren although they might have excused themselves from the necessity of defending their own country from their dangerous neighbours the Philistines.

14. Then - While the people were together by Jabesh-gilead, wherein Samuel's great prudence and fidelity to Saul is evident. He suspended the confirmation of Saul at first, whilst the generality of the people were disaffected, and now when he had given such eminent proof of his princely virtues, and when the peoples hearts were eagerly set upon him, he takes this as the fittest season for that work. Renew - That is, confirm our former choice.

15. Made - They owned and accepted him for their king.

## XII

Samuel clears himself from all imputation of abusing the power which he now resigns to Saul, ver. 1-5. He reminds them of the great things God had done, ver. 6-13. He sets before them the blessing and the curse, ver. 14, 15. He calls upon God for thunder, ver. 16-19. He encourages and exhorts them, ver. 20-25.

1. Said - While they were assembled together in Gilgal. And this is another instance of Samuel's great wisdom and integrity. He would not reprove the people for their sin, in desiring a king, whilst Saul was unsettled in his kingdom; lest through their accustomed levity, they should as hastily cast off their king, as they had passionately desired him, and therefore he chuseth this season for it; because Saul's kingdom was now confirmed by an eminent victory; and because the people rejoiced greatly, applauded themselves for their desires of a king; and interpreted the success which God had given them, as a divine approbation of those desires. Samuel therefore thinks fit to temper their joys, and to excite them to that repentance which he saw wanting in them, and which he knew to be necessary, to prevent the curse of God upon their new king, and the whole kingdom.

2. Walketh - Ruleth over you. To him I have fully resigned my power, and own myself one of his subjects. Old - And therefore unable to bear the burden of government. My sons - Or, among you, in the same states private persons, as you are; if they have injured any of you, the law is now open against them; any of you may accuse them, your king can punish them, I do not intercede for them. Walked before you - That is, been your guide and governor; partly, as a prophet; and partly, as a judge.

3. Behold - I here present myself before the Lord, and before your king, ready to give an account of all my administrations. And this protestation Samuel makes of his integrity, not out of ostentation; but for his own just vindication, that the people might not hereafter for the defense of their own irregularities, reproach his government, and that being publickly acquitted from all faults in his

government, he might more freely reprove the sins of the people, and, particularly, that sin of theirs in desiring a king, when they had so little reason for it.

7. Righteous acts - Hebrew. the righteousnesses; that is, mercies or benefits the chief subject of the following discourse; some of their calamities being but briefly named, and that for the illustration of God's mercy in their deliverances.

8. This place - In this land: in which Moses and Aaron are said to settle them; because they brought them into, and seated them in part of it, that without Jordan; because they were, under God, the principal authors of their entering into the land of Canaan; inasmuch as they brought them out of Egypt, conducted them through the wilderness; and thereby their prayers to God, and counsel to them, preserved them from ruin, and gave command from God for the distribution of the land among them, and encouraged them to enter into it. And lastly, Moses substituted Josh. in his stead, and commanded him to seat them there, which he did.

9. Forgat - That is, they revolted from him, and carried themselves, as if they had wholly forgotten his innumerable favours. This he saith to answer an objection, that the reason why they desired a king, was, because in the time of the Judges they were at great uncertainties, and often exercised with sharp afflictions: to which he answereth by concession that they were so; but adds, by way of retortion, that they themselves were the cause of it, by their forgetting God: so that it was not the fault of that kind of government, but their transgressing the rules of it. Fought - With success, and subdued them.

11. Bedan - This was either Samson, as most interpreters believe, who is called Bedan; that is, in Daniel, or of Daniel, one of that tribe, to signify that they had no reason to distrust that God, who could raise so eminent a saviour out of so obscure a tribe: or, Jair the Gileadite, which may seem best to agree, first, with the time and order of the Judges; for Jair was before Jephthah, but Samson was after him. Secondly, with other scriptures: for among the sons of a more ancient Jair, we meet with one called Bedan, 1 Chron. vii, 17, which name seems here given to Jair the judge, to distinguish him from that first Jair. Safe - So that it was no necessity, but mere wantonness, that made you desire a change.

12. Your king - That is, when God was your immediate king and governor, who was both able and willing to deliver you, if you had cried to him, whereof you and your ancestors have had plentiful experience; so that you did not at all need any other king; and your desire of another, was a manifest reproach against God.

13. Ye have chosen - Though God chose him by lot, yet the people are said to chuse him; either generally, because they chose that form of government; or particularly, because they approved of God's choice, and confirmed it. The Lord - He hath yielded to your inordinate desire.

14. Then, &c. - Hebrew. then shall-ye-be, (that is, walk, or go) after the Lord; that is, God shall still go before you, as he hath hitherto done, as your leader or governor, to direct, protect, and deliver you; and he will not forsake you, as you have given him just cause to do. Sometimes this phrase of going after the Lord, signifies a man's obedience to God; but here it is otherwise to be understood, and it notes not a duty to be performed, but a privilege to be received upon the performance of their duty; because it is opposed to a threatening denounced in case of disobedience, in the next verse.

15. Your fathers - Who lived under the Judges; and you shall have no advantage by the change of government, nor shall your kings be able to protect you against God's displeasure. The mistake,

if we think we can evade God's justice, by shaking off his dominion. If we will not let God rule us, yet he will judge us.

17. Wheat-harvest - At which time it was a rare thing in those parts to have thunder or rain; the weather being more constant in its seasons there, than it is with us. Rain - That you may understand that God is displeased with you; and also how foolishly and wickedly you have done in rejecting the government of that God, at whose command are all things both in heaven and in earth.

18. Samuel - Who had such power and favour with God. By this thunder and rain, God shewed them their folly in desiring a king to save them, rather than God or Samuel, expecting more from an arm of flesh than from the arm of God, or from the power of prayer. Could their king thunder with a voice like God? Could their prince command such forces as the prophet could by his prayers? Likewise he intimates, that how serene soever their condition was now, (like the weather in wheat harvest) yet if God pleased, he could soon change the face of their heavens, and persecute them with his storms.

19. Thy God - Whom thou hast so great an interest in, while we are ashamed and afraid to call him our God.

20. Fear not - With a desponding fear, as if there were no hope left for you.

21. Turn aside-After idols; as they had often done before; and, notwithstanding this warning, did afterwards. Vain things - So idols are called, Deut. xxxii, 21 Jer. ii, 5, and so they are, being mere nothings, having no power in them; no influence upon us, nor use or benefit to us.

22. His name's sake - That is, for his own honour, which would suffer much among men, if he should not preserve and deliver his people in eminent dangers. And this reason God alledgeth to take them off from all conceit of their own merit; and to assure them, that if they did truly repent of all their sins, and serve God with all their heart; yet even in that case their salvation would not be due to their merits; but the effect of God's free mercy. To make - Out of his own free grace, without any desert of yours, and therefore he will not forsake you, except you thrust him away.

24. Only, &c. - Otherwise neither my prayer nor counsels will stand you in any stead.

## XIII

Saul and Jonathan's life-guard, ver. 1, 2. Jonathan smites a garrison, and the people are called together, ver. 3, 4. The Philistines come up, and the Israelites are terrified, ver. 5-7. Saul sacrifices, ver. 8-10. Is reproved by Samuel, ver. 11-14. The people diminished, plundered, and disarmed, ver. 15-23.

3. Blew - That is, he sent messengers to tell them all what Jonathan had done, and how the Philistines were enraged at it, and therefore what necessity there was of gathering themselves together for their own defense.

4. Saul - Perhaps contrary to some treaty.

5. Thirty thousand chariots, &c. - Most of them, we may suppose, carriages for their baggage, not chariots of war, tho' all their allies were joined with them.

6. Strait - Notwithstanding their former presumption that if they had a king, they should be free from all such straits. And hereby God intended to teach them the vanity of confidence in men; and that they did not one jot less need the help of God now, than they did when they had no king. And probably they were the more discouraged, because they did not find Samuel with Saul. Sooner or later men will be made to see, that God and his prophets are their best friends.

7. All the people - That is, all that were left.

8. Seven days - Not seven compleat days; for the last day was not finished.

11. Camest not - That is, when the seventh day was come, and a good part of it past, whence I concluded thou wouldst not come that day.

12. Supplication - Thence it appears, that sacrifices were accompanied with solemn prayers. Forced myself - I did it against my own mind and inclination.

13. For ever - The phrase, for ever, in scripture often signifies only a long time. So this had been abundantly verified, if the kingdom had been enjoyed by Saul, and by his son, and by his son's son; after whom the kingdom might have come to Judah.

14. A man - That is, such a man as will fulfil all the desires of his heart, and not oppose them, as thou dost. Commanded - That is, hath appointed, as the word command is sometimes used: but though God threatened but Saul with the loss of his kingdom for his sin; yet it is not improbable, there was a tacit condition implied, to wit, if he did not repent of this; and of all his sins; for the full, and final, and peremptory sentence of Saul's rejection, is plainly ascribed to another cause, chap. xv, 11, 23, 26, 28, 29, and 'till that second offense, neither the spirit of the Lord departed from him, nor was David anointed in his stead. "But was it not hard, to punish so little a sin so severely?" It was not little: disobedience to an express command, tho' in a small matter, is a great provocation. And indeed, there is no little sin, because there is no little God to sin against. In general, what to men seems a small offense, to him who knows the heart may appear a heinous crime. We are taught hereby, how necessary it is, that we wait on our God continually. For Saul is sentenced to lose his kingdom for want of two or three hours patience.

20. Philistines - Not to the land of the Philistines, but to the stations and garrisons which the Philistines retained in several parts of Israel's land, though Samuel's authority had so far over- awed them, that they durst not give the Israelites much disturbance. In these, therefore, the Philistines kept all the smiths; and here they allowed them the exercise of their art for the uses following.

22. Sword - It seems restrained to the six hundred that were with Saul and Jonathan; for there were no doubt a considerable number of swords and spears among the Israelites, but they generally hid them, as now they did their persons, from the Philistines. And the Philistines had not yet attained to so great a power over them, as wholly to disarm them, but thought it sufficient to prevent the making of new arms; knowing that the old ones would shortly be decayed, and useless. There were likewise other arms more common in those times and places, than swords and spears; to wit, bows and arrows, and slings and stones.

## XIV

Jonathan proposes to his armour-bearer the attacking of the Philistine's army, ver. 1-10. They make the attack; the Philistines are terrified, ver. 11-15. They slay one another, and are pursued by

the Israelites, ver. 16-23. Saul adjures the people to eat nothing 'till night; Jonathan eats honey, ver. 24-30. The people smite the Philistines, and eat the spoil with the blood, ver. 31, 32. Saul remedies this, ver. 33-35. Dooms Jonathan to death, who is rescued by the people, ver. 36-46. A general account of Saul's exploits and family, ver. 47-52.

2. Tarried - In the outworks of the city where he had entrenched himself to observe the motion of the Philistines. In - Or, towards Migron, which was near Gibeah.

3. Ahiah - The same who is called Abimelech, chap. xxii, 9, 11, 20, the high-priest, who was here to attend upon the ark which was brought thither, ver. 18. Ephod - The high-priest's ephod, wherein the Urim and Thummim was.

4. Passages - Two passages, both which Jonathan must cross, to go to the Philistines, between which the following rocks lay, but the words may be rendered, in the middle of the passage, the plural number being put for the singular. Rock - Which is not to be understood, as if in this passage one rock was on the right hand, and the other on the left; for so he might have gone between both: and there was no need of climbing up to them. But the meaning is, that the tooth (or prominency) of one rock, (as it is in the Hebrew) was on the side; that is northward, looking towards Michmash (the garrison of the Philistines) and the tooth of the other rock was on the other side; that is, southward, looking towards Gibeah, (where Saul's camp lay): and Jonathan was forced to climb over these two rocks, because the common ways from one town to the other were obstructed.

6. Uncircumcised - So he calls them, to strengthen his faith by this consideration, that his enemies were enemies to God; whereas he was circumcised, and therefore in covenant with God, who was both able, and engaged to assist his people. It way be - He speaks doubtfully: for tho' he felt himself stirred up by God to this exploit, and was assured that God would deliver his people; yet he was not certain that he would do it at this time, and in this way. Work - Great and wonderful things.

10. A sign - Jonathan not being assured of the success of this exploit, desires a sign; and by the instinct of God's Spirit, pitches upon this. Divers such motions and extraordinary impulses there were among great and good men in ancient times. Observe; God has the governing of the hearts and tongues of all men, even of those that know him not, and serves his own purposes by them, tho' they mean not so, neither does their hearts think so.

12. Come up, &c. - A speech of contempt and derision. The Lord - He piously and modestly ascribes the success which he now foresees, to God only. And he does not say, into our hand, but into the hand of Israel; for he fought not his own glory, but the public good. His faith being thus strengthened, nothing can stand against him: he climbs the rock upon all four, though he had nothing to cover him, none to second him, but his servant, nor any probability of any thing but death before him.

13. They fell - For being endowed with extraordinary strength and courage, and having with incredible boldness killed the first they met with, it is not strange if the Philistines were both astonished and intimidated; God also struck them with a panic; and withal, infatuated their minds, and possibly, put an evil spirit among them, which in this universal confusion made them conceive that there was treachery among themselves, and therefore caused them to sheathe their swords in one anothers bowels.

15. Field - That is, in the whole host which was in the field. All - That is, among all the rest of their forces, as well as those in the garrison at Michmash, as the spoilers, mentioned chap. xiii, 17, the report of this prodigy, and with it the terror of God speedily passing from one to another. Trembling - The Hebrew is, a trembling of God, signifying not only a very great trembling, but such as was supernatural, and came immediately from the hand of God. He that made the heart knows how to make it tremble. To complete their confusion, even the earth quaked; it shook under them, and made them fear it was just going to swallow them up. Those who will not fear the eternal God, he can make afraid of a shadow.

19. Withdraw - Trouble not thyself to inquire; for I now plainly discern the matter.

21. Which went - Either by constraint, as servants; or in policy, to gain their favour and protection.

23. The battle - That is, the warriors who were engaged in the battle, and were pursuing the Philistines. Yet it is said, the Lord saved Israel that day: he did it by them: for without him they could do nothing. Salvation is of the Lord.

24. Distressed - With hunger, and weakness, and faintness, and all by reason of the following oath. Avenged - As Saul's intention was good, so the matter of the obligation was not simply unlawful, if it had not been so rigorous in excluding all food, and in obliging the people to it under pain of an accursed death, which was a punishment far exceeding the fault.

26. Honey - Bees often make their hives in the trunks of trees, or clefts of rocks, or holes of the earth; and this in divers countries, but eminently in Canaan.

27. Enlightened - He was refreshed, and recovered his lost spirits. This cleared his sight, which was grown dim by hunger and faintness.

28. People - They that came with Saul, whose forces were now united with Jonathan's.

32. Slew - At evening, when the time prefixed by Saul was expired. With blood - Not having patience to tarry 'till the blood was perfectly gone out of them, as they should have done. So they who made conscience of the king's commandment for fear of the curse, make no scruple of transgressing God's command.

33. Transgressed - He sees their fault, but not his own, in giving the occasion of it.

36. Draw near - To the ark, in order to inquire of God.

39. Answered - None of those who saw Jonathan eating, informed against him; because they were satisfied that his ignorance excused him; and from their great love to Jonathan, whom they would not expose to death for so small an offense.

41. Perfect lot - Or, declare the perfect, or guiltless person. That is, O Lord, so guide the lot, that it may discover who is guilty in his matter, and who innocent. Escaped - They were pronounced guiltless.

42. Jonathan - God so ordered the lot; not that he approved Saul's execration, ver. 24, or his oath that the transgressor should die, ver. 39, nor that he would expose Jonathan to death; but that Saul's folly might be chastised, when he saw what danger it had brought upon his eldest and excellent son; and that Jonathan's innocency might be cleared.

44. For thou,&c. - We have no proof, that Saul did not act in this whole affair from a real fear of God.

45. With God - In concurrence with God, he hath wrought this salvation. God is so far from being offended with Jonathan, that he hath graciously owned him in the great service of this day.

47. Took the kingdom - That is, resumed the administration of it, after he had in a manner lost it by the Philistines, who had almost turned him out of it.

49. Ishui - Called also Abinadab. chap. xxxi, 2. Ishbosheth, Saul's other son is here omitted, because he intended to mention only those of his sons who went with him into the battles here mentioned, and who were afterwards slain with him.

## XV

God commands Saul utterly to destroy the Amalekites, ver. 1- 3. He destroys them, but not utterly, ver. 4-9. Samuel pronounces sentence upon him for his disobedience, yet consents to honour him before the people, ver. 10-31. Slays Agag, ver. 32, 33. Takes his leave of Saul, yet mourns for him, ver. 34, 35.

1. Hearken - Thou hast committed error already, now regain God's favour by thy exact obedience to what he commands.

2. I remember - Now I will revenge those old injuries of the Amalekites on their children: who continue in their parents practices. Came from Egypt - When he was newly come out of cruel and long bondage, and was now weak, and weary, and faint, and hungry, Deut. xxv, 18, and therefore it was barbarous instead of that pity which even Nature prompted them to afford, to add affliction to the afflicted; it was also horrid impiety to fight against God himself and to lift up their hand in a manner against the Lord's throne, whilst they struck at that people which God had brought forth in so stupendous a way.

3. Destroy - Both persons and goods, kill all that live, and consume all things without life, for I will have no name nor remnant of that people left, whom long since I have devoted to utter destruction. Spare not - Shew no compassion or favour to any of them. The same thing repeated to prevent mistake, and oblige Saul to the exact performance hereof. Slay, &c. - Which was not unjust, because God is the supreme Lord of life, and can require his own when he pleaseth; infants likewise are born in sin, and therefore liable to God's wrath. Their death also was rather a mercy than a curse, as being the occasion of preventing their sin and punishment. Ox, &c. - Which being all made for man's benefit, it is not strange if they suffer with him, for the instruction of mankind.

6. Kenites - A people descending from, or nearly related to Jethro, who anciently dwelt in rocks near the Amalekites, Num. xxiv, 21, and afterwards some of them dwelt in Judah, Judg. i, 16, whence it is probable they removed, (which, dwelling in tents, they could easily do) and retired to their old habitation, because of the wars and troubles wherewith Judah was annoyed. Shewed kindness - Some of your progenitors did so, and for their sakes all of you shall fare the better. You were not guilty of that sin for which Amalek is now to be destroyed. When destroying judgments are abroad God takes care to separate the precious from the vile. It is then especially dangerous to be found in the company of God's enemies. The Jews have a saying, Wo to a wicked man, and to his neighbour.

7. To Shur - That is, from one end of their country to the other; he smote all that he met with: but a great number of them fled away upon the noise of his coming, and secured themselves in

other places, 'till the storm was over. 8. All - Whom he found. Now they paid dear for the sin of their ancestors. They were themselves guilty of idolatry and numberless sins, for which they deserved to be cut off. Yet when God would reckon with them, he fixes upon this as the ground of his quarrel.

9. Vile - Thus they obeyed God only so far as they could without inconvenience to themselves.

11. Repenteth - Repentance implies grief of heart, and change of counsels, and therefore cannot be in God: but it is ascribed to God when God alters his method of dealing, and treats a person as if be did indeed repent of the kindness he had shewed him. All night - To implore his pardoning mercy for Saul, and for the people. Is turned back - Therefore he did once follow God. Otherwise it would have been impossible, he should turn back from following him.

12. A place - That is, a monument or trophy of his victory.

13. They - That is, the people. Thus, he lays the blame upon the people; whereas they could not do it without his consent; and he should have used his power to over-rule them.

18. A journey - So easy was the service, and so certain the success, that it was rather to be called a journey than a war.

20. The king - To be dealt with as God pleaseth.

21. But the people, &c. - Here the conscience of Saul begins to awake, tho' but a little: for he still lays the blame on the people.

22. Sacrifice - Because obedience to God is a moral duty, constantly and indispensably necessary; but sacrifice is but a ceremonial institution, sometimes unnecessary, as it was in the wilderness: and sometimes sinful, when it is offered by a polluted hand, or in an irregular manner. Therefore thy gross disobedience to God's express command, is not to be compensated with sacrifice. Hearken - That is, to obey. Fat - Then the choicest part of all the sacrifice.

23. Rebellion - Disobedience to God's command. Stubbornness - Contumacy in sin, justifying it, and pleading for it. Iniquity - Or, the iniquity of idolatry. Rejected - Hath pronounced the sentence of rejection: for that he was not actually deposed by God before, plainly appears, because not only the people, but even David, after this, owned him as king. Those are unworthy to rule over men, who are not willing that God should rule over them.

24. I have sinned - It does by no means appear, that Saul acts the hypocrite herein, in assigning a false cause of his disobedience. Rather, he nakedly declares the thing as it was.

25. Pardon my sin - Neither can it be proved that there was any hypocrisy in this. Rather charity requires us to believe, that he sincerely desired pardon, both from God and man, as he now knew, he had sinned against both.

26. I will not - This was no lie, though he afterwards returned, because he spoke what he meant; his words and his intentions agreed together, though afterwards he saw reason to change his intentions. Compare Gen. xix, 2, 3. This may relieve many perplexed consciences, who think themselves obliged to do what they have said they would do, though they see just cause to change their minds. Hath rejected thee, &c. - But he does not say, he "hath rejected thee from salvation." And who besides hath authority to say so?

29. Strength of Israel - So he calls God here, to shew the reason why God neither will nor can lie; because lying proceeds from the sense of a man's weakness, who cannot many times accomplish his design without lying and dissimulation; therefore many princes have used it for this very reason. But God needs no such artifices; he can do whatsoever he pleaseth by his absolute power. Repent - That is, nor change his counsel; which also is an effect of weakness and imperfection, either of

wisdom or power. So that this word is not here used in the sense it commonly is when applied to God, as in Jer. xi, 1-23, and elsewhere.

31. Turned - First, that the people might not upon pretense of this sentence of rejection, withdraw their obedience to their sovereign; whereby they would both have sinned against God, and have been as sheep without a shepherd. Secondly, that he might rectify Saul's error, and execute God's judgment upon Agag.

33. As, &c. - Whereby it appears, that he was a tyrant, and guilty of many bloody actions. And this seems to be added for the fuller vindication of God's justice, and to shew, that although God did at this time revenge a crime committed by this man's ancestors 400 years ago, yet he did not punish an innocent son for his father's crimes, but one that persisted in the same evil courses. Hewed - This he did by divine instinct, and in pursuance of God's express command, which being sinfully neglected by Saul, is now executed by Samuel. But these are no precedents for private persons to take the sword of justice into their hands. For we must live by the laws of God, and not by extraordinary examples.

35. To see Saul - That is, to visit him, in token of respect or friendship: or, to seek counsel from God for him. Otherwise he did see him chap. xix, 24. Though indeed it was not Samuel that came thither with design to see Saul, but Saul went thither to see Samuel, and that accidentally.

## XVI

Samuel is appointed to anoint one of the sons of Jesse king, ver. 1-5. The elder sons are passed by, and David anointed, ver. 6- 13. Saul growing melancholy is eased by David's music, ver. 14-23.

1. Mourn - And pray for his restitution, which the following words imply he did. Oil - Which was used in the inauguration of kings. But here it is used in the designation of a king; for David was not actually made king by it, but still remained a subject. And the reason of this anticipation was the comfort of Samuel, and other good men, against their fears in case of Saul's death, and the assurance of David's title, which otherwise would have been doubtful. I have provided - This phrase is very emphatical, and implies the difference between this and the former king. Saul was a king of the people's providing, he was the product of their sinful desires: but this is a king of my own providing, to fulfil all my will, and to serve my glory.

4. Trembled - Because it was strange and unexpected to them, this being but an obscure town, and remote from Samuel, and therefore they justly thought there was some extraordinary reason for it. Peaceable - The Hebrew phrase, comest thou in peace, is as much as to say (in our phrase) is all well?

5. He sanctified - It seems evident that there was something peculiar in Jesse's invitation. For first, both he and his sons were invited, whereas the others were only invited for their own persons. Secondly, the different phrase here used, that he sanctified these, when he only bade the other sanctify themselves; argues a singular care of Samuel in their sanctification. Which makes it

probable, that the rest were only to join with them in the act of sacrificing; but these, and only these, were invited to feast upon the remainders of the sacrifices.

6. Before him - That is, in this place where God is now present. For it is observable, that not only the sacrifice is said to be offered, but even the feast upon the remainders of it is said, to be eaten before the Lord, Deut. xii, 7, that is, before or near his altar, where God was present in a special manner. This I take to be the person I am sent to anoint: wherein yet be was mistaken, as other prophets sometimes were, when they hastily spake their own thoughts, before they had consulted God.

10. Seven - There are but seven named, 1 Chron. ii, 13-15, because one of them was either born of a concubine: or, died immediately after this time.

11. Keepeth sheep - And consequently is the most unfit of all my sons for that high employment. Either therefore he did not understand David's wisdom and valour, or he judged him unfit, by reason of his mean education. And God so ordered it by his providence, that David's choice might plainly appear to be God's work, and not Samuel's, or Jesse's. David signifies beloved: a fit name for so eminent a type of the Beloved Son. It is supposed, David was now about twenty years old. If so, his troubles by Saul lasted near ten years: for he was thirty years old when Saul died. Samuel having done this went to Ramah. He retired to die in peace, since his eyes had seen the salvation, even the scepter brought into the tribe of Judah.

13. Anointed him - David's brethren saw David's unction, yet did not understand, that he was anointed to the kingdom; but were only told by Samuel, that he was anointed to some great service, which hereafter they should know. Thus Jesse only, and David, understood the whole business, and his brethren were able to attest to that act of Samuel's anointing him, which, with other collateral evidences, was abundantly sufficient to prove David's right to the kingdom, if need should be. The spirit,&c., - That is, he was immediately endowed with extraordinary gifts of God's Spirit, as strength, and courage, and wisdom, and other excellent qualities which fitted him for, and put him upon noble attempts.

14. Departed - God took away that prudence, and courage, and alacrity, and other gifts wherewith be had qualified him for his public employment. From the Lord - That is, by God's permission, who delivered him up to be buffeted of Satan. Troubled - Stirred up in him unruly and tormenting passions; as envy, rage, fear, or despair. He grew fretful, and peevish, and discontented, timorous and suspicious, frequently starting and trembling.

16. Be well - And the success confirms their opinion. For although music cannot directly have an influence upon an evil spirit to drive him away; yet, because the devil, as it seems, had not possession of him, but only made use of the passions of his mind, and humours of his body to molest him: and because it is manifest, that music hath a mighty power to qualify and sweeten these, and to make a man sedate and chearful; it is not strange, if the devil had not that power over him when his mind was more composed, which he had when it was disordered; as the devil had less power over lunaticks in the decrease, than in the increase of the moon: Matt. xvii, 15, 18. And seeing music prepared the Lord's prophets for the entertainment of the good Spirit, as 2 Kings iii, 15. Why might it not dispose Saul to the resistance of the evil spirit? And why might not the chearing of his heart, in some measure strengthen him against those temptations of the devil, which were fed by his melancholy humour? And by this means, David without any contrivance of him or his friends, is brought to court, soon after he was anointed to the kingdom. Those whom God designs for any service, his providence will concur with his grace, to prepare and qualify them for it.

18. Prudent - Wonder not, that David was so suddenly advanced, from a poor shepherd, to so great a reputation; for these were the effects of that Spirit of the Lord which he received when he was anointed. The Lord, &c. - That is, directs and prospers all his undertakings.

20. Sent him - This present, though in our times it would seem contemptible, yet was very agreeable to the usage of those times, and to the condition of Jesse, which was but mean in the world. And it seems to have been the custom of those times, (as it is yet in the eastern countries) when they made their appearance before princes, or great persons, to bring a present.

21. Stood before him - That is, waited upon him. And he loved him greatly - So there was something good in Saul still: he had not lost all, tho' he had lost the kingdom. armour-bearer - He had that place conferred upon him, though we do not read that he ever exercised it; for it seems he was gone back to his father upon some occasion not related; and had abode with him some considerable time before the war described, chap. xvii, 1-53, happened.

23. Departed - Namely, for a season. And the reason of this success, may be, partly natural, and partly, supernatural, respecting David; whom God designed by this means to bring into favour with the king, and so to smooth the way for his advancement.

## XVII

Goliath challenges the armies of Israel, ver. 1-11. David coming into the camp, hears his challenge, ver. 12-27. Eliab chides David, whose words are related to Saul, ver. 28-31. David undertakes to fight Goliath, ver. 32-37. He rejects Saul's armour, and goes with his sling, ver. 38-40. He attacks and slays Goliath, ver. 41-51. The Israelites pursue the Philistines, ver. 52-53. David returns: the notice taken of him by Saul, ver. 54-58.

1. Gathered, &c. - Probably they had heard, that Samuel had forsaken Saul, and that Saul himself was unfit for business. The enemies of the church are watchful to take all advantages, and they never have greater advantage, than when her protectors have provoked God's Spirit and prophets to leave them.

4. Six cubits - At least, nine feet, nine inches high. And this is not strange; for besides the giants mentioned in Scripture, Herodotus, Diodourus Siculus, and Pliny, make mention of persons seven cubits high.

5. Coat of mail - Made of brass plates laid over one another, like the scales of a fish. The weight, &c. - The common shekel contained a fourth part of an ounce; and so five thousand shekels made one thousand two hundred and fifty ounces, or seventy- eight pounds: which weight is not unsuitable to a man of such vast strength as his height speaks him to be.

6. Greaves - Boots.

7. Beam - On which the weavers fasten their web. It was like this for thickness. And though the whole weight of Goliath's armour may seem prodigious; yet it is not so much by far as one Athanatus did manage: of whom Pliny relates, That he saw him come into the theatre with arms weighing twelve thousand ounces. A shield - Probably for state: for he that was clad in brass, little needed a shield.

8. Come down - That the battle may be decided by us two alone.

11. Afraid - This may seem strange, considering the glorious promises, and their late experience of divine assistance. And where was Jonathan, who in the last war had so bravely engaged an whole army of the Philistines? Doubtless he did not feel himself so stirred up of God as he did at that time. As the best, so the bravest of men, are no more than what God makes them. Jonathan must sit still now, because this honour is reserved for David.

12. Old man - Therefore he went not himself to the camp.

15. Went - From Saul's court: where having relieved Saul, he was permitted to go to his father's house, to be sent for again upon occasion.

18. Pledge - That is, bring me some token of their welfare.

19. Fighting - That is, in a posture and readiness to fight with them; as it is explained, ver. 20, 21.

20. Went, &c. - Jesse little thought of sending his son to the camp, just at that critical juncture. But the wise God orders the time and all the circumstances of affairs, so as to serve the designs of his own glory.

24. Fled - One Philistine could never have thus put ten thousand Israelites to flight, unless their rock, being forsaken by them, had justly sold them and shut them up.

25. Free - Free from all those tributes and charges which either the court or the camp required.

28. Naughtiness - Thy false-confidence, and vain gloried curiosity. See the folly and wickedness of envy! How groundless its jealousies are, how unjust its censures, how unfair it representations? God preserve us from such a spirit!

29. A cause - Of my thus speaking? Is this giant invincible? Is our God unable to oppose him, and subdue him? However David is not deterred from his undertaking, by the hard words of Eliab. They that undertake public services must not think it strange, if they be opposed by those from whom they had reason to expect assistance, but must humbly go on with their work, in the face, not only of their enemies threats, but of their friends slights, suspicions, and censures.

30. He tarried - For being secretly moved by God's spirit to undertake the combat. He speaks with divers persons about it, that it might come to the king's ear.

32. Let no man's heart, &c. - It would have reflected upon his prince to say, Let not thy heart fail: therefore he speaks in general terms, Let no man's heart fail. A little shepherd, come but this morning from keeping sheep, has more courage than all the mighty men of Israel! Thus doth God often do great things for his people by the weak things of the world.

33. A youth - Not above 20 years old; and a novice, a raw and unexperienced soldier.

37. The Lord, &c. - The lion and the bear were only enemies to me and my sheep, and it was in defense of them I attacked them. But this Philistine is an enemy to my God and his people, and it is for their honour that I attack him.

38. armour - With armour taken out of his armoury. He seems to speak of some military vestments which were then used in war, and were contrived for defense; such as buff-coats are now.

39. Proved them - I have no skill or experience in the managements of this kind of arms.

40. Staff - His shepherd's staff. These arms in themselves were contemptible, yet chosen by David; because he had no skill to use other arms; because he had inward assurance of the victory, even by these weapons; and because such a conquest would be more honourable to God, and most shameful, and discouraging to the Philistines.

41. Drew near - Probably a signal was made, that his challenge was accepted.

42. Fair - Not having so much as the countenance of a martial person.

43. Dog - Dost thou think to beat me as easily as thou wouldst thy dog?

46. A God - Hebrew. that God, the only true God, is for Israel; or on Israel's side, and against you. Or, that Israel hath a God, a God indeed, one who is able to help them; and not such an impotent idol as you serve.

47. Saveth - That is, that he can save without these arms, and with the most contemptible weapons. The battle - That is, the events of war are wholly in his power. He will - David speaks thus confidently, because he was assured of it by a particular inspiration.

48. Drew nigh - Like a stalking mountain. Ran - So far was he from fear!

49. Forehead - Probably the proud giant had lift up that part of his helmet which covered his fore-head; in contempt of David and his weapons, and by the singular direction of providence.

51. David took - Hence it appears, that David was not a little man, as many fancy; but a man of considerable bulk and strength, because he was able to manage a giant's sword. The stone threw him down to the earth, and bereaved him of sense and motion; but there remained some life in him, which the sword took away, and so compleated the work. God is greatly glorified, when his proud enemies are cut off with their own sword.

55. Whose son - David had been some considerable time dismissed from Saul's court, and was returned home. And therefore it is not strange, if Saul for the present had forgot David. Besides the distemper of Saul's mind might make him forgetful; and that David might be now much changed, both in his countenance and in his habit. I cannot tell - Abner's employment was generally in the camp, when David was at the court; and when Abner was there, he took little notice of a person so much inferior to him as David was.

## XVIII

David becomes the friend of Jonathan, the constant attendant of Saul, and the favourite of all the people, ver. 1-5. Saul's envy raised, ver. 6-9. He seeks to kill David, ver. 10-11 Is afraid of him, ver. 12-16. Promises to give him his elder daughter, and gives him the younger, hoping to destroy him thereby, but in vain, ver. a 7-27. He is more feared by Saul and esteemed by the people, ver. 28-30.

1. Loved him - For his excellent virtues and endowments, which shone forth both in his speeches and actions; for the service he had done to God and to his people; and for the similitude of their age and qualities.

2. Took him, &c. - By which it appears, that before this David had not his constant residence at court.

5. Went - Upon military expeditions, of which that word is often used.

10. The evil spirit, &c. - His fits of frenzy returned upon him. The very next day after he conceived envy at David, the evil spirit was permitted by God to seize him again. Such is the fruit

of envy and uncharitableness. Prophesied - That is, he used uncouth gestures, and signs, as the prophets often did.

11. And Saul cast the javelin - Being now quite under the power of that evil spirit. Twice - Once now, and another time upon a like occasion, chap. xix, 10.

12. Afraid - Lest as he had gained the favour of God and of all the people, he should also take away his kingdom.

13. Removed him from him - From his presence and court; which he did, because he feared lest David should find an opportunity to kill him, as he had designed to kill David; because his presence now made him more sad than ever his musick made him chearful: and principally, that hereby he might expose him to the greatest hazards.

18. What is my life - How little is my life worth, that by the exposing of that to some hazard, I should purchase a king's daughter! In these expressions David sheweth not only his humility, but also his wisdom, in discovering so deep a sense of his own meanness, that Saul might see how far he was from aspiring at the kingdom.

19. Adriel - The son of Bar-zillai, as he is called, 2 Sam. xxi, 8. This was an act of great injustice; and accordingly this marriage was accursed by God, and the children begotten in it, were, by God's appointment cut off, 2 Sam. xxi, 8, 9.

26. The days - That is, the time allowed by Saul to David for the execution of this exploit.

27. Two hundred - He doubled the number required; to oblige Saul the more to the performance of his promise; and to shew his great respect and affection to Saul's daughter.

30. Went forth - To war against the Israelites, being provoked by their former losses, and especially by that act of David's.

## XIX

Saul is pacified by Jonathan, ver. 1-7. Attempts again to kill David, ver. 8-10. Is deceived by Michal, who sends David away, ver. 11-17. David flies to Ramah, and Saul prophesies, ver. 18-24.

4. Spake good - Which he could not do without hazard to himself. Herein therefore he performed the duty of a true friend, and of a valiant man.

6. As the Lord, &c. - And without all doubt, he intended what he said, feeling a real change in himself for the present. "God," says Mr. Henry, "inclined the heart of Saul to hearken to the voice of Jonathan."

8. And David, &c. - So David continues his good service, tho' it was ill requited. They who are ill paid for doing good, yet must not be weary of well doing, remembering how bountiful a benefactor God is, even to the evil and unthankful.

9. The evil spirit - David's successes against the Philistines revived his envy, and the devil watched the opportunity, as he had done before.

13. Goats hair - Or, put great goats hair upon his bolster; upon the head and face of the image, which lay upon his bolster, that it might have some kind of resemblance of David's head and hair,

at least in a sick man's bed, where there useth to be but a glimmering light. Covered it - Upon pretense of his being sick, and needing some such covering.

18. To Samuel - Both for comfort and direction in his distress; and for safety, supposing that Saul would be ashamed to execute his bloody designs in the presence of so venerable a person as Samuel.

20. Over them - To instruct and direct them in those holy exercises. For though they prophesied by Divine inspiration, yet they were both to prepare themselves for it before hand, and to make good improvement of it afterwards, in both which they needed Samuel's counsel and assistance. And whereas some might falsely pretend to those raptures; or the devil might transform himself into an angel of light, Samuel's presence and judgment was necessary to prevent and to detect such impostures. Besides, Samuel would by his present conjunction with them in those holy exercises, encourage them, and stir up others to the coveting of those gifts, and to the performance of such religious duties. Prophesied - Being inspired by God as Balaam was; that being wrapt up into such an extasy, their minds might be wholly taken off from their design of seizing David.

23. The spirit - It came upon him in the way; whereas it came not upon his messengers 'till they came to the place. Hereby God would convince Saul of the vanity of his designs against David, and that in them he fought against God himself.

24. Lay down - Hebrew. fell, down upon the earth; for his mind being in an extasy, he had not the use of his senses. God so ordering it, that David might have an opportunity to escape. Naked - That is, stript of his upper garments, as the word naked is often used; and it is here repeated to signify how long he lay in that posture. Day and night - So God kept him as it were in chains, 'till David was got out of his reach. Is Saul - The same proverb which was used before, is here revived, as an evidence of God's wonderful care over David; he made Saul in some sort a prophet, that he mightst make David a king.

## XX

David complains to Jonathan; and desires his help, ver. 1-5. Jonathan promises to give him intelligence, and confirms his friendship, ver. 9-23. He finds his father implacable, ver. 24-34. He gives David notice of it, in the manner they had agreed on, ver. 35-42.

2. Is it not so - For Jonathan gave credit to his father's oath, chap. xix, 6.

3. David swear - The matter being of great moment, and Jonathan doubting the truth of it, he confirms his word with an oath, which follows in the end of the verse. Only he interposeth a reason why Saul concealed it from Jonathan.

5. To the third day - That is, unto the next day, but one after the new moon. His meaning is not, that he would hide himself in any certain place all the three days, but that he would secure himself either at Bethlehem with his friends, or in any other place 'till the third day.

6. Asked me - Who being the king's son and deputy, used to give license to military men to depart for a season upon just occasions.

8. Deal kindly - In giving me timely notice, and a true account of Saul's disposition and intention towards me. A covenant of the Lord - That is, a solemn covenant, not lightly undertaken, but seriously entered into, in the name and fear of God, and in his presence, calling him to be the witness of our sincerity therein, and the avenger of perfidiousness in him that breaks it. Slay me - I am contented thou shouldst kill me. For why - Why shouldst thou betray me to thy father, by concealing his evil intentions from me?

12. O Lord God - Do thou hear and judge between us. It is an abrupt speech which is usual in great passions.

14. Kindness as the Lord - That kindness to which thou hast engaged thyself, in the covenant sworn between thee and me in God's presence. I die not - That thou do not kill me or mine, as princes of another line use to kill the nearest relations of the former line, from whom the kingdom was translated to them.

16. A covenant - The covenant which before was personal, he now extends to the whole house of David, expecting a reciprocal enlargement of it on David's side, which doubtless he obtained. Enemies - If either I or any of my house shall break this covenant, and shall prove enemies to David or to his house, let the Lord, the witness of this covenant, severely punish the violators of it.

17. Swear again - Hebrew. and Jonathan added or proceeded to make David swear; that is, having himself sworn to David or adjured David, in the foregoing verse, he here requires David's oath to him, by way of restipulation or confirmation. Loved him - Because he had a true friendship for David, he desired that the covenant might be inviolably observed through all their generations.

19. Was in hand - When this same business which now they were treating about, was in agitation formerly; namely, to discover Saul's mind and purpose towards him, chap. xix, 2, 3. Ezel - By that stone which directs travelers in the way; namely, in some cave, or convenient place, which was near it.

21. I will send - I will send him out before I shoot, to find out, and take up the arrows which I shall shoot. And I shall shoot them either short of him, or beyond him, as I shall see occasion.

23. Between - As a witness and a judge between us and our families for ever, if on either side this league of friendship be violated.

24. Hid himself - Namely, at the time appointed: for it seems probable, that he went first to Bethlehem, and thence returned to the field, when the occasion required.

25. Arose - He rose from his seat where he was sat next the king, and stood at Abner's coming, to do honour to him, who was his father's cousin, and the general of the army.

26. Something - Some accident which has rendered him unclean, and so unfit to partake of this feast, which consisted in part of the remainders of the peace-offerings, according to the law, Levit vii, 20. Unfit also to come into any company, much more, into the king's company, lest he should pollute them also.

27. Son of Jesse - So he calls him in scorn, to note the meanness of his original; and as not deigning to call him by his proper name. To day - For the uncleanness which came by some chance, usually lasted but for one day.

30. Thy confusion - Men will conclude that thou hast no royal blood in thy veins, that canst so tamely give up thy crown to so contemptible a person.

33. To smite him - Saul seemed to be in great care, that Jonathan should be established in his kingdom: and now he himself aims at his life! What fools, what worse than savage beasts does anger make.

37. To - That is, near the place. For the words following shew, that he was not yet come thither.
40. Artillery - His bow, and arrows, and quiver.

## XXI

David coming to Nob, takes the shew-bread, and Goliath's sword, ver. 1-9. Goes to Achish, and feigns himself mad, ver. 10- 13. Is dismissed by Achish, ver. 14, 15.

1. Nob - A city of priests, where the tabernacle now was. Hither David resorted, for a supply of his necessities, which he supposed he might receive here, without danger of being betrayed into Saul's hands: and principally, that in this great distress, he might receive comfort and counsel from the Lord. Ahimelech - The chief priest, brother to that Ahiah, chap. xiv, 3, and he being now dead, his successor in the priesthood, for they were both sons of Ahitub. Was afraid - Suspecting some extraordinary cause of his coming in such a manner. Alone - For though David had some servants as is manifest from ver. 4, 5, whom Jonathan probably had sent to a place appointed, yet they were left at another place: as David himself affirmeth, ver. 2. And David was now alone, as also he was when he fled to Achish. He who had been suddenly advanced to the highest honour, is as soon reduced to the desolate conditions of an exile. Such changes are there in this world, and so uncertain are its smiles.

2. The king, &c. - This seems to be a plain lie extorted from him, by fear. But it was pernicious to all the priests there. Whence David afterwards declares his repentance for this sin of lying, Psalm 1xix, 29. To such a place - To a certain place which it not convenient now to mention; because the whole business requires concealment.

4. There is, &c. - Here in the tabernacle: though doubtless he had other provisions is his house; but David was in great haste, and in fear of Doeg whom he saw, and knew and therefore would not stay 'till any thing could be fetched thence. There was a double impediment to the giving this bread to them;

1. Its sacredness in itself; which the priest implies, and David answers ver. 5, and the priest was satisfied therein by David's great necessities.
2. The abstinence from all women, which he supposed should be in those that use it; concerning which he now inquires. And though he mentions this only concerning David's young men, and out of reverence forbears to name him; yet he is also included in the number, as David's answer shews.

5. Three days - As long as the law required, Exod. xix, 15. And so long David, and his men hid, it seems, hid themselves for fear of Saul, whereby they were kept both from women: and from food convenient for them. Vessels - That is, Either,

1. Their garments, or other utensils for their journey. Or
2. their bodies. The bread - Hebrew. and this bread; is in a manner common: that is, considering the time, and our necessity, this maybe used in a manner, like common bread. For though for a season while it is to stand before the Lord, it be so holy, that the priest himself might not eat it; yet afterwards it is eaten by

the priest, and his whole family, and so it may be by us, in our circumstances. Tho' it were - But newly put into the vessel, it must give place to the great law of necessity, and charity; because God will have mercy preferred before sacrifice.

7. Detained - Not by force but by his choice; he fixed his abode there for that day; either because it was the sabbath-day; on which he might not proceed in his journey, or for the discharge of some vow. Before the Lord - That is, at the tabernacle. An Edomite - By birth, but he was proselyted to the Jewish religion.

9. Ephod - That is, behind that holy place allotted for the keeping of the sacred, or priestly garments; all which are here comprehended under the ephod; which, as the chief is put for all the rest. Here it was laid up as a sacred monument of God's power and goodness. None like it - Because it not only served him for his use, for he was a strong and tall man, and one that could wield that sword, but was also a pledge of God's favour to him. Whenever be looked upon it, it would be a support to his faith, by reminding him of what God had already done.

10. To Achish - A strange action; but it must be considered, that Saul's rage was so great, his power also, and diligence in hunting after him that he despaired of escaping any other way: and a desperate disease, produceth a desperate remedy. The king elect is here an exile: anointed to the crown, and yet forced to run his country. So do God's providences sometimes run counter to his promises, for the trial of our faith, and the glorifying his name in accomplishing his counsels, notwithstanding the difficulties that lie in the way.

11. King of the land - Of Canaan. They call him king, either more generally for the governor, the most eminent captain and commander, or, as the king elect, the person designed to be king: for, by this time, the fame of Saul's rejection, and David's destination to the kingdom, was got abroad among the Israelites, and from them, probably to the Philistines. Did they not sing, &c. - And therefore consider what to do; and now our great enemy is in thy hand, be sure thou never let him go alive.

12. Was afraid - Lest either their revenge or policy should prompt them to kill him. Perhaps he was the more apprehensive, because he wore Goliath's sword, which was probably well known at Gath. He now learned by experience what he afterward taught us, Psalm 1xviii, 9. It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in princes.

15. Mad men - It is highly probable, Achish was aware, that this madness was counterfeit. But being desirous to preserve David, he speaks as if he thought it real.

## XXII

David escapes to the cave of Adullam, where many resort to him, ver. 1, 2. Lodges his parents with the king of Moab, ver. 3, 4. Comes to the forest of Hareth, ver. 5. Saul complains of his servants as unfaithful to him, ver. 6-8. On the information of Doeg, he orders the priests of Nob to be slain, and their city destroyed, ver. 9-19. David is informed of this by Abiathar, ver. 20-23.

2. Debt - Probably poor debtors, whom the creditors were obliged to spare, Exod. xxii, 25. And though their persons were with David, yet their lands and goods were liable to their creditors.

Captain over them - He did not maintain any injustice or wickedness, which some of them possibly might be guilty of; but on the contrary, he instructed and obliged them to the practice of all justice and honesty.

3. 'Till I know, &c. - He expresses his hopes very modestly, as one that had entirely cast himself upon God, and committed his way to him, trusting not in his own arts or arms, but in the wisdom, power and goodness of God.

4. Hold - In holds; the singular number being put for the plural; as is frequent; that is, as long as David was forced to go from place to place, and from hold to hold, to secure himself: for it concerned David to secure his father, and he did doubtless secure him for all that time; and not only while he was in the hold of Mizpeh, or of Adullam, which was but a little while.

5. Abide not - Do not shut up thyself here. Judah - Go and shew thyself in the land of Judah, that thou mayest publicly put in thy claim to the kingdom after Saul's death; and that thy friends may be invited and encouraged to appear on thy behalf. Hereby also God would exercise David's faith, and wisdom, and courage; and so prepare him for the kingdom.

6. Spear - It seems, as an ensign of majesty, for in old times kings carried a spear instead of a scepter.

7. Ye Benjamites - You that are of my own tribe and kindred, from whom David designs to translate the kingdom to another tribe. Will he distribute profits and preferments among you Benjamites, as I have done? Will he not rather prefer those of his own tribe before you?

8. That all, &c. - See the nature of jealousy, and its arts of wheedling to extort discoveries of things that are not.

10. He inquired - David chargeth him with the sin of lying, Psalm lii, 3, and it is not improbable, that he told many lies not here expressed; and withal, he was guilty of concealing part of the truth, which in this case he was obliged to declare for Ahimelech's just defense, namely, the artifice whereby David circumvented Ahimelech: making him believe, that he was then going upon the king's business, so that the service he did to David, was designed in honour to Saul.

11. The priests - Of the house of Eli, which God had threatened to cut off, chap. ii, 31.

14. And said - He doth not determine the difference between Saul and David; nor affirm what David now was: but only declared what David formerly had been, and what he was still, for anything he knew to the contrary.

15. Knew nothing of all this - Of any design against thee.

18. The Edomite - This is noted to wipe off the stain of this butchery from the Israelitish nation, and to shew, why he was so ready to do it, because he was one of that nation which had an implacable hatred against all Israelites, and against the priests of the Lord.

19. Both men, &c. - In all the life of Saul, there is no wickedness to be compared to this. He appears now to be wholly under the power of that evil spirit which had long tormented him. And this destruction could not but go to the heart of every pious Israelite, and make them wish a thousand times, they had been content with the government of Samuel.

20. Abiathar - Who by his father's death was now high-priest.

## XXIII

David saves Keilah from the Philistines, ver. 1-6. His danger there, and deliverance from it, ver. 7-13. He remains in the wilderness of Ziph, and is visited by Jonathan, ver. 14-18. Saul pursues him, ver. 19-25. His narrow escape, ver. 26-29

1. The Philistines, &c. - Probably it was the departure of God and David from Saul, that encouraged the Philistines to make this inroad. When princes begin to persecute God's people and ministers, let them expect nothing but vexation on all sides.

4. Inquired again - Not for his own, but for his soldiers satisfaction.

6. Ephod - With the Ephod, the high-priest's Ephod, wherein were the Urim and the Thummim, which when Ahimelech and the rest of the priests went to Saul, were probably left in his hand. This gave him the opportunity both of escaping, whilst Doeg the butcher was killing his brethren, and of bringing away the Ephod, which Saul now was justly deprived of.

11. The Lord said - From this place it may appear that God's answer by Urim and Thummim, was not by any change in the colour or situation of the precious stones in the breast-plate of the Ephod, but by a voice or suggestion from God to the high-priest. He will - He purposeth to come, if thou continuest here. For still as David's question, so God's answer, is upon supposition.

16. And strengthened - He comforted and supported him against all his fears, by minding him of God's infallible promises made to him, and his singular providence which hitherto had and still would be with him.

17. Next to thee - Which he gathered either from David's generosity, and friendship to him; or from some promise made to him by David concerning it. So that the whole imports thus much; I do not look to be king myself (as by my birth I might expect,) but that thou shalt be king (God having so appointed) and I but in a secondary place inferior to thee.

18. Made a covenant - They then parted, and never came together again, that we find, in this world.

19. Ziphites - Who were of David's own tribe tho' for this their unnatural carriage to him, he calls them strangers, Psalm liv, 3.

25. A rock - That is, into a cave which was in the rock; where at first he might think to hide himself, but upon farther consideration he removed from thence upon Saul's approach.

27. A messenger, &c. - The wisdom of God is never at a loss for ways, and means to preserve his people.

28. Called, &c. - That is, The rock of divisions, because there Saul was separated, and in a manner pulled asunder from David, who was now almost within his reach.

## XXIV

Saul pursues David to Engedi, ver. 1, 2. David cuts off his skirt, ver. 3-7. He reasons with Saul, ver. 8-15. Saul owns his fault, and returns home, ver. 16-22

2. Rocks - Which the wild goats used to delight in and climb over. These very rocks are exceeding steep, and full of precipices, and dangerous to travelers, as an eye-witness hath left upon record. And yet Saul was so transported with rage, as to venture himself and his army here, that he might take David, who, as he thought, would judge himself safe, and therefore be secure in such inaccessible places.

3. Went in - To sleep there: Saul being a military man, used to sleep with his soldiers upon the ground. And it is not improbable, that being weary with his eager and almost incessant pursuit, first of David, then of the Philistines, and now of David again, he both needed and desired some sleep, God also disposing him thereto, that David might have this eminent occasion to demonstrate his integrity to Saul, and to all Israel. Of the cave - For that there were vast caves in those parts is affirmed, not only by Josephus, but also by Heathen authors; Strabo writes of one which could receive four thousand men.

4. Behold, &c. - Not that God had said these words, or made any such promise; but they put this construction upon those promises which God had made to him, of delivering him from all his enemies, and carrying him through all difficulties to the throne. This promise they conceived put him under an obligation of taking all opportunities which God put into his hand for their accomplishment.

10. Mine eye - The eye is said to spare, because it affects the heart with pity, and moves a man to spare.

12. Will avenge - If thou persistest in thy injuries and cruel designs against me.

13. Wickedness, &c. - That is, wicked men will do wicked actions, among which this is one, to kill their sovereign Lord and king; and therefore if I were so wicked a person as thy courtiers represent me, I should make no conscience of laying violent hands upon thee.

16. Thy voice - He knew his voice, though being at a great distance from him, he could not discern his face. Wept - From the sense of his sin against God, and his base carriage to David. He speaks as one quite overcome with David's kindness, and as one that relents at the sight of his own folly and ingratitude.

17. More righteous than I - He ingenuously acknowledges David's integrity, and his own iniquity.

19. The Lord reward thee - Because he thought himself not able to recompense so great a favour, he prays God to recompense it.

22. Unto the hold - Of En-gedi, ver. 1, for having had by frequent experience of Saul's inconstancy, he would trust him no more.

## XXV

Samuel's death, ver. 1. The character of Nabal, ver. 2, 3. David's requests to him, ver. 4-9. His churlish answer, ver. 10-13. David's purpose to destroy him told to Abigail, ver. 13-17. She pacifies David, ver. 18-31. His answer, ver. 32-35. The death of Nabal, ver. 36-38. David marries Abigail and Ahinoam, ver. 39- 44.

1. Lamented him - Those have hard hearts, that can bury their faithful ministers with dry eyes, and are not sensible of the loss of them who have prayed for them, and taught them the way of the Lord.

2. Carmel - In some part of this wilderness Israel wandered, when they came out of Egypt. The place would bring to mind God's care concerning them, which David might now improve for his own encouragement.

3. Abigail - That is, the joy of his father: yet he could not promise himself much joy of her, when he married her to such an husband: it seems, in inquiring, (no unfrequent thing) more after his wealth, than after his wisdom. Caleb - This is added to aggravate his crime, that he was a degenerate branch of that noble stock of Caleb, and consequently of the tribe of Judah, as David was.

4. Shear sheep - Which times were celebrated with feasting.

6. Prosperity - By this expression David both congratulates Nabal's felicity, and tacitly minds him of the distress in which he and his men were.

7. We hurt not - This considering the licentiousness of soldiers, and the necessities David and his men were exposed to, was no small favour, which Nabal was bound both in justice, and gratitude, and prudence to requite.

8. A good day - That is, in a day of feasting and rejoicing; when men are most chearful and liberal; when thou mayst relieve us out of thy abundance without damage to thyself; when thou art receiving the mercies of God, and therefore obliged to pity and relieve distressed and indigent persons.

17. Can not speak - But he flies into a passion.

18. Abigail took, &c. - This she did without his leave, because it was a case of apparent necessity, for the preservation of herself, and husband, and all the family from imminent ruin. And surely, that necessity which dispenseth with God's positive commands, might dispense with the husband's right, in this case. Bottles - Casks or rundlets.

22. Enemies of David - That is, unto David himself. But because it might seem ominous to curse himself, therefore instead of David, he mentions David's enemies. But is this the voice of David? Can he speak so unadvisedly with his lips? Has he been so long in the school of affliction, and learned no more patience therein? Lord, what is man? And what need have we to pray, lead us not into temptation.

24. And said, &c. - Impute Nabal's sin to me, and if thou pleasest, punish it in me, who here offer myself as a sacrifice to thy just indignation. This whole speech of Abigail shews great wisdom, by an absolute submitting to mercy, without any pretense of justification, of what was done, (but rather with aggravation of it) she endeavours to work upon David's generosity, to pardon it. And there is hardly any head of argument, whence the greatest orator might argue in this case, which she doth not manage to the best advantage.

25. Nabal is his name - Nabal signifies a fool.

26. As Nabal - Let them be as contemptible as Nabal is, and will be for this odious action; let them be as unable to do thee any hurt as he is; let them be forced to yield to thee, and implore thy pardon, as Nabal now doth by my mouth: let the vengeance thou didst design upon Nabal and his family fall upon their heads, who, by their inveterate malice against thee, do more deserve it than this fool for this miscarriage; and much more than all the rest of our family, who, as they are none

of thine enemies, so they were in way guilty of this wicked action. And therefore spare these, and execute thy vengeance upon more proper objects.

27. Blessing - So a gift or present is called here, and elsewhere; not only because the matter of it comes from God's blessing; but also because it is given with a blessing, or with a good will. Unto the young men - As being unworthy of thine acceptance or use.

28. The trespass - That is, which I have taken upon myself, and which, if it be punished, the punishment will reach to me. Sure house - Will give the kingdom to thee, and to thy house for ever, as he hath promised thee. And therefore let God's kindness to thee, make thee gentle and merciful to others; do not sully thy approaching glory with the stain of innocent blood; but consider, that it is the glory of a king, to profit by offenses: and that it will be thy loss to cut off such as will shortly be thy subjects. The battles - For the Lord, and for the people of the Lord against their enemies; especially, the Philistines. And as this is thy proper work, and therein thou mayest expect God's blessing; so it is not thy work to draw thy sword in thy own private quarrel against any of the people of the Lord; and God will not bless thee in it. Evil hath not, &c. - Though thou hast been charged with many crimes by Saul and others; yet thy innocency is evident to all men: do not therefore by this cruel act, justify thine enemies reproaches, or blemish thy great and just reputation.

29. A man - Saul though no way injured. Thy soul - To take away thy life. Bundle of life - Or, in the bundle: that is, in the society, or congregation of the living; out of which, men are taken, and cut off by death. The phrase is taken from the common usage of men, who bind those things in bundles, which they are afraid to lose. The meaning is, God will preserve thy life; and therefore it becomes not thee, unnecessarily to take away the lives of any; especially of the people of thy God. With the Lord - That is, in the custody of God, who by his watchful providence, preserves this bundle, and all that are in it; and thee in a particular manner, as being thy God in a particular way, and special covenant. The Jews understand this. not only of the present life, but of that which is to come, even the happiness of departed souls, and therefore use it commonly, as an inscription on their grave-stones. "Here we have laid the body, trusting the soul is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord." Sling out - God himself will cut them off suddenly, violently, and irresistibly; and cast them far away; both from his presence, and from thy neighbourhood, and from all capacity of doing thee hurt.

31. No grief - The mind and conscience will be free from all the torment which such an action would cause in thee. By which, she intimates, what a blemish this would be to his glory, what a disturbance to his peace, if he proceeded to execute his purpose: and withal implies, how comfortable it would be to him to remember, that he had for conscience to God, restrained his passions. Causeless - Which she signifies would be done if he should go on. For though Nabal had been guilty of abominable rudeness, and ingratitude; yet he had done nothing worthy of death, by the laws of God or of man. And whatsoever he had done, the rest of his family were innocent. Avenged - Which is directly contrary to God's law, Levit xix, 18 Deut. xxxii, 35. Then - When God shall make thee king, let me find grace in thy sight.

32. The Lord - Who by his gracious providence so disposed matters, that thou shouldst come to me: He rightly begins at the fountain of his deliverance; and then proceeds to the instruments.

33. From coming, &c. - Which I had sworn to do. Hereby it plainly appears, that oaths whereby men bind themselves to any sin, are null and void: and as it was a sin to make them; so it is adding sin to sin to perform them.

35. Accepted - That is, shewed my acceptance of thy person, by my grant of thy request.

36. A feast - As the manner was upon those solemn occasions. Sordid covetousness, and vain prodigality were met together in him. Told nothing - As he was then incapable of admonition, his reason and conscience being both asleep.

37. His heart died - He fainted away through the fear and horror of so great a mischief though it was past. As one, who having in the night galloped over a narrow plank, laid upon a broken bridge, over a deep river; when in the morning he came to review it, was struck dead with the horror of the danger he had been in.

38. Smote - God either inflicted some other stroke upon him, or increased his grief and fear to such an height, as killed him.

39. Blessed, &c. - This was another instance of human infirmity in David. David sent - But this doubtless was not done immediately after Nabal's death, but some time after it; though such circumstances be commonly omitted in the sacred history; which gives only the heads, and most important passages of things.

## XXVI

The Ziphites inform Saul of David, who pursues him again, ver. 1-3. David sends out spies, and views his camp, ver. 4, 5. Comes to him, being asleep, and takes his spear and cruse of water, ver. 6-12. Reasons with him upon it, ver. 13-20. Saul again owns his spirit, and promises to pursue him no more, ver. 21-25

5. The Ziphites - Probably Saul would have pursued David no more, had not these wretches set him on.

6. Zerujah - David's sister. His father is not named either because he was now dead; or because he was an obscure person.

7. Came - That is, to Saul's host. It might seem a bold and strange attempt; but it may be considered:

1. That David had a particular assurance that God would preserve him to the kingdom.
2. That he had a special instinct from God, to this work; and possibly God might inform him, that he had cast them into a deep sleep, that he might have this second opportunity of manifesting his innocency towards Saul.

9. Destroy him not, &c. - Though Saul be a tyrant, yet he is our Lord and king; and I, though designed king, as yet am his subject; and therefore cannot kill him without sin, nor will I consent that thou shouldst do it.

11. Take the spear - Which will shew where we have been, and what we could have done.

13. Afar off - That his person might be out of their reach, and yet his voice might be heard; which in a clear air, and in the silence of the night might be heard at a great distance.

14. Cried to the people - It is probable this was early in the morning.

19. The Lord - If the Lord hath by the evil spirit which he hath sent, or by his secret providence, directed thy rage against me for the punishment of thine, or my sins. An offering - Let us offer up a sacrifice to God to appease his wrath against us. Driven me - From the land which God hath given

to his people for their inheritance, and where he hath established his presence and worship. Go serve - This was the language of their actions. For by driving him from God's land, and the place of his worship, into foreign and idolatrous lands, they exposed him to the peril of being either ensnared by their counsels, or examples; or forced by their power to worship idols.

20. Before the Lord - Remember, if thou dost it, God the judge of all men seeth it, and will avenge it; though I will not avenge myself.

21. My soul, &c. - This second instance of David's tenderness wrought more upon Saul than the former. He owns himself melted and quite overcome by David's kindness to him. My soul was precious in thine eyes, which I thought had been odious. He acknowledges he had done very ill to persecute him: I have acted against God's law, I have sinned: and against my own interest, I have played the fool, in pursuing him as an enemy, who was indeed one of my best friends. And herein I have erred exceedingly, have wronged both thee and myself. Nothing can be more full and ingenuous than this confession: God surely now touched his heart. And he promises to persecute him no more: nor does it appear that he ever attempted it.

25 Blessed, &c. - So strong was his conviction now, that he could not forbear blessing him, foretelling his success, applauding David, and condemning himself, even in the hearing of his own soldiers. And this, it seems, was their last interview. After this they saw each other no more.

## XXVII

David retires to Gath, ver. 1-4. Achish gives him Ziklag, ver. 5-7. David destroys the Canaanites, ver. 8, 9. Persuades Achish he fought against Judah, ver. 10-12.

1. I shall perish - But this was certainly a very great fault in David: for

1. This proceeded from gross distrust of God's promise and providence; and that after such repeated demonstrations of God's peculiar care over him.

2. He forsakes the place where God had settled him, chap. xxii, 5, and given him both assurance and experience of his protection there.

3. He voluntarily runs upon that rock, which he cursed his enemies for throwing him upon, chap. xxvi, 19, and upon many other snares and dangers, as the following history will shew; and withal, deprives the people of the Lord of those succors which he might have given them, in case of a battle. But God hereby designed to withdraw David from the Israelites, that they might fall by the hand of the Philistines, without any reproach or inconvenience to David.

4. Sought no more for him - At their meeting Saul's heart was deeply wounded, and he had said, "Return, my son David, Be with me as in time past." Nor have we the least proof, that he would have sought for him again, with any other design.

5. Give me a place - A prudent desire. Hereby David designed to preserve his people, both from the vices, which conversation with the Philistines would have exposed them to; and from that envy, and malice, which diversity of religion might have caused. With thee - Which is too great an honour for me, and too burdensome to thee, and may be an occasion of offense to thy people.

6. Gave Ziklag - Not only to inhabit, but to possess it as his own. Which he did, to lay the greater obligations upon David, whom he knew so able to serve him. It was given to the tribe of Judah before, Josh. xv, 31, but the Philistines kept the possession of it 'till this time. And being given by them to David, it now belonged not to the tribe of Judah; but to the king of Judah, David and his heirs forever. To this day - This, and some such clauses seem to have been added, after the main substance of the several books was written.

8. Amalekites - The remnant of those whom Saul destroyed, chap. xv, 3-9, who retired into remote and desert places.

9. Let neither man, &c. - In that part where he came: but there were more of the Amalekites yet left in another part of that land.

10. David - These and the following words are ambiguous, and contrary to that simplicity which became David, both as a prince, and as an eminent professor of the true religion. The fidelity of Achish to him, and the confidence he put in him, aggravates his sin in thus deceiving him, which David seems penitently to reflect on, when he prays, Remove from me the way of lying.

## XXVIII

The conference between Achish and David, ver. 1-2. The preparation of the Philistines, and the distress of Saul, ver. 3-6. He applies to a woman which had a familiar spirit, to raise Samuel, ver. 7-11. Samuel appears, and foretells his defeat and death, ver. 12-19. Saul faints, and is with difficulty persuaded to take any sustenance, ver. 20-25.

2. Can do - He speaks ambiguously, as he did before.

5. He trembled - Had he kept close to God, he needed not fear all the armies of the Philistines.

7. That hath, &c. - One that converseth with the devil, or dead men's ghosts, and by them can discover future things. See Isaiah viii, 19.

8. Disguised - Both because he was ashamed to be known, or thought guilty of this practice; and because he suspected, the woman, had she known him, would not practice her art before him.

11. Samuel - Whose kindness and compassion as he had formerly experienced, so now he expected it in his deep distress. This practice of divination by the dead, or the souls of dead persons, was very usual among all nations.

12. Saw Samuel - The words are express, the woman saw Samuel, instead of the spirit whom she expected to see, God ordering it so for his own glory. She cried with a loud voice - Terrified and astonished, and thence easily conjectured, whom she had been talking with.

13. Gods - That is, a God, and divine person, glorious, and full of majesty and splendour, exceeding not only mortal men, but common ghosts. She used the plural number, gods, either after the manner of the Hebrew language, which commonly uses that word of one person: or, after the language and custom of the heathens.

14. A mantle - The usual habit of prophets, and particularly of Samuel, chap. xv, 27. If it was not Samuel, but an other spirit in his shape, it is not true, that Saul perceived it was Samuel. It seems Saul did not see him, so soon as the woman, which occasioned his asking those questions.

15. Called Samuel - Happy had it been, if he had called Samuel sooner, or rather the God of Samuel! It was now too late: destruction was at hand and God had determined, it should not be stayed.

17. To him - To David.

19. Tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: "What do these solemn words portend? A gleam of hope when life shall end. Thou and thy sons, tho' slain shall be Tomorrow in repose with me. Not in a state of health or pain If Saul with Samuel doth remain; Not in a state of damn'd despair, If loving Jonathan is there." Tho' these words may only mean, ye shall surely die, without any reference to the state of their souls after death. See note on "chap. xxxi, 8"

20. Fell - As if the Archers of the Philistines had already hit him, and there was no strength in him, to bear up against these heavy tidings: especially, as we cannot doubt, but all his past sins were now brought to his remembrance and what authority has any man to affirm, that he felt no contrition all this time? Altho' it did not seem good to the holy ghost, to leave it upon record?

21. Came to Saul - From whom she departed, when she had brought him and Samuel together, that they might more freely converse together.

24. Unleavened - Not having time to leaven it.

## XXIX

The princes of the Philistines object against David's going with them to the battle, ver. 1-5. He is dismissed by Achish, ver. 6-11.

2. With Achish - As the life-guard of Achish. Achish being, as it seems, the general of the army.

3. The princes - The Lords of the other eminent cities, who were confederate with him in this expedition. These days or years - That is, did I say days? I might have said years. He hath now been with me a full year and four months, chap. xxvii, 7, and he was with me some years ago, chap. xxi, 10, and since their time hath been known to me. And it is not improbable, but David, after his escape from thence, might hold some correspondence with Achish, as finding him to be a man of a more generous temper than the rest of the Philistines, and supposing that he might have need of him for a refuge, in case Saul continued to seek his life. Since he fell - Revolted, or left his own king to turn to me.

4. Make this fellow - Herein the wise and gracious providence of God appeared, both in helping him out of these difficulties, out of which no human wit could have extricated him, but he must have been, an ungrateful person either to the one or the other side, and moreover in giving him the happy opportunity of recovering his own, and his all from the Amalekites, which had been irrecoverably lost, if he had gone into this battle. And the kindness of God to David was the greater, because it had been most just for God to have left David in those distresses into which his own sinful counsel had brought him. These men - That is, of these our soldiers, they speak according to the rules of true policy; for by this very course, great enemies have sometimes been reconciled together.

8. David said &c. - This was deep dissimulation and flattery, no way to be justified. None knows, how strong a temptation they are in to compliment and dissemble, which they are in who attend great men.

9. Angel of God - In whom nothing is blame-worthy. The Heathens acknowledged good spirits, which also they worshipped as an inferior sort of deities, who were messengers and ministers to the supreme God; Achish had learned the title of angels, from the Israelites his neighbours, and especially from David's conversation.

11. Rose up early - David did not then know, how necessary this was, for the relief of his own city. But God knew it well, and sent him thither accordingly. On how many occasions may he say, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter?

## XXX

Ziklag plundered: David and his men distressed, ver. 1-6. Encouraged of God, he pursues them, ver. 7-10. He gains intelligence from a straggler, ver. 11-15. Routs the enemy, and recovers all they had taken, ver. 16-20. Makes an order for dividing the spoil, ver. 21-25. Sends presents to his friends, ver. 26-31

1. The south - Namely, the southern part of Judah, and the adjacent parts.

4. Wept - It is no disparagement to the boldest, bravest spirits, to lament the calamities of friends or relations.

6. Stoning him - As the author of their miseries, by coming to Ziklag at first, by provoking the Amalekites to this cruelty, and by his forwardness in marching away with Achish, and leaving their wives and children unguarded. Encouraged himself - That is, in this that the all-wise, and all-powerful Lord, was his God by covenant and special promise, and fatherly affection, as he had shewed himself to be in the whole course of his providence towards him. It is the duty of all good men, whatever happens, to encourage themselves in the Lord their God, assuring themselves, that he both can and will bring light out of darkness.

7. The ephod - And put it upon thyself, that thou mayst inquire of God according to his ordinance, David was sensible of his former error in neglecting to ask counsel of God by the ephod, when he came to Achish, and when he went out with Achish to the Battle; and his necessity now brings him to his duty, and his duty meets with success.

8. He answered - Before, God answered more slowly and gradually, chap. xxiii, 11, 12, but now he answers speedily, and fully at once, because the business required haste. So gracious is our God, that he considers even the degree of our necessities, and accommodates himself to them.

10. Four hundred - A small number for such an attempt: but David was strong in faith, giving God the glory of his power and faithfulness.

12. Three days and nights - One whole day and part of two others, as appears from the next verse, where he saith, three days ago I fell sick, but in the Hebrew it is, this is the third day since I fell sick.

13. Egypt - God by his providence so ordering it, that he was not one of that cursed race of the Amalekites, who were to be utterly destroyed, but an Egyptian, who might be spared. Left me - In this place and condition: which was barbarous inhumanity: for he ought, and easily might have carried him away with the prey which they had taken. But he paid dear for this cruelty, for this was the occasion of the ruin of him and all their company. And God by his secret providence ordered the matter thus for that very end. So that there is no fighting against God, who can make the smallest accidents serviceable to the production of the greatest effects.

14. Cherethites - That is, the Philistines. Caleb - This is added by way of explication: that part of the south of Judah which belongs to Caleb's posterity.

15. Will bring thee - For his master had told him whither they intended to go, that he might come after them, as soon as he could.

16. Upon all the earth - Secure and careless, because they were now come almost to the borders of their own country, and the Philistines and Israelites both were otherwise engaged, and David, as they believed, with them. So they had no visible cause of danger; and yet then they were nearest to destruction.

17. Twilight - The word signifies both the morning and evening twilight. But the latter seems here intended, partly because their eating, and drinking, and dancing, was more proper work for the evening, than the morning; and partly, because the evening was more convenient for David, that the fewness of his forces might not be discovered by the day-light. It is probable, that when he came near them, he reposed himself, and his army, in some secret place, whereof there were many parts, for a convenient season; and then marched on so as to come to them at the evening time.

20. Other cattle - Before those that belonged to Ziklag. David's spoil - The soldiers, who lately were so incensed against David, that they spake of stoning him: now upon this success magnify him, and triumphantly celebrate his praise; and say concerning this spoil, David purchased it by his valour and conduct, and he may dispose of it as he pleaseth.

21. Saluted them - He spoke kindly to them, and did not blame them because they went no further with them.

23. My brethren - He useth his authority to over-rule them; but manageth it with all sweetness, tho' they were such wicked and unreasonable men, calling them brethren; not only as of the same nation and religion with him, but as his fellow-soldiers. What God hath freely imparted to us, we should not unkindly and injuriously withhold from our brethren.

24. Part alike - A prudent and equitable constitution, and therefore practiced by the Romans, as Polybius and others note. The reason of it is manifest; because they were exposed to hazards, as well as their brethren: and were a reserve to whom they might retreat in case of a defeat; and they were now in actual service, and in the station in which their general had placed them.

26. Elders of Judah - Partly in gratitude for their former favours to him: and partly, in policy, to engage their affections to him.

## XXXI

Israel overthrown, and Saul, his three sons, his armour- bearer and all his men slain, ver. 1-6. The Israelites forsake their cities, ver. 7. The camp plundered and the dead bodies insulted, ver. 8-10. But rescued by the men of Jabesh-Gilead, ver. 11-13.

2. Jonathan - David's dear friend; God so ordering it for the farther exercise of David's faith and patience; and that David might depend upon God alone for his crown, and receive it solely from him, and not from Jonathan; who doubtless, had he lived, would have speedily settled the crown upon David's head. There was also a special providence of God, in taking away Jonathan, (who of all Saul's sons, seems to have been the fairest for the crown) for preventing divisions, which might have happened amongst the people concerning the successor: David's way to the crown being by this means made the more clear. Abinadab - Called also Ishui, chap. xiv, 49. Ishbosheth was not here, being possibly at home for the management of affairs there.

8. Saul and his three sons - "The scripture, as Mr. Henry well observes, makes no mention of the souls of Saul and his sons, what became of them after they were dead: secret things belong not to us."

9. Cut off his head - As the Israelites did by Goliath, and fastened it in the temple of Dagon, 1 Chron. x, 10. Idols - To give them the glory of this victory. And by this respect shewn to their pretended deities, how do they shame those, who give not the honour of their achievements to the living God?

12. Took the body, &c. - This they did, not only out of a concern, for the honour of Israel, and the crown of Israel, but out of gratitude to Saul, for his zeal and forwardness to rescue them from the Ammonites.

13. Fasted - To testify their sorrow for the loss of Saul, and of the people of God; and to intreat God's favour to prevent the utter extinction of his people. But you must not understand this word of fasting strictly, as if they eat nothing for seven whole days; but in a more large sense, as it is used both in sacred and profane writers; that they did eat but little, and that but mean food, and drank only water for that time. This book began with the birth of Samuel, and ends with the death of Saul: The comparing these together will teach us to prefer the honour that comes from God, before all the honours of the world.

## NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL

THIS book is the history of the reign of David. It gives us an account of his triumphs and of his troubles.

I. His triumphs, over the house of Saul, chap. 1-4. Over the Jebusites and Philistines, chap. 5. In the bringing up of the ark, chap. 6, 7. Over the neighbouring nations, chap. 8-10.

II. His troubles; the cause of them, his sin in the matter of Uriah, chap. 11-12. The troubles themselves, from the sin of Amnon, chap. 13. The rebellion of Absolom, chap. 14-19. And of Sheba, chap. 20. From the famine, chap. 21. And the pestilence, for his numbering the people, chap. 24. His song we have, chap. 22. And his words and worthies, chap.

23. In many instances throughout this book, he appears as a great and a good man. Yet it must be confessed he had great vices: So that his honour shines brighter in his psalms than in his annals.

**I**

David receives an account of the death of Saul and Jonathan, ver. 1-10. He mourns over them, ver. 11, 12. Puts the man to death, who boasted he had killed Saul, ver. 13-16. His elegy upon Saul and Jonathan, ver. 17-27.

1. Ziklag - Which though burnt, yet was not so consumed by the fire, that David and his men could not lodge in it.

2. Third day - From David's return to Ziklag. With his clothes rent, &c. - As a mourner.

18. Judah - These he more particularly teacheth, because they were the chief, and now the royal tribe, and likely to be the great bulwark to all Israel against the Philistines, upon whose land they bordered; and withal, to be the most true to him, and to his interest. The bow - That is, of their arms, expressed, under the name of the bow, which then was one of the chief weapons; and for the dextrous use whereof Jonathan is commended in the following song: which may be one reason, why he now gives forth this order, that so they might strive to imitate Jonathan in military skill, and to excel in it, as he did. Jasher - It is more largely and particularly described in the book of Jasher.

19. Beauty - Their flower and glory. Saul and Jonathan, and their army. High places - Hebrew. upon thy high places; that is, those which belong to thee, O land of Israel. How - How strangely! How suddenly! How universally!

20. Tell it not - This is not a precept, but a poetical wish; whereby he doth not so much desire, that this might not be done, which he knew to be impossible; as, express his great sorrow, because it would be done, to the dishonour of God, and of his people. The daughters - He mentions these, because it was the custom of women in those times and places to celebrate those victories which their men obtained, with triumphant songs and dances.

21. Let there be, &c. - This is no proper imprecation; but a passionate representation of the horror which he conceived at this publick loss; which was such, as if he thought every person or thing which contributed to it, were fit to bear the tokens of divine displeasure, such as this is, when the earth wants the necessary influences of dew and rain. Fields of offerings - That is, fruitful fields, which may produce fair and goodly fruits fit to be offered to God. Vilely - Dishonourably: for it was a great reproach to any soldier, to cast away or lose his shield. Cast away - By themselves, that they might flee more swiftly as the Israelites did, and Saul with the rest. As though, &c. - As if he had been no more, than a common soldier: he was exposed to the same kind of death and reproach as they were.

22. Not back - Without effect: their arrows shot from their bow, and their swords did seldom miss, and commonly pierced fat, and flesh, and blood, and reached even to the heart and bowels. Returned not, &c. - But filled and glutted with blood: for the sword is metaphorically said to have

a mouth, which we translate an edge; and to devour. And this their former successfulness is mentioned as an aggravation of their last infelicity.

23. Lovely - Amiable, and obliging in their carriage and conversation, both towards one another, and towards their people: for, as for Saul's fierce behaviour towards Jonathan, it was only a sudden passion, by which his ordinary temper was not to be measured; and for his carriage towards David, that was from that jealousy and reason of state which usually engageth even well- natured princes, to the same hostilities. But it is observable, that David speaks not a word here of his piety; but only commends him for those things which were truly in him. A fit pattern for all preachers in their funeral commendations. Swifter, &c. - Expeditious in pursuing their enemies, and executing their designs; which is a great commendation in a prince, and in a soldier. Stronger, &c. - In regard of their bodily strength, and the courage of their mind.

24. Daughters - These he mentions; because the women then used to make songs both of triumph, and of lamentation, and, because they usually are most delighted with the ornaments of the body here following. Clothed you - This he did, because he procured them so much peace as gave them opportunity of enriching themselves: and, because he took these things as spoils from the enemies, and clothed his own people with them.

25. Thine - Which were in thy country, and (had not thy father disinherited thee by his sins) in thy dominions.

26. Distressed - That is, for the loss of thee. For, besides the loss of a true friend, which is inestimable; he lost him who both could, and undoubtedly would have given him a speedy, and quiet, and sure possession of the kingdom, whereas now, he met with long and troublesome interruptions. Of women - That is, that love wherewith they love their husbands, or children for their affections are usually more ardent than mens.

## II

David goes up to Hebron and is crowned there, ver. 1-4. Thanks the men of Jabesh-gilead, ver. 5-7. Ishbosheth is set up in opposition to him, ver. 8-11. An encounter between David's men and Ishbosheth's, in which the latter are beaten, ver. 12-17. Asahel is killed by Abner, ver. 18-23. Joah sounds retreat by the advice of Abner, who retires to Mahanaim, ver. 24-29. The loss on each side, ver. 30-31. Asahel buried, ver. 32

1. Inquired - By Urim. Thus David begins at the right end, and lays his foundation in God's counsel and assistance. Shall I go - He asked not whether he should take the kingdom; for that was appointed before; and he would not offend God, nor dishonour his ordinance with unnecessary enquiries; but only where he should enter upon it; whether in Judah, as he supposed, because of his relation to that tribe, and his interest in it; or in some other tribe: for he doth not limit God, but resolves exactly to follow his counsels. Hebron - Which was next to Jerusalem (part whereof the Jebusites now possessed) the chief city of that tribe, and a city of the priests, and in the very center of that tribe, to which the whole tribe might speedily resort, when need required. And the sepulchres of the patriarchs adjoining to Hebron, would remind him of the ancient promise.

3. Dwelt in - That is, the cities or towns belonging to Hebron, which was the Metropolis. For in Hebron itself there was not space for them all, because it was filled with priests, and with David's court.

4. Anointed - This they did upon just grounds, because not only the kingdom was promised to that tribe, but David was designed and anointed by God, whose will both they and all Israel were obliged to obey. And they resolved not to neglect their duty, though they saw the other tribes would. Yet their modesty is observable, they make him king of Judah only, and not of all Israel. And therefore there was need of a third anointing to the kingdom over all Israel, which he had chap. v, 3, that first anointing; 1 Sam. xvi, 13, was only a designation of the person who should be king, but not an actual inauguration of him to the kingdom.

5. Kindness - This respect and affection. For as it is, an act of inhumanity to deny burial to the dead; so it is an act of mercy and kindness to bury them.

6. Kindness and truth - That is, true and real kindness; not in words only, but also in actions, as you have done to your king. I will requite - So far am I from being offended with you for this kindness to my late enemy.

7. Be valiant - Be not afraid lest the Philistines should punish you for this fact, but take good courage, I will defend you. For, &c. - Or, though your master Saul be dead, and so your hearts may faint, as if you were now sheep without a shepherd.

8. Abner - Tho' ambition and desire of rule, because he knew that Ishbosheth would have only the name of king, whilst he had the power.

9. Gilead - Largely so taken, for all the land of Israel beyond Jordan. Ashurites - That is, the tribe of Asher, as the Chaldee paraphrast and others understand it. Jezreel - A large and rich valley situate in the borders of the tribes of Zebulun, Issachar and Naphtali, and so put for them all. All Israel - Except Judah.

10. Two years - Namely, before the following war broke out, which continued five years.

12. Went out - To fight with David's army, and to bring back the rest of the kingdom to Saul's house.

13. Met - That is, met the opposite army, and put themselves in a posture for battle.

14. And play - That is, shew their prowess and dexterity in fighting together. He speaks like a vain-glorious and cruel man, and a soldier of fortune, that esteemed it a sport to see men wounding and killing one another. So this he designed, partly for their mutual recreation and trial of skill; and partly, that by this occasion they might be engaged in a battle. But he is unworthy the name of a man, who is thus prodigal of human blood.

16. By the head - By the hair of the head, which after their manner was of a considerable length. Helkath-kazzurim - Or, the field of rock; that is, of men who stood like rocks unmovable, each one dying upon the spot where he fought.

21. And take, &c. - If thou art ambitious to get a trophy or mark of thy valour, desist from me who am an old and experienced captain, and go to some young and raw soldier; try thy skill upon him, and take away his arms from him.

23. And died - So Asahel's swiftness, which he presumed on so much, only forwarded his fate! With it he ran upon his death, instead of running from it.

26. Bitterness - It will produce dreadful effects. Brethren - By nation and religion: whom therefore they should not pursue with so fierce a rage, as if they were pursuing the Philistines.

27. Unless, &c. - Unless thou hadst made the motion that they should fight, ver. 14. It was thou, not I, that gave the first occasion of this fight. Abner was the sole cause of this war; otherwise all things had been ended by an amicable agreement: which might have been made that very morning, if he had so pleased.

32. In Bethlehem - The rest they buried in the field of battle, but Asahel in the sepulchre of his father. Thus are distinctions made upon earth, even between the dust of some and of others! But in the resurrection no difference will be made but between good and bad; which will remain for ever.

## III

David's success and sons, ver. 1-5. Abner's quarrel with Isbosheth, ver. 6-11. His treaty with David, ver. 12-16. He undertakes to bring Israel over to David, ver. 17-21. Joab murders Abner, ver. 22-27. David's concern and mourning over him, ver. 28-39.

1. Long war - For five years longer: for it is probable, Isbosheth was made king presently upon Saul's death; and the other tribes did not submit to David before seven years were expired.

3. Geshur - A part of Syria, northward from the land of Israel. Her he married, as it may seem, in policy, that he might have a powerful friend and ally to assist him against Ishbosheth's party in the north, whilst himself opposed him in the southern parts. But he paid dear for making piety give place to policy, as the history of Absolom sheweth.

5. Eglah - This is added, either because she was of obscure parentage, and was known by no other title but her relation to David: or, because this was his first and most proper wife, best known by her other name of Michal, who, though she had no child by David after she scoffed at him for dancing before the ark, chap. vi, 23, yet might have one before that time. And she might be named the last, because she was given away from David, and married to another man. Six sons in seven years. Some have had as numerous an offspring, and with much more honour and comfort, by one wife. And we know not that any of the six were famous: but three were very infamous.

6. Strong - He used all his endeavours to support Saul's house: which is mentioned, to shew the reason of his deep resentment of the following aspersion.

12. Messengers - Who in his name might treat with David concerning his reconciliation with him. Thus God over-rules the passions of wicked men, to accomplish his own wise and holy purposes. And who then dare contend with that God who makes even his enemies to do his work, and destroy themselves? Whose, &c. - To whom doth this whole land belong, but to thee? Is it not thine by Divine right?

14. Ishbosheth - Whose consent was necessary, both to take her away from her present husband, and to persuade her to return to David. Hereby also David opened to him a door of hope for his reconciliation, lest being desperate he should hinder Abner in his present design. My wife - Who, though she was taken from me by force, and constrained to marry another, yet is my rightful wife. David demands her, both for the affection he still retained to her, and upon a political consideration that she might strengthen his title to the kingdom.

19. Benjamin - To these he particularly applies himself, because they might be thought most kind to Saul and his house, and most loath to let the kingdom go out of their own tribe; and therefore it was necessary that he should use all his art and power with them, to persuade them to a compliance with his design; and besides, they were a valiant tribe, and bordering upon Judah, and situate between them and the other tribes; and therefore the winning of them, would be of mighty concernment to bring in all the rest.

22. A troop - Of robbers, or Philistines, who taking advantage of the discord between the houses of Saul and David, made inroads into Judah.

29. Let it, &c. - But would not a resolute punishment of the murderer himself have become David better, than this passionate imprecation on his posterity?

30. Abishai - For though Joab only committed the murder, yet Abishai was guilty of it, because it was done with his consent, and counsel, and approbation. In battle - Which he did for his own necessary defense; and therefore it was no justification of this treacherous murder.

31. Joab - Him he especially obliged to it, to bring him to repentance for his sin, and to expose him to public shame. Followed - That is, attending upon his corps, and paying him that respect which was due to his quality. Though this was against the usage of kings, and might seem below David's dignity; yet it was now expedient to vindicate himself from all suspicion of concurrence in this action.

33. As a fool - That is, as a wicked man. Was he cut off by the hand of justice for his crimes? Nothing less; but by Joab's malice and treachery. It is a sad thing to die as a fool dieth, as they do that any way shorten their own days: and indeed all they that make no provision for another world.

34. Not bound - Thou didst not tamely yield up thyself to Joab, to be bound hand and foot at his pleasure. Joab did not overcome thee in an equal combat, nor durst he attempt thee in that way, as a general or soldier of any worth would have done. Wicked men - By the hands of froward, or perverse, or crooked men, by hypocrisy and perfidiousness, whereby the vilest coward may kill the most valiant person.

36. Pleased them - They were satisfied concerning David's integrity.

38. Know ye not, &c. - But how little, how mean are they made by death, who were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.

39. Weak - In the infancy of my kingdom, not well settled in it. The metaphor is taken from a young and tender child or plant. These men - Joab and Abishai, the sons of thy sister Zeruiah. Too hard - That is, too powerful. They have so great a command over all the soldiers, and so great favour with the people, that I cannot punish them without apparent hazard to my person and kingdom; especially, now when all the tribes, except Judah, are in a state of opposition against me. But although this might give some colour to the delay of their punishment, yet it was a fault that he did not do it within some reasonable time, both because this indulgence proceeded from a distrust of God's power and faithfulness; as if God could not make good his promise to him, against Joab and all his confederates; and because it was contrary to God's law, which severally requires the punishment of willful murderers. It was therefore carnal wicked policy, yea cruel pity that spared him. If the law had had its course against Joab, it is probable the murder of Ishbosheth, Ammon, and others, had been prevented. So truly was he in these, and some other respects, a bloody man, which may be observed to the glory of the Divine grace, in his forgiveness and conversion.

## IV

Two of his servants murder Ishbosheth, and bring his head to David, ver. 1-8. He puts them to death, ver. 9-52.

4. Jonathan had a son - This history is inserted as that which encouraged these men to this wicked murder, because Saul's family was now reduced to a low ebb; and if Isbosheth was dispatched, there would be none left, but a lame child, who was altogether unfit to manage the kingdom, and therefore the crown must necessarily come to David by their act and deed; for which they promised themselves no small recompense. Jezreel - The place of that last and fatal fight.

6. Fetched wheat - Which was laid up in publick granaries in the king's house, and was fetched thence by the captains and commanders of the army for the pay of their soldiers, who, in those ancient times were not paid in money, but in corn. Upon this pretense they were admitted into the house, and so went from room to room, to the place where the king lay.

12. David commanded. &c.But what a disappointment to Baanah and Rechab, was the sentence which David passed upon them! And such they will meet with, who think to serve the Son of David, by cruelty or injustice: who under colour of religion, outrage or murder of their brethren, think they do God service. However men may now canonize such methods of serving the church and the catholic cause, Christ will let them know another day, that Christianity was not designed to destroy humanity. And they who thus think to merit heaven, shall not escape the damnation of hell.

## V

David is anointed king by all the tribes, ver. 1-5. Takes the strong hold of Zion, ver. 6-10. David builds him an house; his kingdom is established, ver. 11, 12. Has more children, ver. 13- 16. Conquers the Philistines, ver. 17-25.

2. Shalt feed - That is, rule them, and take care of them, as a shepherd doth of his sheep, Psalm lxxviii, 70, 71. This expression, he useth to admonish David, that he was not made a king to advance his own glory, but for the good of his people; whom he ought to rule with all tenderness, and to watch over with all diligence.

3. A league - Whereby David obliged himself to rule them according to God's laws; and the people promised obedience to him.

6. Cannot come - They confided in the strength of their fortifications, which they thought so impregnable, that the blind and the lame were sufficient to defend them, against the most powerful assailant. And probably they set a parcel of blind and lame people, invalids or maimed soldiers, to make their appearance on the wall, in contempt of David and his men.

8. To the gutter - That is, whosoever scaleth the fort, or getteth up to the top of it, where the gutter was. That are hated - The Jebusites, and the lame, and the blind, Who had probably themselves

insulted him, and blasphemed God. He shall be - These words are fitly supplied out of 1 Chron. xi, 6, where they are expressed. They said &c. - That is, whence it became a proverb, or a common saying, used by David, and others, the blind and the lame Jebusites, were set to keep the house, that is, the fort of Zion; and to keep others from coming into it; but now they are shut out of it, and none of them, either of the Jebusites, or of blind and lame persons, shall be admitted to come into it again. Which David might ordain, to keep up the memory of this great exploit, and of the insolent carriage of the Jebusites.

9. Millo - Which seems to have been the town-hall or, state-house, near the wall of the city of Zion.

12. King over Israel - That he might be a blessing to them, and they might be happy under his administration.

13. David took, &c. - This may well be reckoned amongst David's miscarriages, the multiplication of wives being expresly forbidden to the king, Deut. xvii, 17. It seems to have been his policy, that hereby he might enlarge his family, and strengthen his interest by alliances with so many considerable families. But all these did not preserve him from coveting his neighbour's wife. Rather they inclined him to it: for men who have once broke the fence, will wander carelesly.

17. The hold - To some fortified place to which his people might conveniently resort from all places, and where he might intrench his army, which lay towards the Philistines.

20. Baal-perazim-Whither the Philistines were come from the valley of Rephraim, 1 Chron. xiv, 11. Baal-perazim, signifies the master of the breaches: So he ascribes all to God. As waters - As floods or rivers of waters, which break the banks, and overflow a land, and overturn all that stands in their way.

21. Images - When the ark fell into the hand of the Philistines, it consumed them: but when these images fell into the hands of Israel, they could not save themselves from being consumed.

22. And spread themselves - The expression intimates, that they were very numerous, and made a very formidable appearance. So we read, Rev. xx, 9, of the church's enemies going up on the breadth of the earth. But the wider they spread themselves, the fairer mark they are for God's arrows.

23. Go up - Directly against them, as the following words explain it. Behind - Where they least expect thee; God's purposes and promises do not exclude men's endeavours.

24. The sound - A noise as it were of persons walking upon the tops of them, which I shall cause; and by this sign, both thou shalt he assured that I am coming to help thee; and the Philistines shall be affrighted, and not perceive the noise of thy army, until thou art upon them. Bestir - Fall upon them.

## VI

The ark is brought from the house of Abinadab, ver. 1-5. Its progress stopped by the death of Uzzah, ver. 6-11. It is brought into the city of David with solemn rejoicings, ver. 12-19. David answers the reproof of Michal, ver. 20-23.

2. On which, &c. - That is, by, or before which, they were to present their prayers to God for counsel and succor upon all occasions. And this is mentioned here as the reason why David put himself and his people to so great trouble and charge, because it was to fetch up the choicest treasure which they had.

3. They set, &c. - Being taught, and encouraged to do so, by the example of the Philistines, who did so without any token of God's displeasure upon them for so doing. But they did not sufficiently consider, that God might wink at the Philistines, because they were ignorant of God's laws; and yet be angry with them for the same thing, because they knew, or might have known the law of God, which commanded the priests to bear it upon their shoulders. But their present transports of joy of the happy change of their affairs, and their greedy desire of having the ark of God removed, made them inconsiderate. In Gibeah - Or, on the hill, as 1 Sam. vii, 1.

5. Played before the Lord - Public joy should always be as before the Lord, with an eye to him, and terminating in him. Otherwise it is no better than public madness, and the source of all manner of wickedness.

7. He died - This may seem very severe, considering his intention was pious, and his transgression not great. But, besides that, men are improper Judges of the actions of God; and that God's judgments are always just, though sometimes obscure: it is reasonable, God should make some present examples of his high displeasure against sins, seemingly small; partly, for the demonstration of his own exact and impartial holiness; partly, for the establishment of discipline, and for the greater terror and caution of mankind, who are very prone to have slight thoughts of sin, and to give way to small sins, and thereby to be led on to greater; all which is, or may be prevented by such instances of severity: and consequently there is more of God's mercy, than of his justice, in such actions, because the justice is confined to one particular person, but the benefit of it common to mankind in that, and all future ages.

8. Displeased - Or, grieved, both for the sin, and for God's heavy judgment; whereby their hopes were dashed, and their joys interrupted. Perez-uzzah - That is, the breach of Uzzah.

10. House of Obed-edom - Obed-edom knew what slaughter the ark had made among the Philistines and the Bethshemites. He saw Uzzah struck dead; yet invites it to his house, and opens his doors without fear, knowing it was a savour of death, only to them that treated it ill. "O the courage, says Bishop Hall, of an honest and faithful heart! Nothing can make God otherwise than amiable to him: even his justice is lovely."

11. The Lord blessed, &c. - The same hand that punished Uzzah's presumption, rewarded Obed-edom's humble boldness. None ever had, or ever shall have reason to say, that it is in vain to serve God. Piety is the best friend to prosperity. His household too shared in the blessing. It is good living in a family that entertains the ark; for all about it will fare the better for it.

14. Danced - To express his thankfulness to God by his outward carriage, according to the manner of those times. Linen ephod - The usual habit of the priests and Levites, in their sacred ministrations yet sometimes worn by others, as it was by the young child Samuel; and so David, who laid by his royal robes, and put on this robe to declare, that although he was king of Israel, yet he willingly owned himself to be the Lord's minister and servant.

16. Despised - As one of a base and mean spirit, that knew not how to carry himself with that majesty which became his place.

17. David had pitched - For Moses tabernacle was still at Gibeon, 1 Chron. xvi, 39; xxi, 29; 2 Chron. i, 3, which David left there, because he designed to build a temple at Jerusalem with all speed.

18. He blessed - That is, he heartily and solemnly prayed to God for his blessing upon them: which he did both as a prophet, and as their king, to whom by office it belongs, by all means, to seek his people's welfare.

20. Bless his household - Ministers must not think, that their public performances will excuse them from family worship: but when they have blessed the public assembly, they are to return and bless their own household. And none is too great to do this. It is the work of angels to worship God; and therefore certainly can be no disparagement to the greatest of men. Who uncovered - By stripping himself of his royal robes, that he might put on a Levitical ephod.

21. Before the Lord - In his presence and service, which though contemptible to thee, is, and ever shall be honourable in mine eyes. Who chose - Who took away the honour from him and his, and transferred it unto me, whereby he hath obliged me to love and serve him with all my might.

22. More vile than thus - The more we are vilified for well doing, the more resolute therein we should be, binding our religion the closer to us, for the endeavours of Satan's agents to shame us out of it. Be base - I will always be ready to abase myself before God, and think nothing to mean to stoop to for his honour. Be had in honour - So far will they be from despising me on this account, that they will honour me the more.

23. Therefore - Because of her proud and petulant speech and carriage to David, which God justly punished with barrenness. No child - After this time.

## VII

Nathan approves David's design of building an house for God, ver. 1-3. God forbids it, but promises to bless him and his seed, ver. 4-17. His prayer and thanksgiving, ver. 18-29.

1. Sat - That is, was settled in the house which Hiram's men had built for him, then he reflected upon the unsettled state of the ark.

2. Curtains - That is, in a tent or tabernacle, ver. 6, composed of several curtains.

3. Nathan said - Pursue thy intentions, and build an house for the ark. The design being pious and the thing not forbidden by God, Nathan hastily approves it, before he had consulted God about it, as both he and David ought to have done in a matter of so great moment. And therefore Nathan meets with this rebuke, that he is forced to acknowledge his error, and recant it. For the holy prophets did not speak all things by prophetic inspiration, but some things by an human spirit.

4. The word of the Lord came - Because David's mistake was pious, and from an honest mind, God would not suffer him to lie long in it.

5. Shalt thou - That is, thou shalt not.

6. Tent and tabernacle - These two seem thus to be distinguished, the one may note the curtains and hangings within, the other the frame of boards, and coverings upon it.

8. My servant - Lest David should be too much discouraged, or judge himself neglected of God, as one thought unworthy of so great an honour, God here gives him the honourable title of his servant, thereby signifying that he accepted of his service, and good intentions.

10. Appoint - That is, I will make room for them, whereas hitherto they have been much distressed by their enemies. Or, I will establish a place for them, that is, I will establish them in their place or land. My people - Among the favours which God had vouchsafed, and would vouchsafe to David, he reckons his blessings to Israel, because they were great blessings to David; partly, because the strength and happiness of a king consists in the multitude and happiness of his people; and partly, because David was a man of a public spirit, and therefore no less affected with Israel's felicity than with his own. Before time - Namely in Egypt.

11. And as since - Nor as they did under the Judges. But all this is to be understood with a condition, except they should notoriously forsake God. And have caused thee - That is, and as until this time in which I have given thee rest. But these words, though according to our translation they be enclosed in the same parenthesis with the foregoing clauses, may be better put without it, and taken by themselves. For the foregoing words in this verse, and in ver. 10, all concern the people of Israel; but these words concern David alone, to whom the speechs returns after a short digression concerning the people of Israel. And they may be rendered thus. And I will cause thee to rest, &c. - More fully and perfectly than yet thou dost. He will, &c. - For thy good intentions to make him an house, he will make thee an house, a sure house, that is, he will increase and uphold thy posterity, and continue thy kingdom in thy family.

12. And when, &c. - When the time of thy life shall expire. This phrase implies, that his days shall be prolonged to the usual course of nature, and not cut off in the midst, by any violent or untimely death. I will set - I will set up in thy throne, thy posterity, first Solomon, and then others successively, and at last the Messiah. So the following words may be understood, part of his posterity in general, part of Solomon, and part of Christ only, according to the different nature of the several passages.

13. He shall - This is meant literally of Solomon, who alone did build the material house or temple; but ultimately of Christ, who is the builder of God's spiritual house or temple. For my name - That is, for my service, and glory. For ever - This is not meant of Solomon, for his kingdom was not for ever. But it is to be understood of David's posterity, in general, and with special respect to Christ, in whose person the kingdom was to be lodged for ever. 14. His father - I will carry myself towards him as a father, with all affection, and I will own him as my son. This is intended both of Solomon, as a type of Christ; and of Christ himself as is evident from Heb. i, 5. If he commit - This agrees only to Solomon and some others of David's posterity; but not to Christ, who never committed iniquity, as Solomon did, who therein was no type of Christ, and therefore this branch is terminated in Solomon; whereas in those things wherein Solomon was a type of Christ, the sense passes through Solomon to Christ. Rod of men - With such rods as are gentle and moderate, and suited to man's weakness.

15. My mercy - That is, Or, my kindness, that is, the kingdom which I have mercifully promised to thee and thine. From Saul - In regard of his posterity, for the kingdom was continued to his person during life.

16. Before thee - Thine eyes in some sort beholding it: for he lived to see his wise son Solomon actually placed in the throne, with reputation and general applause, which was in itself a good presage of the continuance of the kingdom in his family: and being considered, together with the

infallible certainty of God's promise to him and his, (of the accomplishment whereof, this was an earnest,) gave him good assurance thereof; especially considering that he had his eyes and thoughts upon the Messiah, Psalm cx, 1, &c. whose day he saw by faith, as Abraham did, John viii, 56, and whom he knew that God would raise out of the fruit of his loins to sit on his throne, and that for ever: and so the eternity of his kingdom is rightly said to be before him.

18. In - Into the tabernacle. Sat - He might sit for a season whilst he was meditating upon these things, and then alter his posture and betake himself to prayer. Who am I, &c. - How infinitely unworthy am I and my family of this great honour and happiness!

19. This - Which thou hast already done for me, that thou hast brought me hitherto, to that pitch of honour, and peace, and prosperity, in which through thy favour I now stand. Was small - Though it was more than I deserved, or could expect, yet thou didst not think it enough for thee to give to me. A great while - For many future ages, and indeed to all eternity. Is this, &c. - Do men use to deal so kindly with their inferiors, as thou hast done with me? No: this is the prerogative of divine grace.

20. David say - Either in a way of gratitude and praise, words cannot express my obligations to thee, nor my sense of these obligations: Or in a way of prayer. What can I ask of thee more than thou hast freely done? Thou knowest - Thou knowest my deep sense of thy favours, and my obligations to thee. And my condition and necessities, what I do or may need hereafter; and as thou knowest this, so I doubt not thou wilt supply me.

21. Thy word's sake - That thou mightest fulfil thy promises made to me, and thereby demonstrate thy faithfulness. Own heart - Or thy own mere liberality and good pleasure, without any desert of mine. So far was David, though a very gracious man, from thinking his actions meritorious.

22. Great - Both in power and in goodness, as appears by the great and good things which thou hast done for me.

24. Confirmed - Partly, by thy promises, and that sure covenant which thou hast made with them: and partly, by thy glorious works wrought on their behalf, as it appears this day. Their God - In a peculiar manner, and by special relation and covenant: for otherwise he is the God and father of all things.

26. Let thy name - That is, do thou never cease to manifest thyself to be the God and governor of Israel.

27. This prayer, &c. - That prayer that is found in the tongue only will not please God. It must be found in the heart. That must be lifted up and poured out before God.

28. That God - That God who hast declared thyself to be Israel's God, and in particular my God.

29. Continue forever, &c. - When Christ for ever sat down on the right-hand of God, and received all possible assurance, that his seed and throne should be as the days of heaven, then this prayer was abundantly answered.

## VIII

David subdues the Philistines and Moabites, ver. 1-2. Smites Hadadezer, and the Syrians, ver. 3-8. Dedicates the presents he had received and the spoils to God, ver. 9-12. Conquers the Syrians again, and the Edomites, ver. 13, 14. His administration of justice and chief officers, ver. 15-18,

1. And David took - Gath and her towns, as it is expressed in the parallel place, 1 Chron. xviii, 1. Which are called Metheg-ammah, or the bridle of Ammah, Gath was situate in the mountain of Ammah; and because this being the chief city of the Philistines, and having a king, which none of the rest had, was the bridle which had hitherto kept the Israelites in subjection.

2. Moab - For although the king of Moab, out of hatred to Saul, gave protection to his parents, 1 Sam. xxii, 3, 4, yet the Moabites were perpetual and sworn enemies to the Israelites, who therefore were forbidden to admit them into the congregation of the Lord. And though God commanded them in their march to Canaan, to spare the Moabites, yet afterwards they proved fierce enemies to God and his people, and thereby provoked God to alter his carriage towards them. Measured them - That is, having conquered the land, he made an estimate of it, and distributed the towns and people into three parts. Casting down - Overthrowing their towns, and utterly destroying their people in manner following. And now that prophecy, Num. xxiv, 17, was accomplished.

3. As he went - David, remembering the grant which God had made to his people of all the land as far as Euphrates, and having subdued his neighbouring enemies, went to recover his rights, and stablish his dominion as far as Euphrates.

4. Seven hundred - Or, seven hundred companies of horsemen, that is, in all seven thousand; as it is 1 Chron. xviii, 4, there being ten in each company, and each ten having a ruler or captain. Houghed - That is, cut the sinews of their legs, that they might be useless for war.

5. Of Damascus - That is, who were subject to Damascus, the chief city of Syria.

7. On the servants - Or rather, which were with the servants, that is, committed to their custody, as being kept in the king's armoury: for it is not probable they carried them into the field.

8. From Betah, &c. - In 1 Chron. xviii, 8, it is, from Tibhath, and from Chun. Either therefore the same cities were called by several names, as is usual, the one by the Hebrew, the other by the Syrians, or those were two other cities, and so the brass was taken out of these four cities.

14. The Lord preserved, &c. - All David's victories were typical of the success of the gospel over the kingdom of Satan, in which the Son of David rode forth, conquering and to conquer, and will reign 'till he has brought down all opposing rule, principality and power.

16. Recorder - The treasurer, who examined all the accounts, and kept records of them.

17. Scribe - Or, secretary of state.

18. Cherethites, &c. - The Cherethites and Pelethites were undoubtedly soldiers, and such as were eminent for their valour and fidelity. Most probable they were the king's guards, which consisted of these two bands, who might be distinguished either by their several weapons, or by the differing time or manner of their service. They are supposed to be thus called either, first, from their office, which was upon the king's command to cut off or punish offenders, and to preserve the king's person, as their names in the Hebrew tongue may seem to imply. Or, secondly, from some country, or place to which they had relation. As for the Cherithites, it is certain they were ether a branch of the Philistines, or a people neighbouring to them, and so might the Pelethites be too, though that be not related in scripture. And these Israelites and soldiers of David might be so called, either because they went and lived with David when he dwelt in those parts or, for some notable exploit against, or victory over these people.

## IX

David sends for Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, ver. 1-6. Restores to him all the land that was Saul's, and appoints him to eat at his own table, ver. 7-13.

1. Of Saul - He saith not of the house of Jonathan, for he knew not of any son he had left, and therefore thought his kindness and obligation was to pass to the next of his kindred. As for Mephibosheth, he was very young and obscure, and possibly concealed by his friends, lest David should cut him off, as hath been usual among princes.

5. Machir - This Machir appears to have been a generous man, who entertained Mephibosheth out of mere compassion, not of disaffection to David: for afterwards we find him kind to David himself, when he fled from Absalom. David now little thought, that the time would come, when he himself should need his assistance. Let us be forward to give, because we know not what we ourselves may sometime want.

8. Bowed himself - It is good to have the heart humbled under humbling providences. If when divine providence brings our condition down, divine grace brings our spirits down, we shall be easy.

## X

David's ambassadors are abused by Hanun, ver. 1-4. The Ammonites prepare for war and are routed, ver. 5-14. Their allies, the Syrians rally and are defeated again, ver. 15-19.

2. David sent - There had hitherto been friendship between David and him: and therefore the spoils of the children of Ammon are mentioned, chap. viii, 12, by way of anticipation, and with respect to the story here following.

4. Shaved - To fasten this is a reproach upon them, and to make them ridiculous and contemptible. Cut off, &c. - This was worse than the former, because the Israelites wore no breeches, and so their nakedness was hereby uncovered.

19. And served them - And thus at length was fulfilled the promise made to Abraham, and repeated to Joshua, that the borders of Israel should extend as far as the river Euphrates. The son of David sent his ambassadors, his apostles and ministers, to the Jewish church and nation. But they intreated them shamefully, as Hanun did David's, mocked them, abused them, slew them. And this it was that filled the measure of their iniquity, and brought upon them ruin without remedy.

## XI

David commits adultery with Bathsheba, ver. 1-5. endeavours to father the child upon Uriah, ver. 6-13. Contrives the death of Uriah, ver. 14-25. Marries Bathsheba, ver. 26, 27.

1. After - When that year ended, and the next begun, which was in the spring time. When kings - Which is, when the ground is fit for the march of soldiers, and brings forth provision for man and beast. Tarried at Jerusalem - Had he been now in his post, at the head of his forces be had been out of the way of temptation.

2. Arose from off his bed - Where he had lain, and slept for some time. And the bed of sloth often proves the bed of lust. Washing herself - In a bath, which was in her garden. Probably from some ceremonial pollution.

3. He inquired - Instead of suppressing that desire which the sight of his eyes had kindled, he seeks rather to feed it; and first inquires who she was; that if she were unmarried, he might make her either his wife or his concubine.

4. Took her - From her own house into his palace, not by force, but by persuasion. Lay with her - See how all the way to sin is down hill! When men begin, they cannot soon stop themselves.

8. Go down - Not doubting but he would there converse with his wife, and so cover their sin and shame.

9. The servants - With the king's guard. This he did, by the secret direction of God's wise providence, who would bring David's sin to light.

10. Camest - Wearied with hard service and travel, nor did I expect or desire that thou shouldest now attend upon my person, or keep the watch.

11. The ark - This it seems, was now carried with them for their encouragement and direction, as was usual. Fields - In tents which are in the fields. His meaning is, now, when God's people are in a doubtful and dangerous condition, it becomes me to sympathize with them, and to abstain even from lawful delights.

15. He arose - So far is David from repenting, that he seeks to cover one sin with another. How are the beginnings of sin to be dreaded! For who knows where it will end? David hath sinned, therefore Uriah must die! That innocent, valiant, gallant man, who was ready to die for his prince's honour, must die by his prince's hand! See how fleshly lusts war against the soul, and what devastations they make in that war! How they blind the eyes, fear the conscience, harden the heart, and destroy all sense of honour and justice!

27. The mourning - Which was seven days. Nor could the nature of the thing admit of longer delay, lest the too early birth of the child might discover David's sin. Bare a son - By which it appears, That David continued in the state of impenitency for divers months together; and this notwithstanding his frequent attendance upon God's ordinances. Which is an eminent instance of the corruption of man's nature, of the deceitfulness of sin, and of the tremendous judgment of God in punishing one sin, by delivering a man up to another.

## XII

Nathan delivers and applies his parable, ver. 1-12. David repents and is forgiven, but punished, ver. 13. 14. The sickness and death of the child, with David's behaviour on the occasion, ver. 15-23. The birth of Solomon, ver. 24-25. The taking of Rabbah, ver. 26-31.

1. The Lord sent - When the ordinary means did not awaken David to repentance, God takes an extraordinary course. Thus the merciful God pities and prevents him who had so horribly forsaken God. He said - He prudently ushers in his reproof with a parable, after the manner of the eastern nations, that so he might surprize David, and cause him unawares to give sentence against himself.

2. Many flocks - Noting David's many wives and concubines.

3. Bought - As men then used to buy their wives: or, had procured.

5. Is worthy to die - This seems to be more than the fact deserved, or than he had commission to inflict for it, Exod. xxii, 1. But it is observable, that David now when he was most indulgent to himself, and to his own sin, was most severe and even unjust to others; as appears by this passage, and the following relation, ver. 31, which was done in the time of David's impenitent continuance in his sin.

7. Thus saith the Lord God - Nathan now speaks, not as a petitioner for a poor man, but as an ambassador from the great God.

9. To be thy wife - To marry her whom he had defiled, and whose husband he had slain, was an affront upon the ordinance of marriage, making that not only to palliate, but in a manner to consecrate such villainies. In all this he despised the word of the Lord; (so it is in the Hebrew.) Not only his commandment in general, but the particular word of promise, which God had before sent him by Nathan, that he would build him an house: which sacred promise if he had had a due value for, he would not have polluted his house with lust and blood.

10. Never depart - During the residue of thy life.

11. Own house - From thy own children and family. Thine eyes - Openly, so that thou shalt know it as certainly as if thou didst see it, and yet not be able to hinder it. And give them - I shall by my providence, give him power over them. neighbour - To one who is very near thee. But God expresseth this darkly, that the accomplishment of it might not be hindered.

13. I have sinned - How serious this confession was, we may see, Psalm li, 1-19. Put away thy sin - That is, so far as concerns thy own life. Not die - As by thy own sentence, ver. 5, thou dost deserve, and may expect to be done by my immediate stroke.

16. Besought - Supposing the threatening might be conditional, and so the execution of it prevented by prayer. Went - Into his closet.

17. Elders - The chief officers of his kingdom and household. He would not - This excessive mourning did not proceed simply from the fear of the loss of the child; but from a deep sense of his sin, and the divine displeasure manifested herein.

18. Seventh day - From the beginning of the distemper.

20. And came - That is, to the tabernacle, to confess his sin before the Lord, to own his justice in this stroke, to deprecate his just displeasure, to acknowledge God's rich mercy, in sparing his own life; and to offer such sacrifices as were required in such cases.

23. I fast - Seeing fasting and prayer cannot now prevail with God for his life. I shall go to him - Into the state of the dead in which he is, and into heaven, where I doubt not I shall find him.

24. His wife - Who was now much dejected, both for her former sin, and for the loss of the child. Loved him - That is, the Lord declared to David, that he loved his son, notwithstanding the just cause David had given to God to alienate his affections from him.

25. Jedidiah - That is, beloved of the Lord. Because - Either, because of the Lord's love to him, or because the Lord commanded him to do so.

26. Royal city - That is, that part of the city where was the king's palace; though now it seems he was retired to a strong fort.

27. Of waters - Rabbah was so called because it was encompassed with water.

28. Take it - For having taken one part of the city, he concluded the remaining part of it could not long stand out. Lest - Lest I have the honour of taking it.

30. The weight - Or rather, the price whereof, &c. For the same words both in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, are used, to signify either weight, or price. And the addition of precious stones, which are never valued by the weight of gold, makes this signification most probable. Moreover, the weight might seem too great either for the king of Ammon, or for David to wear it upon his head.

31. The people - The words are indefinite, and therefore not necessarily to be understood of all the people; but of the men of war, and especially of those who had been the chief actors of that villainous action against David's ambassadors, and of the dreadful war ensuing upon it; for which, they deserved severe punishments. Altho' indeed there seems to have been too much rigor used; especially, because these deaths were inflicted not only upon those counsellors, who were the only authors of that vile usage of the ambassadors; but upon some number of the people. And therefore it is probable, David exercised this cruelty whilst his heart was hardened, and impenitent; and when he was bereaved of that good spirit of God, which would have taught him more mercy. Saws - He sawed them to death of which punishment, we have examples both in scripture, and in other authors. Brick-kiln - Or, made them to pass through the furnace of Malchen: that is, of Moloch; punishing them with their own sin, and with the same kind of punishment which they had inflicted upon their own children.

## XIII

Amnon ravishes Tamar, ver. 1-20. Absalom kills him, ver. 21-29. David mourns: Absalom flees to Geshur, ver. 30-39.

1. A sister - His sister by father and mother.

2. A virgin - And therefore diligently kept, so he could not get private converse with her.

5. My sister - So he calls her, to prevent the suspicion of any dishonest design upon so near a relation. At her hand - Pretending, his stomach was so nice, that he could eat nothing but what he saw dressed, and that by a person whom he much esteemed.

9. Out - Out of the frying-pan into the dish.

10. Chamber - Amnon lying upon his couch in one chamber where the company were with him, where also she made the cakes before him, first sends all out of that room, and then rises from his couch, and, upon some pretense, goes into another secret chamber.

12. Brother - Whom nature both teaches to abhor such thoughts and obliges to defend me from such a mischief with thy utmost hazard, if another should attempt it. Force - Thou shouldst abhor it, if I were willing; but to add violence, is abominable. Israel - Among God's people who are taught better things; who also will be infinitely reproached for such a base action.

13. Shame - How can I either endure or avoid the shame? Fools - That is, contemptible to all the people, whereas now thou art heir apparent of the crown. Withhold - This she spoke, because she thought her royal father would dispense with it, upon this extraordinary occasion, to save his first-born son's life:

15. Hated her - By the just judgment of God both upon Amnon and David, that so the sin might be made publick, and way for the succeeding tragedies.

16. No cause - For me to go. Greater thou the other - This she might truly say, because though the other was in itself a greater sin, yet this was an act of greater cruelty, and a greater calamity to her because it exposed her to publick infamy and contempt, and besides, it turned a private offense into a publick scandal, to the great dishonour of God and of his people, and especially of all the royal family.

18. Garment - Of embroidered work.

19. Put ashes - To signify her grief for some calamity which had befallen her, and what that was, concurring circumstances easily discovered. Head - In token of grief and shame, as if she were unable and ashamed to shew her face. Crying - To manifest her abhorrency of the fact, and that it was not done by her consent.

20. Been with thee - Behold, and imitate the modesty of scripture expressions. Brother - Wherefore thou must forgive and forgot the injury; therefore thy disgracing of him will be a blot to us all; therefore thou wilt not get right from David against him, because he is as near and dear to him as thou; therefore thy dishonour is the less, because thou wast not abused by any mean person, but by a king's son; therefore this evil must be born, because it cannot be revenged: and thus he covers his design of taking vengeance upon him at the first opportunity. Regard not - So as to torment thyself. Desolate - Through shame and dejection of mind, giving her self up to solitude and retirement.

21. Wroth - With Amnon: whom yet he did not punish, at least so severely as he should either from the consciousness of his own guilt in the like kind; or, from that foolish indulgence which he often shewed to his children.

22. Spake - That is, he said nothing at all to him, about that business. He neither debated it with him, nor threatened him for it; but seemed willing to pass it by with brotherly kindness. If he had wholly forborne all discourse with him, it would have raised jealousies in Amnon and David.

23. Two years - This circumstance of time is noted, as an aggravation of Absalom's malice, which was so implacable: and as an act of policy, that both Amnon and David might more securely comply with his desires.

26. Let Amnon - For the king designed (as the following words shew) to keep him at home with him, as being his eldest son, and heir of his kingdom: otherwise Absalom would never have made particular mention of him; which now he was forced to do. Nor did this desire of Amnon's presence want specious pretenses, as that seeing the king would not, he who was next to him might, honour him with his company; and that this might be a publick token of friendship between him and his brother, notwithstanding the former occasion of difference.

27. Pressed him - It is strange that his urgent desire of Amnon's company raised no suspicion in so wise a king; but God suffered him to be blinded that he might execute his judgments upon David, and bring upon Amnon the just punishment of his lewdness.

28. Merry - When he least suspects, and will be most unable to prevent the evil. I - I who am the king's son, and, when Amnon is gone, his heir: who therefore shall easily obtain pardon for you, and will liberally reward you.

29. Commanded - Now the threatened sword is drawn in David's house, which will not depart from it. His eldest son falls by it, thro' his own wickedness, and his father by his connivance is accessory to it.

37. Talmai - His mother's father, that he might have present protection and sustenance from him; and that by his mediation he might obtain his father's pardon.

39. Go forth - And could not he recalled, to visit him, or to send for him. What amazing weakness was this! At first he could not find in his heart, to do justice to the ravisher of his sister! And now he can almost find in his heart to receive into favour the murderer of his brother? How can we excuse David from the sin of Eli; who honoured his sons more than God?

## XIV

The story told David of the widow of Tekoah, ver. 1-20. Absalom is brought back to Jerusalem, but not to court, ver. 21- 24. An account of Absalom's person and children, ver. 21-27. He is at length introduced to David, ver. 28-33.

1. Was towards - He desired to see him, but was ashamed to shew kindness to one whom God's law and his own conscience obliged him to punish; he wanted therefore a fair pretense, which therefore Joab gave him.

2. Anoint - As they used to do when they were out of a mourning state.

5. Widow - One of them who most need thy compassion, and whom thou art by God's law obliged in a singular manner to relieve.

9. Be guiltless - If through thy forgetfulness or neglect of this my just cause, my adversaries prevail and destroy my son, my desire is, that God would not lay it to the king's charge, but rather to me and mine, so the king may be exempted thereby. Whereby she insinuates, that such an omission will bring guilt upon him; and yet most decently orders her phrase so as not to seem to blame or threaten the king. This sense seems best to agree with David's answer, which shew's that she desired some farther assurances of the king's care.

11. Remember - Remember the Lord, in whose presence thou hast made me this promise, and who will be a witness against thee, if thou breakest it.

13. Wherefore then - If thou shouldst not permit the avengers of blood to molest me, or to destroy my son, who are but two persons; how unreasonable is it that thou shouldest proceed in thy endeavours to avenge Amnon's blood upon Absalom, whose death would be grievous to the whole commonwealth of Israel, all whose eyes are upon him as the heir of the crown, and a wise, and valiant, and amiable person, unhappy only in this one act of killing Amnon, which was done

upon an high provocation, and whereof thou thyself didst give the occasion by permitting Amnon to go unpunished? Faulty - By thy word, and promise, and oath given to me for my son, thou condemnest thyself for not allowing the same equity towards thy own son. It is true, Absalom's case was widely different from that which she had supposed. But David was too well affected to him, to remark that difference, and was more desirous than she could be, to apply that favourable judgment to his own son, which he had given concerning hers.

14. We - We shall certainly die, both thou, O king, who art therefore obliged to take care of thy successor, Absalom; and Absalom, who, if he do not die by the hand of justice, must shortly die by the necessity of nature: and Amnon too must have died in the common way of all flesh, if Absalom had not cut him off. Respect - So far as to exempt him from this common law of dying. Not expelled - He hath given laws to this purpose, that the man-slayer who is banished should not always continue in banishment, but upon the High-priest's death return to his own city.

15. The people - The truth is, I was even forced to this bold address to thee by the disposition of thy people, who are discontented at Absalom's perpetual banishment, lest, if Absalom by his father-in-law's assistance invade the land, the people who have a great kindness for him, and think he is very hard used, should take up arms.

16. Hear - For I know the king is so wise and just, that I assure myself of audience and acceptation. Deliver - To grant my request concerning my son, and consequently the peoples petition concerning Absalom. My son - Implying that her life was bound up in the life of her son, and that she could not outlive his death; (and supposing that it might be David's case also, and would therefore touch him in a tender part, though it were not proper to say it expressly:) and thereby suggesting, that the safety and comfort of the people of Israel, depended upon Absalom's restitution. Inheritance - That is, out of that land which God gave to his people to be their inheritance, and in which alone God hath settled the place of his presence and worship: whereby she intimates the danger of Absalom's living in a state of separation from God, and his house, amongst idolaters.

17. Angel - In wisdom, and justice, and goodness. Therefore - Because thou art so wise and gracious to those who in strict justice deserve punishment, God will own and stand by thee in this thy act of grace: or God will prosper thee in thy enterprizes.

19. Of Joab - Hast thou not said and done this by Joab's direction. Said - It is even so, thou hast discovered the truth. These words - As to the substance of them, but not as to all the expressions; for these were to be varied as the king's answer gave occasion.

20. To fetch - That is, to propose his, and the peoples desire of Absalom's restitution in this parabolical manner. In the earth - Or, in this land, in all thy kingdom; all the counsels and devices of thy subjects.

22. Fulfilled - But it seems David had no power to dispense with God's laws, nor to spare any whom God appointed him to destroy: for the laws of God bound the kings and rulers, as well as the people of Israel. How justly did God make this man, whom he had so sinfully spared, a scourge to him?

24. Let him turn - Lest whilst be shewed some mercy to Absalom, he should seem to approve of his sin. Likewise by this means Absalom might be drawn to a more thorough humiliation and repentance.

25. Beauty - This is noted as the occasion of his pride, and of the people's affection to him.

26. Weighed - Others understand this not of the weight, but of the price of his hair.

27. Sons - All which died not long after they were born, as may be gathered from chap. xviii, 18, where it is said, that Absalom had no son.

32. Kill me - For it is better for me to die, than to want the sight and favour of my dear father. Thus he insinuates himself into his father's affections, by pretending such respect and love to him It seems that by this time Absalom having so far recovered his father's favour, began to grow upon him, and take so much confidence as to stand upon his own justification, as if what he had done, had been no iniquity, at least not such as to deserve death. See how easily wise parents may be imposed on by their children, when they are blindly fond of them.

33. Kissed - Did the bowels of a father prevail to reconcile him to an impenitent son? And shall penitent sinners question the compassion of him who is the Father of mercy? If Ephraim bemoan himself, God soon bemoans him, with all the expressions of fatherly tenderness. He is a dear son, a pleasant child.

## XV

Absalom steals the hearts of the people, ver. 1-6. He conspires against David, ver. 7-12. David flies from Jerusalem, ver. 13-18. He confers with Ittai, and passes over Kidron, ver. 19- 23. Sends back Zadok with the ark, ver. 24-29. His prayer on this occasion, ver. 30, 31. He concerts with Hushai, ver. 32-37.

1. Prepared - As being the king's eldest son, now Amnon was dead; for Chileab, who was his eldest brother, chap. iii, 3, was either dead, or incapable of the government. And this course he knew would draw the eyes of the people to him, and make them conclude that David intended him for his successor.

2. Early - Thereby making a shew of solicitude for the good of the public, and of every private person. Called him - Preventing him with the offers of his assistance. And as if he were ready to make particular enquiry into the state of his cause.

3. See - Upon some very slight hearing of their cause, he approved it, that he might oblige all. No man - None such as will do thee justice. The other sons and relations of the king, and the rest of the Judges and rulers under him and them, are wholly corrupted; or, at least not careful and diligent as they should be: and my father being grown in years, is negligent of publick affairs. It is the way of turbulent, aspiring men, to reproach the government they are under. Even David himself, the best of kings, could not escape the worst of censures.

7. After forty years - From the change of the government, into a monarchy, which was about ten years before David began to reign. So this fell out about the thirtieth year of his reign.

9. Hebron - This place he chose as being an eminent city, and next to Jerusalem, the chief of the tribe of Judah, and the place where his father began his kingdom, which he took for a good omen. And where it is probable he had secured many friends. It was also at a convenient distance from Jerusalem.

11. Called - Such as Absalom had picked out as fit for his purpose; such as were of some reputation with the king and people, which would give a countenance to his undertaking, and give

occasion to people at first to think that this was done by his father's consent, as being now aged, and infirm, and willing to resign the kingdom to him. It is no new thing, for good men to be made use of by designing men to put a colour upon ill practices.

12. Sacrifices - Which he did not in devotion to God; but merely that upon this pretense he might call great numbers of people together.

14. Let us flee - For though the fort of Zion was strong, and he might have defended himself there; yet he had not laid in provisions for a long siege; and, if he had been once besieged there, Absalom would have got speedy possession of his whole kingdom; whereas if he marched abroad, he might raise a considerable army for his defense. Besides, the greatest part of Jerusalem could not be well defended against him.

16. After him - Or, on foot, which the king chose to do, to humble himself under the hand of God; to encourage his companions in this hard and comfortless march; and to move compassion in his people towards him. Concubines - For he supposed that their sex would protect them, and their relation to David would gain them some respect, or at least, safety from his son.

17. Far off - At some convenient distance, tho' not very far.

18. Gittites - Or rather strangers, as Ittai their head is called, ver. 19, and they are called his brethren, ver. 20. Probably they were Philistines by birth, born in the city or territory of Gath, as the following words imply, who by David's counsel, and example, were won to embrace the true religion, and had given good proof of their military skill, and valour, and fidelity to the king.

19. Thy place - To Jerusalem, where thy settled abode now is. The king - With Absalom who is now made king. An exile - Not much concerned in our affairs, and therefore not fit to be involved in our troubles.

20. Brethren - Thy countrymen the Gittites, ver. 18. Mercy, &c. - Since I am now unable to recompense thy kindness and fidelity to me, my hearty prayer to God is, that he would shew to thee his mercy, in blessing thee with all sorts of blessings, and his faithfulness in making good all these promises which he had made, not to Israelites only, but to all true hearted proselytes, such as thou art.

21. Will thy servant be - He is a friend indeed, who loves at all times, and will cleave to us in adversity. Thus should we cleave to the Son of David, that neither life, nor death may separate us from his love.

22. Little ones - For being so deeply engaged for David, he durst not leave his little ones to Absalom's mercy.

23. Kidron - Or, Cedron, which was near Jerusalem. The very same brook that Christ passed over when he entered upon his sufferings, John xviii, 1. Wilderness - Which was between Jerusalem and Jericho.

24. Went up - From the ark to the city, which was on higher ground, that so he being high-priest, might use his authority with the people, to persuade them to do their duty; and there he staid until all those whom he could persuade were gone forth.

25. Carry back - Out of care and reverence to the ark, which though it might be carried our to a certain place; yet he might justly think unfit to carry it from place to place he knew not whither, and out of respect to the priests, whom, by this means, he thought he should expose to the rage of Absalom, as he had before exposed them to Saul's fury. Habitation - That is, the tabernacle which David had lately built for it, chap. vi, 17, in which the ark, and God, by means hereof, ordinarily dwelt.

26. Let him do - That we may not complain of what is, let us see God's hand in all events. And that we may not be afraid of what shall be, let us see all events in God's hand.

27. A seer - A seeing, discerning, or observing man: for so the Hebrew verb raah is often used. And this suits well with David's mind: Thou art a wise man, and therefore fit to manage this great business, which requires prudence and secrecy.

30. Barefoot - In testimony of his deep sorrow, and humiliation and shame for his sins.

34. And say - That is, as faithful to thee, as I have been to thy father. David's suggesting this crafty counsel must be reckoned amongst his sins. Nevertheless God was pleased to direct this evil advice to a good end.

36. There - Not in Jerusalem, but in a place near it, to which they could easily send upon occasion.

37. Absalom came, &c. - How soon do royal cities and royal palaces change their masters? But we look for a kingdom which cannot be moved.

## XVI

David is deceived by Ziba, ver. 1-4. And cursed by Shemei, ver. 5-14. Absalom receives Hushai, ver. 15-19. Lies with his father's concubines, ver. 20-23.

1. Bottle - A large bottle, or vessel proportionable to the other provisions.

4. Behold - A rash sentence, and unrighteous to condemn a man unheard, upon the single testimony of his accuser, and servant. Find grace - Thy favour is more to me, than this gift; which, as a token of thy favour, I accept with all thankfulness.

8. Of Saul - Either,

1. The blood of Abner and Ishbosheth; which he imputes to David, as if they had been killed by David's contrivance: or,
2. the death of Saul's seven sons, chap. xxi, 8, which, though related after this, seems to have been done before. Art taken - The same mischief thou didst bring upon others, is now returned upon thy own head.

10. What have I, &e. - In this matter I ask not your advice, nor will I follow it; nor do I desire you should at all concern yourselves in it. The Lord - God did not put any wickedness into Shimei's heart, for he had of himself an heart full of malignity against David; but only left him to his own wickedness; and brought David into so distressed a condition, that he might seem a proper object of his scorn. And this is ground enough for this expression, the Lord said, not by the word of his precept, but by the word of his providence, in respect whereof he is said to command the ravens, 1 Kings xvii, 4, and to send forth his word to senseless creatures, Psalm 1xlvii, 15, 18. Who shall reproach God's providence for permitting this? Or, who shall restrain him from executing his just judgment against me?

11. My life - Which is a greater mischief, than to reproach me with words. Benjamites - Of that tribe and family from which God hast taken away the kingdom, and given it to me. Let him - Do

not now hinder him violently from it, nor punish him for it. It is meet I should bear the indignation of the Lord, and submit to his pleasure.

14. Came - To the city of Bahurim.

17. Is this - Doth this action answer that profession of friendship which thou hast hitherto made to him? He speaks thus only to try him. And he saith, thy friend, by way of reflection upon David; as one who was a friend to Hushai, and to strangers but not to his own son, whom, by his severity he provoked to this course; and therefore he doth not vouchsafe to call him his father.

21. Go - This counsel he gave, partly to revenge the injury done to Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, chap. xi, 3, who was the son of Ahithophel, chap. xxiii, 34, and principally for his own, and the people's safety, that the breach between David and Absalom might be irreparable. For this would provoke David in the highest degree and cut of all hope of reconciliation, which otherwise might have been expected by some treaty between Absalom and his tender-hearted father. But in that case his followers, and especially Ahithophel, had been left to David's mercy, and therefore obliged to prosecute the war with all vigour, and to abandon all thoughts of peace: as knowing that his father, though be might dissemble, yet would never forgive so foul a crime. Be strong - They will fight with greater courage and resolution, when they are freed from the fear of thy reconciliation, which otherwise would make their hearts faint, and hands slack in thy cause. But by this we may see the character of Absalom's party, and how abominably wicked they were, whom such a scandalous action tied the faster to him. And we may farther learn, how corrupt the body of the people was, how ripe for that judgment which is now hastening to them.

22. The top - Of the king's palace, the very place from whence David had gazed upon Bathsheba, chap. xi, 2, so that his sin was legible in the very place of his punishment. Went in - To one, or some of them. And by so doing did farther make claim to the kingdom; and, as it were, take possession of it. It being usual in the eastern countries to account the wives and concubines of the late king, to belong of right to the successor. Israel - Who saw him go into the tent; and thence concluded, that he lay with them, as he had designed to do. God had threatened by Nathan, that for his defiling Bathsheba, David's own wives should be defiled in the face of the sun. This is now fulfilled: the Lord is righteous; and no word of his shall fall to the ground.

23. The counsel, &c. - It was received by the people with equal veneration, and was usually attended with as certain success. Which is mentioned as the reason why a counsel which had so ill a face, should meet with such general approbation.

## XVII

Ahithophel advises Absalom to dispatch, ver. 1-4 Hushai advises deliberation, and his advice is received, ver. 5-14. Intelligence is sent to David, ver. 15-21. David passes over Jordan, ver. 22. Ahithophel hangs himself, ver. 23. Absalom pursues David, ver. 24-26. David is supplied with necessaries, ver. 27-29.

2. And I will, &c. - That such a wretch as Absalom should aim at his father's throat is not strange. But that the body of the people, to whom David had been so great a blessing, should join with him

in it, is amazing. But the finger of God was in it. Let not the best of parents, or the best of princes think it strange, if they are injured by those who should be their support and joy, when they (like David) have provoked God to turn against them.

5. Call Hushai - A wonderful effect of Divine Providence, influencing his heart, that he could not rest in Ahithophel's counsel, though it was so evidently wise, and approved by the general consent of his whole party; and that he should desire Hushai's advice, though neither his reputation for wisdom was equal to Ahithophel's, nor had he yet given anyone proof of his fidelity to Absalom. But there is no contending with that God who can arm a man against himself, and destroy him by his own mistakes and passions.

9. Pit - Having been often accustomed to that course, and well acquainted with in all hiding-places from Saul's time. In one of them, unknown to us, he will lurk with some of his chosen men, and lie in ambush for us; and, when they see a fit opportunity, they will suddenly come forth and surprize some of our men, when they least expect it, and probably at first put them to flight. Some - Namely, of Absalom's men sent against David. At the first - Implying, that their good success at first would mightily animate David's men to proceed vigourously in the fight, and intimidate Absalom's army, and consequently would be both a presage and an occasion of their total defeat.

11. I counsel - His pretense was, that they might make sure, though slow work: his design was to gain David time, that he might increase his army, and make better provision for the battle; and that the present heat of the people might be cooled, and they might bethink themselves of their duty, and return to their allegiance. Thou - For thy presence will put life and courage into thy soldiers, who will be ambitious to shew their skill and courage in defending thy person, when they know that all their actions are observed by him who hath the distribution of rewards and punishments in his hands. Besides, the glory of the victory will be wholly thine, which now Ahithophel seeks to get to himself.

12. As dew - That is, plenteously, suddenly, irresistibly, and on all sides; for so the dew falls.

13. Bring ropes - It is an hyperbolical expression, suited to the vain-glorious temper of this insolent young man: implying, that they would do so if they could not destroy him another way: or, that they should be enough to do so, if there were occasion. River - Adjoining to the city; it being usual to build cities near some river, both for defense, and for other accommodations.

14. Absalom and all, &c. - Be it observed, to the comfort of all that fear God, he turns all mans hearts as the rivers of water. He stands in the congregation of the mighty, has an over-ruling hand in all counsels, and a negative voice in all resolves, and laughs at mens projects against his children.

16. Lodge not - Lest the king's and people's mind's change, and Ahithophel persuade the king to pursue you speedily.

17. Enrogel - Or, the fullers well. A place near Jerusalem, Josh. xv, 7; xviii, 16. Wench - Pretending to go thither to wash some cloaths, or to draw water.

19. Spread corn - Under pretense of drying it by the sun: which shews it was summer-time.

20. Over the brook of water - That is, over Jordan. This was a manifest lie.

23. Hanged himself - See here contempt poured upon the wisdom of man! He that was more renowned for policy than ever any man was, played the fool with himself more than ever any man did. See likewise honour done to the justice of God! The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.

24. Passed - Not speedily, but when all the men of Israel were gathered together according to Hushai's counsel.

25. Nahash - Nahash is the name of Jesse's wife, by whom he had this Abigail, as he had Zeruiah by another wife; so they were sisters by the father, but not by the mother.

27. Shobi - Who, as it may seem, disliked and disowned that barbarous action to the ambassadors; and therefore, when the rest were destroyed, was left king or governor of the residue of the Ammonites. Machir - See above chap. ix, 4.

29. In - Having been in the wilderness. Thus God sometimes makes up to his people that comfort from strangers, which they are disappointed of in their own families.

## XVIII

David prepares to engage the rebels, ver. 1-5. The total defeat of Absalom, ver. 6-8. His death and burial, ver. 9-18. The news brought to David, ver. 19-32. His lamentation over Absalom, ver. 33.

5. Deal gently - If you conquer (which be presaged they would by God's gracious answer to his prayer for the turning of Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness,) take him prisoner, but do not kill him. Which desire proceeded, from his great indulgence towards his children: from his consciousness that he himself was the meritorious cause of this rebellion, Absalom being given up to it for the punishment of David's sins; from the consideration of his youth, which commonly makes men foolish, and subject to ill counsels: and from his piety, being loth that he should be cut off in the act of his sin without any space for repentance. But "what means, says Bp. Hall, this ill-placed mercy? Deal gently with a traitor? Of all traitors with a son? And all this for thy sake, whose crown, whose blood he hunts after? Even in the holiest parents nature may be guilty of an injurious tenderness. But was not this done in type of that unmeasurable mercy, of the true King of Israel, who prayed for his murderers, Father, forgive them! Deal gently with them for my sake!" Yea, when God sends an affliction to correct his children, it is with this charge, deal gently with them for my sake: for he knows our frame.

8. The wood - More people died in the wood, either through hunger, and thirst, and weariness: or, by the wild beasts, whereof great numbers were there, which, though they were driven away from the place of the main battle, yet might easily meet with them when they fled several ways: or, by falling into ditches and pits, which were in that place, ver. 17, and probably were covered with grass or wood, so that they could not see them till they fell into them: and especially by David's men, who pursued them, and killed them in the wood: and the wood is rightly said to have devoured them, because it gave the occasion to their destruction, inasmuch as the trees, and ditches, and pits, entangled them, and stopped their flight, and made them an easy prey to David's men, who followed them, and slew them in the pursuit. The sword - In the main battle: the sword being put for the battle, by a common figure.

9. The servants of David - Who, according to David's command, spared him, and gave him an opportunity to escape. His head - In which probably he was entangled by the hair of the head, which

being very long and thick, might easily catch hold of a bough, especially when the great God directed it. Either he wore no helmet, or he had thrown it away as well as his other arms, to hasten his flight. Thus the matter of his pride was the instrument of his ruin.

15. Slew him - The darts did not dispatch him, and therefore they smote him again, and killed him.

18. A pillar - To preserve his name; whereas it had been more for his honour if his name had been buried in perpetual oblivion.

24. Gates - For the gates of the cities then were, as now they are, large and thick; and for the greater security, had two gates, one more outward, the other inward. Here he sat, that he might hear tidings when any came into the city.

33. Over the gate - Retiring himself from all men and business, that he might wholly give up himself to lamentation. My son - This he might speak from a deep sense of his eternal state, because he died in his sins, and because David himself had by his own sins been the occasion of his death. But it seems rather to be the effect of strong passion, causing him to speak unadvisedly with his lips.

## XIX

Joab prevails on David to refrain, ver. 1-8. He is brought back to his kingdom by the men of Judah, ver. 9-15. Pardons Shimei, ver. 16-23. Restores to Mephibosheth his estate, ver. 24- 30. Barzillai is dismissed, and his son taken into David's service, ver. 31-40. The Israelites expostulate with the men of Judah, ver. 41-43.

3. By stealth - Not openly and triumphantly, as conquerors use to do; but secretly, as if they were afraid and ashamed, lest David should see them, and look upon them with an evil eye, as those that had an hand in killing of his beloved son.

5. Hast shamed - By disappointing their just hopes of praises and rewards, and by requiting them with contempt and tacit rebukes.

6. Pleased thee - This is not be understood as exactly true; but David's carriage gave too much colour to such a suggestion; and such sharpness of speech was in a manner necessary to awaken the king out of his lethargy, and to preserve him from the impendent mischiefs.

9. At strife - Quarrelling one with another as the authors or abettors of this shameful rebellion, and discoursing privately and publickly of David's high merits, which God, being now reconciled to David, brings afresh to their memories.

10. Now therefore - The people of Israel speak thus to the elders of Israel, as appears by comparing this verse with the next. Seeing their designs for Absalom disappointed, they now repented of that undertaking, and were willing to testify so much by their forwardness to bring back David, and re-establish him.

11. Judah - Who being the abettors of Absalom's rebellion, despaired of pardon, and therefore were backward to promote the king's restoration. His house - Even to Mahanaim, where now the king's house and family is.

13. Of Joab - Who, besides his other crimes, had lately exasperated the king by his murder of Absalom, contrary to David's express command. And therefore the king having now the opportunity of another person who had a greater interest than Joab, gladly complies with it, that so he might both chastise Joab for his faults, and rescue himself from the bondage in which Joab had hitherto held him.

14. He bowed - David by this prudent and kind message and his free offer of pardon.

17. With him - Whom he brought, partly to shew his interest in the people, and partly, as intercessors on his behalf, and as witnesses of David's clemency or severity, that in him they might see what the rest of them might expect. Ziba - Who, being conscious of his former abuse of David, and of his master Mephibosheth, which he knew the king would understand, designed to sweeten David's spirit towards him, by forwardness in meeting him.

20. House of Joseph - The house of Joseph is here put for all the tribes, except Judah, which are fitly distinguished from Judah, because the rights of the first-born were divided between Judah and Joseph, 1 Chron. v, 2. And though Benjamin, after the division of the kingdoms was fitly joined with Judah, because then they adhered to that tribe; yet before that time it was joined with Joseph, because they marched under the standard of the house of Joseph, or of Ephraim, Num. x, 22, 23, 24. Whence it is, that Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, are put together, Psalm lxxx, 2.

22. Adversaries - That is, that you put me upon things unfit for me to do, and contrary to my interest; for it was David's interest at this time to appease the people, and reconcile them to him, and not to give them any new distaste by acts of severity: for this would make others jealous, that he would watch an opportunity to be revenged on them. King - Is not my kingdom, which was in a manner wholly lost, just now restored and assured to me? And when God hath been so merciful to me in forgiving my sin, shall I shew myself revengeful to Shemei? Shall I sully the publick joy and glory of this day, with an act of such severity? Or, shall I alienate the hearts of my people from me, now they are returning to me?

24. The son - That is, the grandson, chap. vi, 3, 6. His feet - By washing his feet, which was usual in those hot climates, and very refreshing; and therefore now neglected, as becoming a mourner. Beard - But suffered it to grow very long, and disorderly, as was usual with persons in a forlorn, or mournful state. Clothes - His linen cloathes. This and the former were signs, that he was a true and obstinate mourner, and evidences of the falsehood of Ziba's relation concerning him, chap. xvi, 3.

25. Jerusalem - Probably he had continued near Jerusalem, because he could not go to meet him, as others did.

26. Deceived me - By carrying away the ass which I bid him saddle for me.

27. Angel - To distinguish between true reports and calumnies; See note on "chap. xiv, 20".

28. Before - Before thy tribunal: we were all at thy mercy: not my estate only but my life also was in thy power, if thou hadst dealt with rigor, and as earthly kings use to do with their predecessor's and enemies children. To cry - For the vindication of mine honour, and the restitution of my estate.

29. Divide - The land shall be divided between thee and him, as it was by my first order, chap. ix, 10, he and his sons managing it, and supporting themselves out of it, as they did before, and giving the rest of the profits thereof to thee.

35. I am, &c. - My senses are grown dull, and incapable of relishing the pleasures of a court. I am past taking pleasures in delicious tastes, or sweet musick, and other such delights. I am through age both useless and burdensome to others, and therefore most improper for a court life.

37. That I may die in mine own city - That my bones may with little ado, be carried to the place of their rest. The grave is ready for me: let me go and get ready for it, go and die in my nest.

40. Half - Whereas the men of Judah came entirely and unanimously to the king, the Israelites of the other tribe came in but slowly, and by halves, as being no less guilty of the rebellion, than the tribe of Judah; but not encouraged to come in by such a gracious message as they were. And this is here mentioned as the occasion both of the contention here following, and of the sedition, chap. xx, 1-22.

41. All - Such as were present. Stolen - That is, conveyed thee over Jordan hastily, not expecting our concurrence. David's men - All thy officers, guards, and soldiers. This is mentioned as an aggravation of their fault, that they did not only carry the king over Jordan, but all his men too, without asking their advice.

42. Of kin - Of the same tribe with us, and therefore both oweth the more respect to us, and might expect more respect from us. Gifts - We have neither sought nor gained any advantage to ourselves hereby, but only discharged our duty to the king, and used all expedition in bringing him back, which you also should have done, and not have come in by halves, and so coldly as you have done.

43. Ten - They say but ten, though strictly there were eleven; either, because they accounted Joseph (which comprehends both Ephraim and Manasseh under it) for one tribe, or because Simeon, whose lot lay within the tribe of Judah, were joined with them in this action. More right - As in the general we have more right in the king and kingdom; so particularly, we have more right in David than you, because you were the first beginners, and the most zealous promoters of this rebellion; howsoever, as he is king, we justly claim a greater interest in him, than you; inasmuch as we are the far greatest part of his subjects. Fiercer - Instead of mollifying them with gentle words, they answered them with greater fierceness so that David durst not interpose in the matter.

## XX

A new rebellion raised by Sheba, ver. 1, 2. David confines his ten concubines for life, ver. 3. Joab murders Amasa, ver. 4-12. Pursues Sheba to Abel, ver. 13-15. He is delivered up, ver. 16-22. David's great officers, ver. 23-26.

1. Happened - His presence was casual in itself, though ordered by God's providence. No part - The tribe of Judah have monopolized the king to themselves, and will not allow us any share in him; let them therefore enjoy him alone, and let us seek out a new king. The son of Jesse - An expression of contempt, implying that he was no more to be owned as their king, but as a private person, as the son of Jesse. To his tents - Let us all desist from this unthankful office, of bringing the king back, and go each to our homes, that we may consider, and then meet together to chuse a new king.

2. Every man - That is, the generality of those Israelites who were present.

5. Tarried - Either, because the people being wearied out by the late war, were not forward to engage in another: or because the soldiers had more affection to Joab, than to their new general.

6. Abishai - Not to Joab; lest by this means he should recover his place, and Amasa be discontented, and David's fidelity in making good his promise to Amasa be questioned.

7. Joab's men - The remainders of Joab's army who were there present, with whom also Joab might go as a reformade, watching an opportunity to do what he designed.

8. Amasa went - Having gathered some forces, and given due orders for the rest to follow him, he returned to Jerusalem, and by the king's command went after those mentioned ver. 7, and being come up to them at the place where they waited for him, he put himself in the head of Joab's men, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and such as he had brought along with him, and marched before them as their general. Girded - After the manner of travelers and soldiers. Went forth - To meet and salute Amasa, who was coming towards him to do him honour. It fell - Things having (it is likely) been so contrived by Joab, that upon the least motion of his body, his sword should drop out, and he might take it up without raising Amasa's suspicion.

9. Beard - As the manner of ancient times was, when they saluted one another.

10. The sword - Which falling out, as it seemed, casually, he supposed that Joab intended only to put it into its scabbard, and therefore took no care to defend himself against the stroke. So Joab - Who now boldly resumed his former place, and marched in the head of the army. It is not strange, that Amasa's soldiers did not fight to revenge his death; partly, because not many of them were yet come up, as the following verses shew; and partly, because Joab's interest and authority with the military-men was very great; especially, with David's guards, who were here present, and who had no kindness for Amasa, as having been the general of the rebellious army; and, as they might think, not fit to be put into a place of so great trust.

11. One - Left there on purpose to deliver the following message. favoureth Joab - He that would have Joab to be general, rather than such a perfidious rebel as Amasa. For David - He that wisheth David good success against Sheba, and against all rebels.

12. Stood still - Wondering at the spectacle, and enquiring into the author and occasion of it. Removed - Perceiving, that it both incensed them against Joab and hindered the king's service. Cast a cloth upon him - But the covering of blood with a cloth cannot stop its cry to God for vengeance.

14. He - Sheba, who marched from tribe to tribe to stir them up to sedition. Abel - Unto Abel-beth-maachah, as this place is called here in the Hebrew text, ver. 15, to distinguish it from other Abels; and to signify, that this was that Abel which was in the northern border of Canaan towards that part of Syria called Maachah, chap. x, 8. Berites - Such as lived in the city, or territory of Beeroth of Benjamin, Josh. xviii, 25, who being of the same tribe, if not city with Sheba, adhered to him, and followed him through all the tribes of Israel. They - The tribes of Israel; that is, a considerable number of them; as might well be expected, when the discontents were so high and general.

15. They - That is, Joab and his army. A bank - From whence they might either batter the wall, or shoot at those who defended it. It stood - The bank stood in, or near to the trench, or the wall of the city; so that the city was in great danger of being taken.

16. Then cried a wise woman - It seems none of all the men of Abel, offered to treat with Joab: no, not when they were reduced to extremity: but one wise woman saved the city. Souls know no difference of sex: many a manly heart is lodged in a female breast. Nor is the treasure of wisdom the less valuable, for being lodged in the weaker vessel.

18. Ask counsel - This city which thou art about to destroy, is no mean and contemptible one, but so honourable and considerable for its wisdom, that when any differences arose among any of

the neighbours, they used proverbially to say, We will ask the opinion and advice as the men of Abel about it, and we will stand to their arbitration; and so all parties were satisfied, and disputes ended.

19. A mother - Great cities are commonly called mothers; as lesser towns or villages subject to them, and depending upon them, are called their daughters. Inheritance - That is, a considerable part of, that land which God hath chosen for his particular possession. The destruction which thou art about to bring upon us, is an injury to Israel, and to the God of Israel.

21. Ephraim - Probably mount Ephraim was a place in Benjamin so called, either because it was upon the borders of Ephraim or for some notable action or event of the Ephraimites in that place. His head - Which she undertook, because she knew the present temper of the citizens, and soldiers too. And it is not unlikely, that this woman might be a governness in that city. For though this office was commonly performed by men; yet women were sometimes employed in the government: as we see in Deborah, who judged Israel, Judg. iv, 4.

22. Wisdom - Prudently treated with them about it, representing to them the certainty and nearness of their ruin, if they did not speedily comply with her desires, and certain deliverance if they did.

23 Over all the host - The good success of this, and of the former expedition, under the conduct of Joab, had so fixed his interest in the army, and others of David's fastest friends, that the king could not without danger displace him.

## XXI

A famine, caused by Saul's killing the Gibeonites, ver. 1-3. Seven of his family put to death, ver. 4-9. Care taken of their dead bodies, and of the bones of Saul, ver. 10-14. Battles with the Philistines, ver. 15-22.

1. Then - The things related here and chap. xxiv, 1-25, are by the best interpreters conceived to have been done long before Absalom's rebellion. And this opinion is not without sufficient grounds: first, this particle, then, is here explained, in the days, that is, during the reign of David: which general words seem to be added as an intimation that these things were not done after the next foregoing passages, for then the sacred writer would rather have added, after these things, as it is in many other places. Secondly, here are divers passages which it seems improbable to ascribe to the last years of David's reign: such as first, that Saul's sin against the Gibeonites should so long remain unpunished. And indeed that this was done, and Saul's seven sons hanged by David's order before that time, seems to be intimated by that passage, chap. xvi, 8, where he is charged with the blood of the house of Saul: for which there was not the least colour 'till this time. Secondly, that David should not remove the bones of Saul and Jonathan to their proper place, 'till that time. Thirdly, that the Philistines should wage war with David again and again, ver. 15, &c. so long after he had fully subdued them, chap. viii, 1, and that David in his old age should attempt to fight with a Philistine giant, or that his people should suffer him to do so. Fourthly, that David should then have so vehement a desire to number his people, chap. xxiv, 1, which being an act of youthful vanity,

seems not at all to agree with his old age, nor with that state of deep humiliation in which he then was. And the reason why these matters are put here out of their proper order, is plainly this, because David's sin being once related, it was very convenient that David's punishments should immediately succeed: this being very frequent in scripture-story, to put those things together which belong to one matter, though they happened at several times. He flew - Which was not only an act of cruelty, but also of perfidiousness, because it was a public violation of that solemn oath given to them by Joshua and the princes, in the name of all the Israelites, of that and succeeding generations. "But why did not God punish Saul whilst he was alive for this, but his children, and the Israelites of this age?" First, God did severely punish Saul for this and his other sins. Secondly, as God may justly inflict temporal punishments upon any offender, either in his person, or in his posterity, when he pleaseth; so it is meet he should take his own time for it; and it is folly in us to quarrel with God for so doing. Thirdly, the Israelites might sundry ways make themselves guilty of Saul's sin, tho' it be not particularly mentioned, advising or encouraging him to it; or, assisting him in the execution of it. And whereas many of the people were probably innocent of that crime, yet they also were guilty of many other sins, for which God might punish them, though he took this occasion for it.

2. Sought - That is, he sought how he might cut them off with some colour of justice, aggravating their faults, and punishing them worse than they deserved; oppressing them with excessive labours, and intending by degrees to wear them out.

6. I will - Having doubtless consulted God in the matter; who as he had before declared Saul's bloody house to be the causes of this judgment, so now commanded that justice should be done upon it, and that the remaining branches of it should be cut off; as sufficiently appears from hence, that God was well pleased with the action; which he would not have been, if David had done it without his command; for then it had been a sinful action of David's, and contrary to a double law of God, Deut. xxi, 23; xxiv, 16.

7. Spared - For the Gibeonites desiring only such a number, it was at David's choice whom to spare. Of Jonathan - This is added, to distinguish him from the other Mephibosheth, ver. 8.

10. Spread it - As a tent to dwell in: being informed that their bodies were not to be taken away speedily, as the course of the law was in ordinary cases, but were to continue there until God was intreated, and removed the present judgment. On the rock - In some convenient place in a rock, near adjoining. Until water - Until they were taken down: which was not to be done 'till God had given rain as a sign of his favour, and a mean to remove the famine, which was caused by the want of it. Thus she let the world know, that her sons died not for any sin of their own, not as stubborn and rebellious sons, whose eye had despised their mother: but for their father's sin, and therefore her mind could not be alienated from them by their hard fate.

11. David - Who heard it with so much approbation, that he thought fit to imitate her piety, being by her example provoked to do what hitherto he had neglected, to bestow an honourable interment on the remains of Saul and Jonathan, and, with them, upon those that are now put to death, that the honour done to them herein, might be some comfort to this disconsolate widow.

13. The bones - Having first burnt off the flesh which remained upon them when they were taken down. Compare 1 Sam. xxxi, 10, &c.

14. After that - After those things were done which were before related; that is, after they were hanged up: for by that God was pacified, and not by their burial.

18. After this - After the battle last mentioned.

22. Born to the giant in Gath - These giants were probably the remains of the sons of Anak, who, tho' long feared, fell at last.

## XXII

This chapter is inserted among the Psalms, No. 18, with some little variation. It is here as it was composed for his own closet; there, as it was delivered to the chief musician for public service. The inspired writer having largely related David's deliverances in this and the foregoing book, thought fit to record this sacred poem, as a memorial of all that had been before related

## XXIII

The last words of David, ver. 1-7. An account of his mighty men, the first three, ver. 8-12. Two of the next three, ver. 13-23. And the thirty, ver. 24-39.

1. Last words - Not simply the last that he spoke, but the last which he spake by the spirit of God, assisting and directing him in an extraordinary manner. When we find death approaching, we should endeavour both to honour God, and to profit others with our last words. Let those who have had experience of God's goodness, and the pleasantness of the ways of wisdom, when they come to finish their course, leave a record of those experiences, and bear their testimony to the truth of the promise. Raised - Advanced from an obscure estate, to the kingdom. Whom, God singled out from all the families of Israel, and anointed to be king. Psalmist - He who was eminent among the people of God, for composing sweet and holy songs to the praise of God, and for the use of his church in after ages: these seem not to be the words of David, but of the sacred penman of this book.

2. His word - The following words, and consequently the other words and Psalms composed and uttered by me upon the like solemn occasions, are not to be looked upon as human inventions, but both the matter and the words of them are suggested by God's spirit, the great teacher of the church.

3. Rock - He who is the strength, and defense, and protector of his people; which he manifests by directing kings and rulers so to manage their power as may most conduce to their comfort and benefit. Ruleth - Here are the two principal parts of a king's duty, answerable to the two tables of God's law, justice towards men, and piety towards God, both which he is to maintain and promote among his people.

4. Shall be - These words are a farther description of the king's duty, which is not only to rule with justice and piety, but also with sweetness, and gentleness, and condescension to the infirmities of his people; to render his government as acceptable to them, as is the sun-shine in a clear morning, or the tender grass which springs out of the earth by the warm beams of the sun after the rain.

5. Altho' - Although God knows, that neither I, nor my children have lived and ruled as we should have done, so justly, and in the fear of the Lord; and therefore have not enjoyed that uninterrupted prosperity which we might have enjoyed. Covenant - Notwithstanding all our transgressions whereby we have broken covenant with God, yet God, to whom all my sins were known, was graciously pleased to make a sure covenant, to continue the kingdom to me, and to my seed for ever, chap. vii, 16, until the coming of the Messiah who is to be my son and successor, and whose kingdom shall have no end. Ordered - Ordained in all points by God's eternal counsel; and disposed by his wise and powerful providence which will over-rule all things, even the sins of my house so far, that although he punished them for their sins, yet he will not utterly root them out, nor break his covenant made with me and mine. Sure - Or, preserved, by God's power and faithfulness in the midst of all oppositions. For this - Or, in this is, that is, it consists in, and depends upon this covenant. Salvation - Both mine own eternal salvation, and the preservation of the kingdom to me and mine. Tho' - Although God as yet hath not made my house or family to grow; that is, to increase, or to flourish with worldly glory as I expected; yet this is my comfort, that God will inviolably keep this covenant. But this refers also to the covenant of grace made with all believers. This is indeed an everlasting covenant, from everlasting, in the contrivance of it, and to everlasting, in the continuance and the consequence of it. It is ordered, well ordered in all things; admirably well, to advance the glory of God and the honour of the mediator, together with the holiness and happiness of believers. It is sure, and therefore sure, because well-ordered: the promised mercies are sure, on the performance of the conditions. It is all our salvation: nothing but this will save us, and this is sufficient. Therefore it should be all our desire. Let me have an interest in this covenant, and I have enough, I desire no more.

6. But - Having in the foregoing verses described the nature, and stability of that kingdom which God had by a sure covenant settled upon him and his seed; and especially, upon the Messiah, who was to be one of his posterity; he now describes the nature and miserable condition, of all the enemies of this holy and blessed kingdom. As thorns - Which men do not use to handle, but thrust them away. And so will God thrust away from himself, and from his people, and kingdom, all those who shall either secretly or openly set themselves against it.

7. Fenced - He must arm himself with some iron weapon, whereby he may cut them down; or, with the staff of a spear, or some such thing, whereby he may thrust them away from himself, that they do him no hurt. Burnt - Or, if they do not cut them down or thrust them away they will burn and consume them. The place - Or, in their place, where they grow or stand.

8. These - But this catalogue, though placed here, was taken long before, as is manifest from hence, that Asahel and Uriah are named here. And whereas there are some difference between this list, and that, 1 Chron. xi, 10-47, most of them are easily reconciled by these two considerations;

1. that nothing is more common than for one person to have divers names.
2. That as some of the worthies died, and others came in their stead; this must needs cause some alteration in the latter catalogue, 1 Chron. xi, 10-47, from this which was the former. Learn hence, how much religion tends to inspire men with true courage. David both by his writings and example greatly promoted piety among the grandees of the kingdom. And when they became famous for piety, they became famous for bravery. Adino - This was his proper name. Lift up - Which words are fitly supplied out of 1 Chron. xi, 11, where they are expressed. One time - In one battle, which though it be strange, yet cannot seem incredible,

supposing him to be a person of extraordinary strength and activity, and his enemies to be discouraged, and fleeing away.

9. Gone away - That is, fled away, 1 Chron. xi, 13, being dismayed at the approach of their enemies.

11. Lentiles - Or barley, as it is 1 Chron. xi, 13. For both might grow in the same field, in divers parts of it. And this fact is ascribed to Eleazar,

1 Chron. xi, 12, but it is implied, that he had some partner or partners in it; for it is there said, 1 Chron. xi, 14 they set themselves, &c. So Eleazar might fight in that part where the barley was and Shammah where the lentiles were.

12. Lord wrought - How great soever the bravery of the instruments is, the praise of the achievement is to be given to God. These fought, but God wrought the victory.

15. Said - Being hot and thirsty, he expresses how acceptable a draught of that water would be to him; but was far from desiring, or expecting that any of his men should hazard their lives to procure it.

16. Would not - Lest by gratifying himself upon such terms, he should seem either to set too high a price upon the satisfaction of his appetite, or too low a price upon the lives of his soldiers. Poured it - As a kind of drink offering, and acknowledgment of God's goodness in preserving the lives of his captains in so dangerous an enterprize; and to shew, that he esteemed it as a sacred thing, which it was not fit for him to drink.

17. These three - Jointly: then two of them are mentioned severally.

19. Attained not - He fell short of them in strength and valour.

21. Pit - Where he put himself under a necessity, either of killing, or being killed. Of snow - When lions are most fierce, both from the sharpness of their appetite in cold seasons, and from want of provisions.

25. Harodite - In 1 Chron. xi, 27, Shammoth the Harorite. Concerning which, and other changes of the names, which will be observed, by comparing this catalogue with that, it will be sufficient to suggest,

1. that the same names of persons, or places, are differently pronounced according to the different dialects of divers places or ages.
2. That one man had often two names.
3. That David had more worthies than those here mentioned; and as some of these were slain in the former part of David's reign, as Asahel was; so others came up in their stead; and some were added to this number, as appears from 1 Chron. xi, 10-47, where they are named, but not numbered, as they were here; and where there is a greater number than is here expressed.

## NOTES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS

THE two books of Samuel are an introduction to the two books of Kings, as they relate the original of the royal government in Saul, and of the royal family in David. These two books give us an account of David's successor, Solomon, the division of his kingdom, and the several kings

of Israel and Judah, down to the captivity. And in these special regard is had to the house of David, from which Christ came. Some of his sons trod in his steps, and their reigns were usually long, whereas those of the wicked kings were usually short: so that the state of Judah (in Israel all the kings were wicked) was not so bad as it would otherwise have been. In this first book we have, The death of David, chap. 1, 2. The glorious reign of Solomon, chap. 3-10. His defection, chap. 11. The division of the kingdom between Rehoboam and Jeroboam, chap. 12-14. The reigns of Abijah and Asa over Judah, of Basha and Omni over Israel, chap. 15, 16. The history of Elijah, chap. 17-19. Ahab's success, wickedness, and death, chap. 20-22.

## I

David declines in health, ver. 1-4. Adonijah aspires to the kingdom, ver. 5-10. Nathan and Bathsheba procure an order for the succession of Solomon, ver. 11-31. The anointing of Solomon, and the peoples joy, ver. 32-40. The dispersion of Adonijah's party, ver. 41-49. Solomon dismisses Adonijah, ver. 50-53.

1. Old - Being in the end of his seventieth year. No heat - Which is not strange in a person who had been exercised with so many hardships in war, and with such tormenting cares, and fears, and sorrows, for his own sins (as divers of his Psalms witness) and for the sins and miseries of his children and people. Besides, this might be from the nature of his bodily distemper.

2. Servants - His physicians. Virgin - Whose natural heat is fresh and wholesome, and not impaired with bearing or breeding of children. The same counsel doth Galen give for the cure of some cold and dry distempers. Stand - That is, minister unto him, or wait upon him, in his sickness, as occasion requires. Lie in his bosom - As his wife: for that she was so, may appear by divers arguments. First, otherwise this had been a wicked course; which therefore neither his servants durst have prescribed, nor would David have used, especially being now in a dying condition. Secondly, it appears from this phrase of lying in his bosom, which is everywhere in scripture mentioned as the privilege of a wife. Thirdly, this made Adonijah's crime in desiring her to wife, so heinous in Solomon's account, because he saw, that by marrying the king's wife he designed to revive his pretense to the kingdom.

4. Knew her not - Which is mentioned to note the continuance and progress of the king's malady.

5. Then - Upon notice of the desperateness of the king's disease, and the approach of his death. Exalted - Entertained high thoughts and designs. I will - As the right of the kingdom is mine, ver. 6, so I will now take possession of it. Prepared - As Absalom had done upon the like occasion, chap. xv, 1.

6. Displeased him - This is noted as David's great error, and the occasion of Adonijah's presumption. Saying - He neither restrained him from, nor reproved him for his miscarriages: which David well knew was a great sin. Goodly man - This was a second ground of his confidence, because his great comeliness made him amiable in the peoples eyes.

7. They helped - Either because they thought the right of the crown was his: or to secure and advance their own interest. It seems God left them to themselves, to correct them for former miscarriages, with a rod of their own making.

10. Called not - Because he knew they favoured Solomon his competitor.

11. Nathan spake - Being prompted to it both by his piety in fulfilling the will of God declared to him, concerning Solomon's succession, 2 Sam. vii, 13, and by his prudence, knowing that Adonijah hated him for being the principal instrument of Solomon's advancement. Bathsheba - Who being retired and private in her apartment, was ignorant of what was done abroad: and, who was likely to be most zealous in the cause, and most prevalent with David.

26. But me - Whom he knew to be acquainted with thy mind, and with the mind of God in this matter: and therefore his neglect of me herein gives me cause to suspect that this is done without thy privity.

27. Shewed thy servant - Who, having been an instrument in delivering God's message to thee concerning thy successor, might reasonably expect that if the king had changed his mind, thou wouldest have acquainted me with it, as being both a prophet os the Lord, and one whom thou hast always found faithful to thee.

28. Call Bathsheba - Who, upon Nathan's approach to the king had modestly withdrawn.

29. Out of all distress - The words contain a grateful acknowledgement of the goodness of God to him, in bringing him safe through the many difficulties, which had lain in his way, and which he now mentions to the glory of God, (as Jacob when he lay a dying) thus setting to his seal, from his own experience that the Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants.

31. Live for ever - Though I desire thy oath may be kept, and the right of succession confirmed to my son, yet I am far from thirsting after thy death, and would rather rejoice, if it were possible for thee to live and enjoy the crown for ever. 33. My mule - As a token that the royal dignity is transferred upon Solomon, and that by my consent. Gihon - A river near Jerusalem, on the west side. Adonijah was inaugurated on the east side. This place David chose, either, as remote from Adonijah and his company, that so the people might be there without fear of tumults or bloodshed; or, to shew that Solomon was chosen king in opposition to Adonijah: or, because this was a place of great resort, and fit to receive and display that numerous company, which he knew would follow Solomon thither.

34. Anoint - As they used to do where there was any thing new or extraordinary in the succession. And this unction signified both the designation of the persons to the office, and the gifts and graces which were necessary for their office, and which, they, seeking them sincerely from God, might expect to receive.

35. My stead - My deputy and vice-king whilst I live, and absolutely king when I die. And Judah - This is added, lest the men of Judah, who were in a special manner invited by Adonijah, ver. 9, might think themselves exempted from his jurisdiction.

47. Bowed himself - Adoring God for this great mercy, and thereby declaring his hearty consent to this action.

48. Blessed, &c. - It is a great satisfaction to good men, when they are going out of the world, to see their children rising up in their stead, to serve God and their generation: and especially to see peace upon Israel, and the establishment of it.

51. His servants - He owns Solomon as his king, and himself as his servant and subject; and being sensible of his guilt, and of the jealousy which kings have of their competitors, could not be satisfied without Solomon's oath.

53. Go to thine house - Lead a private life, without noise and numerous attendants, and meddle not with the affairs of the kingdom.

## II

David's charge to Solomon ver. 1-9. His death and burial, with the beginning of Solomon's reign, ver. 10-12. He puts Adonijah to death, ver. 13-25. Deposes Abiathar from the high-priesthood, ver. 26, 27. Puts Joab to death, ver. 28-35. Confines Shimei, to Jerusalem, ver. 36-38. Puts him to death, ver. 39-46.

2. I go the way, &c. - Even the sons and heirs of heaven, must go the way of all the earth, of all who dwell thereon. But they walk with pleasure in this way, thro' the valley of the shadow of death. Prophets, yea kings must go this way to brighter light and honour than prophecy or sovereignty. Be strong - For, to govern his people according to the law of God, requires great fortitude, or strength of mind. And a man - In manly wisdom, and courage, and constancy, though thou art but young in years.

3. The law - Which the prince was enjoined to transcribe and read, Deut. xvii, 11, that be might govern his own and his peoples actions by it. Mayest profit - Or, behave thyself prudently. Hereby he intimates, that religion is the truest reason of state, and that all true wisdom and good success depend upon piety.

4. Confirm his word - Fulfil his promise, the condition upon which it was suspended, being performed.

5. To me - That is, against me; in what he did against Abner and Amasa: whose death was a great injury to David, as it was a breach of his laws and peace; a contempt of his person and government; a pernicious example to his subjects, and a great scandal to him, as if Joab had been only David's instrument, to affect what he secretly designed. And shed - He slew them as if they had been in the state of war, when there was not only a cessation of arms, but also a treaty of peace. Put the blood - This is added to note his impenitency, that although by his perfidious manner of killing them when he pretended to embrace them, he stained his own garments with their blood, yet he was not ashamed of it, but gloried in it, and marched boldly along with the army, with the same girdle and shoes which were sprinkled with their blood.

6. Do therefore - That is, what in reason and justice thou seest fit. For tho' I was forced to forbear him, yet I never forgave him; punish him according to his demerits.

7. For so - With such kindness.

8. I will not, &c. - The words are, The king said unto Shimei, thou shalt not die: and the king swear unto him, 2 Sam. xix, 23. The oath, we see, was absolute. It was not, "I will not put thee to death now." or, "I will not put thee to death with the sword." But who can reconcile his charge to

Solomon with this oath? Surely, considering the time of that charge, this next to the matter of Uriah, is the greatest blemish in all David's life.

25. Benaiah - For the execution of justice was not then committed to obscure persons, as now it is; but to persons of great honour and authority. It is far from clear, that Solomon did right herein, or that Adonijah had any ill design in asking Abishag.

26. Because, &c. - Thus Solomon shews respect to his sacred function. He mixes mercy with justice, and requites Abiathar's former kindness to David; hereby teaching princes, that they should not write injuries in marble, and benefits in sand, as they have been so often observed to do.

27. Which he spake - Concerning the translation of the priesthood from the house of Eli, and of Ithamar, to that of Eleazar: which being threatened eighty years ago, is now executed. So divine vengeance, though sometimes it be slow, is always sure.

30. He said, Nay, &c. - For he supposed, either, that Solomon would not defile that place with his blood, but would spare him for his respect to it, as he had done Adonijah: or, he had a superstitious conceit, that his dying there might give his guilty and miserable soul some advantage.

31. Do, &c. - Kill him, though he be there; take him from that place, and then kill him: for, Exod. xxi, 14, doth not command the ruler to kill the murderer there, but to remove him thence, to take him from the altar, that he may die.

34. Wilderness - Places which have but few houses and inhabitants, are often so called in scripture. He was buried privately, like a criminal, not pompously, like a general.

36. Go not forth - This Solomon ordered, both for his own security; and as a penalty for his former wickedness.

37. Kidron - A brook nigh Jerusalem, which he particularly names, because that was the way to Bahurim, his former habitation: but this is not all, for the restraint was general, that he should not go forth thence any whither. Thy blood - The blame and guilt of thy blood shall lie upon thyself only.

38. Is good - Thy sentence is more merciful than I expected, or deserved.

39. Achish - A king, but subject and tributary, to Solomon. Permitted to enjoy the title and honour of a king, but not the full power; whence it was, that Achish could not keep these servants though they had fled to him for protection; but suffered Shimei to take them away from his royal city.

40. To seek his servants - By "seeking his servants, says Bp. Hall, he lost himself. These earthly things either are, or should be our servants. How commonly do we see men run out of the bounds set by God's laws, to hunt after them, till their souls incur a fearful judgment."

44. Thine heart - For which thine own conscience accuseth thee, and there is no need of other witnesses. The Lord - God hath punished thee for thy former wickedness, by suffering thee to expose thyself to thy deserved death.

## III

Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter, ver. 1. His religion, ver. 2-4. His prayer for wisdom, and the answer, ver. 5-15. He decides the dispute between the two harlots, ver. 16-28.

1. Pharaoh - As being a powerful neighbour, whose daughter doubtless was first instructed in, and proselyted to the Jewish religion. It seems, this was designed by God to be a type of Christ, calling his church to himself, and to the true religion, not only out of the Jews, but even out of the Gentile world. City of David - Into David's palace there. The wall - Which though in some sort built by David, yet Solomon is here said to build, either because he made it higher, and stronger, in which sense Nebuchadnezzar is said to have built Babylon, Dan. iv, 30, or because he built another wall besides the former, for after this time Jerusalem was encompassed with more walls than one.

2. Only - This particle is used here, and ver. 3, as an exception to Solomon's integrity and as a blemish to his government, That he himself both permitted and practiced this which was expressly forbidden, Levit xvii, 3, 4 Deut. xii, 13, 14. High places - Which were groves, or other convenient places upon hills, in which the patriarchs used to offer up their sacrifices to God; and from them this custom was derived both to the Gentiles and the Jews: and in them the Gentiles sacrificed to idols, the Hebrew to the true God. Because, &c. - Which reason was not sufficient, for there was a tabernacle, to which they were as much confined as to the temple, Exod. xl, 34-38, &c.

3. Yet - Although he miscarried in the matter of high places, yet in the general, his heart was right with God. Statutes - According to the statutes or commands of God, which are here called the statutes of David; not only because they were diligently practiced by David, but also because the observation of them was so earnestly pressed upon Solomon, and fortified with David's authority and command.

6. Truth - In the true worship of God, in the profession, belief, practice and defense of the true religion. So truth here contains all duties to God, as righteousness doth his duties to men, and uprightness the right manner of performing both sorts of duties. With thee - That is, in thy judgment, to whom he often appealed as the witness of his integrity.

7. Child - So he was in years: not above twenty years old; and withal (which he principally intends) he was raw and unexperienced, as a child, in state affairs. Go out, &c. - To govern my people, and manage affairs.

8. In the midst - Is set over them to rule and guide them. A metaphor from the overseer of divers workmen, who usually is in the midst of them, that he may the better observe how each of them discharges his office. Chosen - Thy peculiar people, whom thou takest special care of, and therefore wilt expect a more punctual account of my government of them.

9. An understanding heart - Whereby I may both clearly discern, and faithfully perform all the parts of my duty: for both these are spoken of in scripture, as the effects of a good understanding; and he that lives in the neglect of his duties, or the practice of wickedness, is called a fool, and one void of understanding. Discern - Namely in causes and controversies among my people; that I may not through mistake, or prejudice, or passion, give wrong sentences, and call evil good, or good evil. Absalom, that was a fool, wished himself a judge: Solomon, that was a wise man, trembles at the undertaking. The more knowing and considerate men are, the more jealous they are of themselves.

13. All thy days - Whereby he signifies that these gifts of God were not transient, as they were in Saul, but such as should abide with him whilst he lived.

14. And if - This caution God gives him, lest his wisdom should make him proud, careless, or presumptuous.

15. A dream - Not a vain dream, wherewith men are commonly deluded; but a divine dream, assuring him of the thing: which he knew, by a divine impression after he was awakened: and by

the vast alteration which he presently found within himself in point of wisdom and knowledge. The ark - Which was there in the city of David, 2 Sam. vi, 17, before which he presented himself in a way of holy adoration. Burnt offerings - Chiefly for the expiation of his and his peoples sin, through the blood of Christ, manifestly signified in these sacrifices. Peace offerings - Solemnly to praise God for all his mercies, and especially for giving him quiet possession of the kingdom, and for his glorious appearance to him in the dream, and for the promise therein made to him, and the actual accomplishment of it.

16. Harlots - Or, victuallers: for the Hebrew words signifies both. Yet that they are unmarried persons, seems probable, both because there is no mention of any husbands, whose office it was, if there were any such, to contest for their wives; and because they lived a solitary life in one house.

19. Overlaid it - And so smothered it: which she justly conjectures, because there were evidences of that kind of death, but no appearance of any other cause thereof.

25. Said - Though with a design far above the reach of the two women, or of the people present, who probably with horror expected the execution of it.

27. She is the mother - As is evident from her natural affection to the child, which she had rather have given away from her, than destroyed.

28. Wisdom of God - Divine wisdom with which God had inspired him for the government of his people.

## IV

Solomon's ministers of state, ver. 1-6. The purveyors of his household, ver. 7-19. The number of his subjects, and extent of his kingdom, ver. 20, 21. The provision for his table, ver. 22, 23. The peace of his subjects, ver. 24, 25. His stables, ver. 26-28. His wisdom, ver. 29-34.

1. All Israel - This is spoken with respect to his successors, who were kings only over a part, and that the smallest part of it.

2. Princes - That is, the chief rulers or officers. The son - Or the grand-son. The priest - The second priest, or the priest that attended upon Solomon's person in holy offices and administrations.

3. Scribes - That is, secretaries of state. He chose two, whereas David had but one: either, because he observed some inconveniences in trusting all those matters in one hand: or, because he had now much more employment than David had, this being a time of great peace and prosperity, and his empire enlarged.

4. Priests - That is, the high-priests, successively, first Abiathar, and then Zadok.

5. Officers - Over those twelve Officers, named ver. 7, &c. who were all to give up their accompts to him. Nathan - The prophet, who had been so highly instrumental in Solomon's establishment in the throne. Principal officer - Possibly, president of the king's council. Friend - His confident, with whom he used to communicate his most secret counsels.

6. Abiathar was - Steward of the king's household. Tribute - The personal tribute, or the levy of men, as appears by comparing this with chap. v, 13, 14, it being very fit that there should be some one person to whom the chief conduct of that great business was committed.

8. The son, &c. - This and others of them are denominated from their fathers, because they were known and famous in their generation.

10. Hepher - In Judah.

19. Country of Gilead - That is, in the remaining part of that land of Gilead, which was mentioned above. The only officer - In all Gilead, excepting the parcels mentioned before, in all the territories of Sihon and Og; which because they were of large extent, and yet all committed to this one man, it is here noted concerning him as his privilege above the rest.

21. The river - Euphrates: for so far David, having conquered the Syrians, extended his empire, which Solomon also maintained in that extent. And so God's promise concerning the giving the whole land, as far as Euphrates, to the Israelites, was fulfilled. And, if the Israelites had multiplied so much that the land of Canaan would not suffice them, having God's grant of all the land as far as Euphrates, they might have seized upon it whensoever occasion required. The land of the Philistines - Which is to be understood inclusively; for the Philistines were within Solomon's dominion. The border of Egypt - Unto the river Sihor, which was the border between Egypt and Canaan. And served - By tribute, or other ways, as he needed and required.

22. Measures - Hebrew. Cors: each of which contained ten ephahs. So this provision was sufficient for near three thousand persons. Meal - Of a coarser sort for common use.

23. Fat - Fatted in stalls. Out of pastures - Well fleshed, tender and good, though not so fat as the former.

24. Tiphsah - Either that Tiphsah, 2 Kings xv, 16, which was in the kingdom of Israel within Jordan; or, rather, another place of that name upon Euphrates, even that eminent city which is mentioned by Ptolemy, and Strabo, and Pliny, called Thapsarum. And this best agrees with the following: Azzah, which was the border of Canaan in the south and west, as Tiphsah was in the north and east. And so his dominion is described by both its borders. All kings - Who owned subjection, and paid tribute to him.

25. Under his vine - Enjoying the fruit of his own labour with safety and comfort. Under these two trees, which were most used and cultivated by the Israelites, he understands all other fruit-bearing trees, and all other comforts. And they are brought in as fitting or dwelling under these trees, partly for recreation or delight in the shade; and partly, for the comfort or advantage of the fruit; and withal, to note their great security, not only in their strong cities, but even in the country, where the vines and fig-trees grew, which was most open to the incursions of their enemies.

26. Forty thousand - In 2 Chron. ix, 25, it is but four thousand. But it is not exactly the same Hebrew word which is here and there, though we translate both stalls; and therefore there may well be allowed some difference in the signification, the one signifying properly stables, of which there were four thousand, the other stalls or partitions for each horse, which were forty thousand. Chariots - Both for his military chariots, which seem to be those fourteen hundred, chap. x, 26, and for divers other uses, as about his great and various buildings, and merchandises, and other occasions, which might require some thousands of other chariots. Horsemen - Appointed partly for the defense of his people in peace; and partly for attendance upon his person, and for the splendour of his government.

27. The officers - Named above. They lacked - Or rather, they suffered nothing to be lacking to any man that came thither, but plentifully provided all things necessary.

29. Largeness of heart - Vastness of understanding, a most comprehensive knowledge of all things both Divine and human.

30. East country - The Chaldeans, Persians, and Arabians, who all lay eastward from Canaan, and were famous in ancient times for their wisdom and learning. Egypt - The Egyptians, whose fame was then great for their skill in the arts and sciences, which made them despise the Grecians as children in knowledge.

31. All men - Either of his nation; or, of his time: or, of all times and nations, whether of the east or any other country excepting only the first and second Adam. Ethan, &c. - Israelites of eminent wisdom, probably the same mentioned, 1 Chron. ii, 6; xv, 19; xxv, 4 Psalm 8viii, 1(title,) Psalm lxxxix, 1(title). Chalcol, &c. - Of whom see 1 Chron. ii, 6.

32. Proverbs - That is, short, and deep, and useful sentences, whereof a great part are contained in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Songs - Whereof the chief and most divine are in the Canticles.

33. Trees - That is, of all plants, of their nature and qualities: all which discourses are lost, without any impeachment of the perfection of the holy scriptures; which were not written to teach men philosophy or physick, but only to make them wise unto salvation. From the cedar, &c. - That is, from the greatest to the least.

34. All kings - All the neighbouring kings; a restriction grounded upon the following words, where this is limited to such as heard of Solomon's wisdom. Let those who magnify the modern learning above that of the ancients, produce such a treasury of learning, anywhere in these later ages, as that was, which Solomon was master of. Yet this puts an honour upon human learning, that Solomon is praised for it, and recommends it to the great ones of the earth, as well worthy their diligent search. In all this Solomon was a type of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

## V

Hiram congratulates Solomon on his accession, and agrees to furnish him with workmen and timber for the temple, ver. 1-9. The work is well done, and the workmen paid, ver. 10-18.

6. They - That is, thy servants. And this assistance which these Gentiles gave to the building of Solomon's temple, was a type of the calling of the Gentiles, and that they should be instrumental in building and constituting Christ's spiritual temple. Cedar-trees - Which for their soundness, and strength, and fragrancy, and durableness, were most proper for his design. Of these David had procured some, but not a sufficient number. Lebanon - Which was in Solomon's jurisdiction: and therefore he doth not desire that Hiram would give him the cedars, because they were his own already; but only that his servants might hew them for him; which the ingenious Tyrians well understood. With thy servants - Either to be employed therein as they shall direct; or to receive the cedars, from their hands, and transmit them to me. Hire - Pay them for their labour and art. Sidonians - Or Tyrians: for these places and people being near, are promiscuously used one for another.

7. Rejoiced - Being a faithful friend to David and his house, and tho' it is not probable he was a sincere proselyte, yet he had sufficient information concerning the nature and excellency of the God of Israel, and had honourable thoughts of him.

9. The sea - The mid-land sea. Floats - Or, rafts. It is thought the timber were tied together in the water, as now is usual, and so by the help of boats or ships, conveyed to the appointed place, which was at no great distance. Household - My family and court, which most properly is called his house.

11. Measures - Hebrew. twenty cors pure oil; but in 2Chr ii, 10, it is twenty thousand baths of oil. To which there is added twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine. Either therefore, first, he speaks of several things. Or, secondly, he speaks there of what Solomon offered: for it runs thus, I will give; and here of what Hiram accepted. Or, thirdly, the barley, and wine, and twenty thousand baths of common oil, mentioned 2 Chron. ii, 10, must be added to the twenty thousand measures of wheat, and the twenty measures of pure oil here expressed, and the whole sum is to be made up from both places; that book of Chronicles being written to supply and compleat the histories of the books of Samuel, and of the Kings. Gave Hiram - Either, first, for sustenance to the workmen, during the years wherein they were employed in the cutting down and hewing of timber. Or, for the yearly support of the king's house, during the said time. Thus by the wise disposal of providence, one country has need of another, and is benefited by another, that there may be a mutual correspondence and dependence, to the glory of God our common Parent.

13. The levy - Which were to be employed in the most honourable and easy parts of the work relating to the temple; and these were Israelites; but those fifteen hundred thousand mentioned ver. 15, were strangers. If it seem strange, that so many thousands should be employed about so small a building as the temple was; it must be considered,

1. that the temple, all its parts being considered, was far larger than men imagine;
2. that it is probable, they were employed by turns, as the thirty thousand were, ver. 14, else they had been oppressed with hard and uninterrupted labours.
3. that the timber and stone hewed and carried by them, was designed, not only for the temple, but also for Solomon's own houses, and buildings; because we read of no other levy of men, nor of any care and pains taken after the building of the temple, for the procurement, or preparation of materials for his own houses, or his other buildings; nay, that this very levy of men was made and employed for the building of the Lord's house, and Solomon's house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer, is expressed chap. ix, 15.

16. Three thousand &c. - Whereof three thousand were set over the fifteen hundred thousand, expressed ver. 15, each of these, over fifty of them, and the odd three hundred were set over these three thousand, each of these to have the oversight of ten of them, to take an account of the work for them. But in 2 Chron. ii, 18, these overseers are said to be thirty-six hundred. The three thousand added in 2 Chron. ii, 2, might be a reserve, to supply the places of the other three thousand: yea, or of the thirty-three hundred, as any of them should be taken off from the work by death, or sickness, or weakness, or necessary occasions; which was a prudent provision, and not unusual in like cases. And so there were thirty-six hundred commissioned for the work, but only thirty-three hundred employed at one time; and therefore both computations fairly stand together.

17. Great and costly - Marble and porphyry, or other stones of great size and value. The foundation - Where they could not afterward be seen: and therefore that this was done, is mentioned only as a point of magnificence, except it was intended for a type, or mystical signification of the preciousness of Christ, who is the foundation of the true temple, the church of God.

18. Stone-squarers - Hebrew. the Giblites, the inhabitants of Gebel, a place near Zidon, famous for artificers and architects, Josh. xiii, 5. These are here mentioned apart, distinct from the rest of Hiram's builders, as the most eminent of them.

## VI

The time when the temple was built, ver. 1. The dimensions of it, ver. 2, 3. The windows, chambers, materials, doors, ver. 4-10. God's message to Solomon, ver. 11-13. The walls and flooring, ver. 14-18. The oracle and cherubim, ver. 19-30. The doors and inner court, ver. 31-36. How long it was building, ver. 37-38.

1. Four hundred and four score, &c. - Allowing forty years to Moses, seventeen to Joshua, two hundred ninety-nine to the Judges, forty to Eli, forty to Samuel and Saul, forty to David, and four to Solomon before he began the work, we have just the sum of four hundred and eighty. So long it was before that holy house was built, which in less than four hundred and thirty years was burnt by Nebuchadnezzar. It was thus deferred, because Israel had by their sins, made themselves unworthy of this honour: and because God would shew how little he values external pomp and splendour in his service. And God ordered it now, chiefly to be a shadow of good things to come.

2. The house - Properly so called, as distinct from all the walls and buildings which were adjoining to it; namely, the holy, and most holy place. Length - From east, to west. And this and the other measures may seem to belong to the inside from wall to wall. Cubits - Cubits of the sanctuary. Height - Namely, of the house: for the porch was one hundred and twenty cubits high, 2 Chron. iii, 4. So that all the measures compared each with other were harmonious. For sixty to twenty (the length to the breadth) is triple: or as three to one: and sixty to thirty (the length to the height) is double, or as two to one: and thirty to twenty (the height to the breadth) is one and an half, as three to two. Which are the proportions answering to the three great concords in music, commonly called, a twelfth, an eighth, and a fifth. Which therefore must needs be a graceful proportion to the eye, as that in music is graceful to the ear.

3. The porch - In the front of, or entrance into the house, 2 Chron. iii, 4, being a portico, a walk or gallery, at one end of the building (from side to side.) And the measures of this were harmonious also. For twenty to ten (the length of the portico to the breadth of it) is double, or as two to one. And, if the height within, be the same with that of the house, that is thirty; it will be to the length of it, as three to two; and to its breadth, as three to one. Or, if we take in the whole height mentioned, 2 Chron. iii, 4, which is one hundred and twenty; there is in this no disproportion: being to its length as six to one; and to its breadth as twelve to one; especially when this height was conveniently divided into several galleries, one over another, each of which had their due proportions.

4. Narrow - Narrow outward, to prevent the inconveniences of the weather; widening by degrees inward, that so the house might better receive, and more disperse the light.

5. Against the wall - The beams of the chambers were not fastened into the wall, but leaned upon the buttresses of the wall. Chambers - For the laying the priests garments, and other utensils belonging to the temple, therein. Round about - On all the sides except the east, where the porch

was; and except some very small passages for the light. And yet these lights might be in the five uppermost cubits of the wall, which were above all these chambers, for these were only fifteen cubits high, and the wall was twenty cubits high. Chambers - Galleries which encompassed all the chambers; and which were necessary for passage to them.

6. Broad - On the inside, and besides the galleries mentioned above. Narrowed rests - Or, narrowings: as in our buildings the walls of an house are thicker, or broader at the bottom, and narrower towards the top: only these narrowings were in the outside of the wall, which at each of the three stories was a cubit narrower than that beneath it. And this is mentioned, as the reason of the differing breadth of the chambers; because the wall being narrower, allowed more space for the upper chambers. Not fastened - That there might be no holes made in the wall for fastening them; and that the chambers might be removed, if occasion were, without any inconvenience to the house.

7. Made ready - Hewed, and squared, and fitted exactly according to the direction of the architect. Neither hammer, &c. - So it was ordered, partly for the ease and conveniency of carriage: partly, for the magnificence of the work, and commendation of the workmen's skill and diligence: and partly, for mystical signification. And as this temple was a manifest type both of Christ's church upon earth, and of the heavenly Jerusalem: so this circumstance signified as to the former, that it is the duty of the builders and members of the church, as far as in them lies, to take care that all things be transacted there with perfect peace and quietness; and that no noise of contention, or division, or violence, be heard in that sacred building: and for the latter, that no spiritual stone, no person, shall bear a part in that heavenly temple, unless he be first hewed, and squared, and made meet for it in this life.

8. The door - That is, by which they entered to go up to the middle chamber or chambers; such as were in the middle story. Right side - That is, in the south-side, called the right side; because when a man looks towards the east, the south is on his right hand. There was another door on the left, or the north-side, leading to the chambers on that side. Winding stairs - Without the wall, leading up to the gallery out of which they went into the several chambers. Middle chamber - Or rather, into the middle story, or row of chambers; and so in the following words, out of the middle story: for these stair's could not lead up into each of the chambers; nor was it needful, but only into the story, which was sufficient for the use of all the chambers.

10. Built chambers - The Hebrew words may be properly rendered, He built a roof, a flat and plain roof, over all the house, according to the manner of the Israelitish buildings. The inner roof was arched, ver. 9, that it might be the more beautiful, but the outward roof was flat. Five cubits - Above the walls of the temple: that it might be a little higher than the arched roof, which it was designed to cover and secure. They rested - Hebrew. it rested, namely, the roof. Timber of cedar - Which rested upon the top of the wall, as the chambers, ver. 5, rested upon the sides of the wall.

12. If - God expresses the condition upon which his promise and favour is suspended; and by assuring him thereof in case of obedience, he plainly intimates the contrary upon his disobedience. Thus he was taught, that all the charge he and the people were at, in erecting this temple, would neither excuse them from obedience to the law of God, nor shelter them from his judgments in case of disobedience.

15. Walls - The name of a wall is not appropriated to stone or brick, because we read of a brazen wall, Jer. xv, 20, and a wall of iron, Ezek iv, 3. And that wall into which Saul smote his javelin, 1 Sam. xix, 10, seems more probably to be understood of wood, than of stone; especially, considering

that it was the room where the king used to dine. By this periphrasis, from the floor of the house, unto the walls of the ceiling, he designs all the side-walls of the house. Them - The side-walls of the house. Wood - With other kind of wood, even with fir; as appears from 2 Chron. iii, 5, wherewith the floor is here said to be covered. Floor - This is spoken only concerning the floor, because there was nothing but planks of fir; whereas there was both cedar and fir in the sides of the house, the fir being either put above, or upon the cedar; or intermixed with, or put between the boards or ribs of cedar: as may be gathered from, 2 Chron. iii, 5.

16. House - That is, the most holy place, which contained in length twenty cubits, which may be said to be on the sides Of the house, because this part took off twenty cubits in length from each side of the house, and was also twenty cubits from side to side, so it was twenty cubits every way. The oracle-the most holy place - The last words are added, to explain what he means by the word oracle, which he had not used before.

17. House - That is, the holy place. Temple - This is added, to restrain the signification of the word house, which otherwise notes the whole building. It - The oracle.

18. Cedar - Cedar is here named, not to exclude all other wood, but stone only; as the following words shew.

19. Prepared - That is, adorned and fitted it for the receipt of the ark. Solomon made every thing new, but the ark. That with its mercy seat was still the same that Moses made. This was the token of God's presence, which is with his people, whether they meet in tent or temple, and changes not with their condition.

20. Forepart - Which was in the inner part of the house, called in Hebrew, the forepart; not because a man first enters there, but because when a man is entering, or newly entered into the house, it is still before him. Covered - With gold, chap. vii, 48; 1 Chron. xxviii, 18. The altar - The altar of incense.

21. House - Or, that house, the oracle. Partition - He made a veil, which was a farther partition between the holy, and the most holy; which veil did hang upon these golden chains. Before the oracle - In the outward part of the wall, or partition, which was erected between the oracle and the holy place; which is properly said to be before the oracle, there the veil was hung; and there the chains or bars, or whatsoever it was which fastened the doors of the oracle, were placed. It - The partition; which he here distinguisheth from the house, or the main walls of the house, which he had in the former part of this verse told us were overlaid with gold; and now he affirms much as of the partition.

22. Whole house - Not only the oracle, but all the holy place. The altar - the altar of incense, which was set in the holy place close by the doors of the oracle. With gold - As before he overlaid it with cedar.

23. Cherubim - Besides those two made by Moses, Exod. xxv, 18, which were of gold, and far less than these. The Heathens set up images of their gods, and worshipped them. These were designed to represent the servants and attendants of the God of Israel, the holy angels, not to be worshipped themselves, but to shew how great he is whom we worship.

29. Cherubim - As signs of the presence and protection of the angels vouch-safed by God to that place. Palm-trees - Emblems of that peace and victory over their enemies, which the Israelites duly serving God in that place might expect. Within and without - Within the oracle and without it, in the holy place.

31. Fifth part - That is, four cubits in height or breadth, whereas the wall was twenty cubits.

36. Inner court - The priests court, 2 Chron. iv, 9, so called, because it was next to the temple which it compassed. Cedar beams - Which is understood, of so many galleries, one on each side of the temple, whereof the three first were of stone, and the fourth of cedar, all supported with rows of pillars: upon which there were many chambers for the uses of the temple, and of the priests.

38. Seven years - It is not strange that this work took up so much time: for,

1. The temple properly so called, was for quantity the least part of it, there being very many and great buildings both above ground in the several courts, (for though only the court of the priests be mentioned, yet it is thereby implied, that the same thing was proportionably done in the others) and under ground.
2. The great art which was used here, and the small number of exquisite artists, required the longer time for the doing it. And if the building of Diana's temple employed all Asia for two hundred years; and the building of one pyramid employed three hundred and sixty thousand men, for twenty years together; both which, Pliny affirms: no reasonable man can wonder that this temple was seven years in building. Now let us see what this temple typifies.
   1. Christ himself is the true temple. He himself spoke of the temple of his body: and in him dwelt all the fulness of the godhead. In him all the Israel of God meet, and thro' him have access with confidence to God.
   2. Every believer is a living temple, in whom the spirit of God dwelleth. We are wonderfully made by the Divine Providence, but more wonderfully made anew by the Divine grace. And as Solomon's temple was built on a rock, so are we built on Christ.
   3. The church is a mystical temple, enriched and beautified, not with gold and precious stones, but with the gifts and graces of the spirit. Angels are ministering spirits, attending the church and all the members of it on all sides.
   4. Heaven is the everlasting temple. There the church will be fixt, and no longer moveable. The cherubim there always attend upon the throne of glory. In the temple there was no noise of axes or hammers: every thing is quiet and serene in heaven. All that shall be stones in that building, must here be fitted and made ready for it; must be hewn and squared by the Divine grace, and so made meet for a place in that temple.

## VII

Solomon builds several other houses, ver. 1-12. He furnishes the temple with two pillars, ver. 13-22. With a molten sea, ver. 23-26. With ten bases and ten lavers of brass, ver. 27-39. With all other utensils, and the things David had dedicated, ver. 40-51.

1. House - The royal palace for himself, and for his successors. Thirteen years - Almost double the time to that in which the temple was built; because neither were the materials so far provided

and prepared for this, as they were for the temple: nor did either he or his people use the same diligence in this, as in the other work; to which they were quickened by God's express command.

2. Of the forest of Lebanon - An house so called, because it was built in the forest of Lebanon, for a summer-seat, whither Solomon, having so many chariots and horses, might at any time retire with ease. The length - Of the principal mansion; to which doubtless other buildings were adjoining. Pillars - Upon which the house was built, and between which there were four stately walks. Beams - Which were laid for the floor of the second story.

3. Fifteen - So in this second story were only three rows of pillars, which was sufficient for the ornament of the second and for the support of the third story.

4. Against light - One directly opposite to the other, as is usual in well-contrived buildings. In ranks - One exactly under another.

5. Windows - He speaks, of smaller windows or lights, which were over the several doors.

6. A porch - Supported by divers pillars, for the more magnificent entrance into the house; upon which also it is thought there were other rooms built, as in the house. The porch - Now mentioned which is said to be before them; before the pillars on which the house of Lebanon stood. Pillars - Or, and pillars; That is, fewer and lesser pillars for the support of the lesser porch. Beam - Which was laid upon these pillars, as the others were ver. 2.

7. A porch - Another porch or distinct room without the house. The other - The whole floor; or, from floor to floor, from the lower floor on the ground, to the upper floor which covered it.

8. Another court - That is, between the porch and the house, called therefore the middle court, chap. 2 Kings xx, 4. Like this - Not for form or quantity, but for the materials and workmanship, the rooms being covered with cedar, and furnished with like ornaments.

9. These - Buildings described here and in the former chapter. The measures - Hewed in such measure and proportion as exact workmen use to hew ordinary stones. Within, &c. - Both on the inside of the buildings which were covered with cedar, and on the outside also. To the coping - From the bottom to the top of the building. And so on - Not only on the outside of the front of the house, which being most visible, men are more careful to adorn; but also of the other side of the house, which looked towards the great court belonging to the king's house.

11. Above - That is, in the upper part; for this is opposed to the foundation. Stones and cedars - Intermixed the one, and the other.

12. The court - Namely, of Solomon's dwelling-house mentioned, ver. 8.

14. In brass - And Of gold, and stone, and purple, and blue, 2 Chron. ii, 14. But only his skill in brass is here mentioned, because he speaks only of the brasen things which he made.

16. Five cubits - The word chapiter is taken either more largely for the whole, so it is five cubits; Or, more strictly, either for the pommels, as they are called, 2 Chron. iv, 12, or for the cornice or crown, and so it was but three cubits, to which the pomegranates being added make it four cubits, as it is below, ver. 19, and the other work upon it took up one cubit more, which in all made five cubits.

17. The chapiters - Which those nets and wreathes encompass, either covering, and as it were receiving and holding the pomegranates, or being mixed with them.

18. Two rows - Either of pomegranates, by comparing this with ver. 20, or of some other curious work.

19. Lilly work - Made like the leaves of lillies. In the porch - Or, as in the porch; such work as there was in the porch of the temple, in which these pillars were set, ver. 21, that so the work of the tops of these pillars might agree with that in the top of the porch.

20. The belly - So he calls the middle part of the chapiter, which jetted farthest out. Two hundred - They are said to be ninety and six on a side of a pillar; in one row and in all an hundred, Jer. lii, 23, four great pomegranates between the several checker-works being added to the first ninety six. And it must needs be granted, that there were as many on the other side of the pillar, or in the other row, which makes them two hundred upon a pillar, as is here said, and four hundred upon both pillars, as they are numbered, 2 Chron. iv, 13.

21. Jachin - Jachin signifies he; That is, God shall establish, his temple, and church, and people: and Boaz signifies, in it, or rather, in him (to answer the he in the former name) is strength. So these pillars being eminently strong and stable, were types of that strength which was in God, and would be put forth by God for the defending and establishing of his temple and people, if they were careful to keep the conditions required by God on their parts.

23. A Sea - He melted the brass, and cast it into the form of a great vessel, for its vastness called a sea, which name is given by the Hebrew to all great collections of waters. The use of it was for the priests to wash their hands and feet, or other things as occasion required, with the water which they drew out of it.

24. Knops - Carved or molten figures: for this word signifies figures or pictures of all sorts. Ten, &c. - So there were three hundred in all. Cast - Together with the sea; not carved. Two rows - It seems doubtful whether the second row had ten in each cubit, and so there were three hundred more; or, whether the ten were distributed into five in each row.

25. Oxen - Of solid brass, which was necessary to bear so great a weight.

26. Baths - Which amounts to five hundred barrels, each bath containing about eight gallons; the bath being a measure of the same bigness with an ephah.

27. Bases - Upon which stood the ten lavers mentioned below, ver. 38, in which they washed the parts of the sacrifices.

28. Borders - Broad brims, possibly for the more secure holding of the lavers.

29. Base above - So he calls the upper-most part of the base: for though it was above, yet it was a base to the laver, which stood upon it. Additions - Either as bases for the feet of the said lions and oxen: or, only as farther ornaments.

30. Wheels - Whereby the bases and lavers might be removed from place to place as need required. Under-setters - Hebrew. shoulders; fitly so called, because they supported the lavers, that they should not fall from their bases, when the bases were removed together with the lavers.

31. The mouth - So he calls that part in the top of the base which was left hollow, that the foot of the laver might be let into it. The chapiter - Within the little base, which he calls the chapiter, because it rose up from, and stood above the great base. Above - Above the chapiter; for the mouth went up, and grew wider like a funnel. A cubit - In height, ver. 35, whereof half a cubit was above the chapiter or little base, and the other half below it. A cubit and half - In compass. Four square - So the innermost part, called the mouth, was round, but the outward part was square, as when a circle is made within a quadrangle.

33. Molten - And cast together with the bases.

34. Of the base - Not only of the same matter, but of the same piece, being cast with it.

36. The proportion - Or, empty place, that is, according to the bigness of the spaces which were left empty for them, implying that they were smaller than those above mentioned.

39. Right side - In the south side, not within the house, but in the priests court, where they washed either their hands or feet, or the parts of the sacrifices. Left side - On the north side. The south - In the southeast part, where the offerings were prepared.

45. The pots - To boil those parts of the sacrifices which the priests, &c. were to eat.

48. Vessels - Such as Moses had made only these were larger, and richer, and more. Table of gold - Under which, are comprehended both all the utensils belonging to it, and the other ten tables which he made together with it.

49. Candlesticks - Which were ten, according to the number of the tables, whereas Moses made but one: whereby might be signified the progress of the light of sacred truth, which was now grown clearer than it was in Moses's time, and should shine brighter and brighter until the perfect day of gospel light. Pure gold - Of massy and fine gold. The oracle - In the holy place. Flowers - Wrought upon the candlesticks, as it had formerly been.

51. Silver and gold - So much of it as was left. And vessels - Those which David had dedicated, and with them the altar of Moses, and some other of the old utensils which were now laid aside, far better being put in the room of them.

## VIII

The chief men of Israel called together, ver. 1, 2. The ark fixt in the most holy place, ver. 3-9. God takes possession of it by a cloud, ver. 10-12. Solomon tells the people the occasion of their meeting, ver. 13-21. The prayer of dedication, ver. 22-53. He dismisses the assembly with a blessing and an exhortation, ver. 54-61. Offers abundance of sacrifices, ver. 62-66.

1. Elders - The senators, and Judges, and rulers. Heads - For each tribe had a peculiar governor. Chief - The chief persons of every great family in each tribe. Jerusalem - Where the temple was built. Bring the ark - To the top of Moriah, upon which it was built; whither they were now to carry the ark in solemn pomp. City of David - Where David had placed the ark, which is called Zion, because it was built upon that hill.

2. All Israel - Not only the chief men, but a vast number of the common people. The feast - The feast of the dedication, to which Solomon had invited them. Seventh month - Which time he chose with respect to his peoples convenience, because now they had gathered in all their fruits, and were come up to Jerusalem, to celebrate the feast of tabernacles. But the temple was not finished till the eighth month, chap. vi, 38, how then could he invite them in the seventh month? This was the seventh month of the next year. For although the house in all its parts was finished the year before, yet the utensils of it were not then fully finished: and many preparations were to be made for this great and extraordinary occasion.

3. The priests - For although the Levites might do this, Num. iv, 15, yet the priests did it at this time, for the greater honour of the solemnity; and because the Levites might not enter into the holy-

place, much less into the holy of holies, where it was to be placed, into which the priests themselves might not have entered, if the high-priest alone could have done it.

4. The tabernacle - That made by Moses, which doubtless before this time had been translated from Gibeon to Zion, and now together with other things, was put into the treasuries of the Lord's house, to prevent all superstitious use of it, and to oblige the people to come up to Jerusalem, as the only place where God would now be worshipped.

5. Sacrificing - When the ark was seated in its place: for although they might in the way offer some sacrifices, as David did; yet that was not a proper season to offer so many sacrifices as could not be numbered. This is more particularly related below, ver. 62, 63, 64, which is here signified by way of anticipation.

6. Cherubim - Of Solomon's new made cherubim, not of the Mosaic cherubim, which were far less, and unmovably fixed to the ark, Exod. xxxvii, 7, 8, and therefore together with the ark, were put under the wings of these cherubim.

8. Drew out - Not wholly, which was expressly forbidden, Exod. xxv, 15, Num. iv, 6, but in part. Seen out - In the most holy place, which is oft called by way of eminency, the holy place, and the Hebrew words rendered before the oracle, may be as well rendered, within the oracle. And these staves were left in this posture, that the high-priest might hereby be certainly guided to that very place where he, was one day in a year to sprinkle blood, and to offer incense before the ark, which otherwise he might mistake in that dark place, where the ark was wholly covered with the wings of the great cherubim, which stood between him and the ark when he entered in.

9. Nothing - Strictly and properly: but in a more large sense, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod were also in it, Heb. ix, 4, that is, by it, in the most holy place, before the ark of the testimony, where God commanded Moses to put them.

10. The cloud - The usual token of God's glorious presence. Filled - In testimony of his gracious acceptance of this work, and their service; and to beget an awe and reverence in them, and in all others, when they approach to God.

12. Then spake - Perceiving both priests and people struck with wonder at this darkness, he minds them, that this was no sign of God's disfavour, as some might possibly imagine; but a token of his approbation, and special presence among them. Said - He hath declared, that he would manifest his presence with, and dwelling among his people, by a dark cloud, in which he would appear.

14. Turned - From the temple to the body of the congregation. Stood - In token of reverence, and of their readiness to receive the blessing.

16. Since, &c. - Until David's time; for then he did chuse Jerusalem. That my name - That my presence, and grace, and worship, and glory, might be there. Chose David - And in and with him the tribe of Judah, of which he was, and Jerusalem where he dwelt.

21. The covenant - The tables of the covenant, wherein the conditions of God's covenant with Israel are written.

22. Stood - Upon a scaffold set up for him in the court of the people, 2 Chron. vi, 13.

24. Hast kept - That branch of thy promise concerning the building of this house by David's son.

25. Keep - Make good the other branch of thy promise.

27. But will - Is it possible that the great, and high, and lofty God should stoop so low, as to take up his dwelling amongst men? The heaven - All this vast space of the visible heaven. And

heaven, &c. - The third and highest, and therefore the largest heaven, called the heaven of heavens for its eminency and comprehensiveness. Contain - For thy essence reacheth far beyond them, being omnipresent. Much less - This house therefore was not built as if it were proportionable to thy greatness, or could contain thee, but only that therein we might serve and glorify thee.

28. Yet - Tho' thou art not comprehended within this place, yet shew thyself to be graciously present here, by accepting and granting my present requests here tendered unto thee.

29. Open - To behold with an eye of favour. My name - My presence, and glory and grace. This place - This temple, to which Solomon did now look, and towards which, the godly Israelites directed their looks in their prayers.

30. In heaven - Which he adds to direct them in their addresses to God in this temple, to lift up their eyes above it, even to heaven, where God's most true, and most glorious dwelling-place is. Forgive - The sins of thy people, praying, and even of their prayers; which, if not pardoned, will certainly hinder the success of all their prayers, and the course of all thy blessings.

31. Trespass - If he be accused of a trespass. Laid on him - Either by the judge, or by the party accusing him, or by the accused person himself: which was usual, when there were no witnesses. Thine altar - For here God, who was appealed to as witness, was especially present. Hence the Heathens used to swear at their altars.

32. His way - The just recompence of his wicked action. Give him, &c. - To vindicate him, and manifest his integrity.

33. Confess - Give glory to thy name, by acknowledging their sins, and by justice; and by accepting the punishment of their iniquity; and by trusting to thy power and goodness alone, for their deliverance.

35. Heaven - The lower heaven in which the clouds are. Shut up - Heaven is compared to a great store-house in God's keeping, out of which nothing can be had, so long as it is close shut up.

36. Good way - The way, of their duty, which is good in itself; and both delightful and profitable, to those that walk in it. Give rain - The order of Solomon's prayer is very observable; first and chiefly, he prays for their repentance and forgiveness, which is the chief blessing, and the only solid foundation of all other mercies: and then he prays for temporal mercies; thereby teaching us what to desire principally in our prayers; which also Christ hath taught us in his perfect prayer; wherein there is but one petition for outward, and all the rest are for spiritual blessings.

38. The plague - His sin, which may be called the plague of his heart, in opposition to the other plagues here mentioned; so the sense is, who, by their afflictions are brought to a true and serious sense of their worse and inward plague of their sins, which are most fitly called the plague of the heart, because that is both the principal seat of sin, and the fountain from whence all actual sins flow.

39. Thou knowest - Not only the plagues of their hearts, their several wants and burdens, (these he knows! but he will know them from us,) but the desire and intent of the heart, the sincerity or hypocrisy of it.

41. A stranger - A proselyte. But cometh - That he may worship, and glorify thy name.

43. Calleth for - Agreeable to thy will and word. It is observable, that his prayer for the strangers is more large, and comprehensive, than for the Israelites; that thereby he might both shew his public-spiritedness, and encourage strangers to the worship of the true God. Thus early were the indications of God's favour, toward the sinners of the Gentiles. As there was then one law for the native and for the stranger, so there was one gospel for both.

44. To battle - In a just cause, and by thy warrant or commission. Shall pray - Whereby he instructs them, that they should not trust, either to the strength or justice of their arms, but only to God's help and blessing. Chosen - For thy dwelling-place, and the seat of thy temple. Towards the house - For to it they were to turn their faces in prayer; to profess themselves worshippers of the true God, in opposition to idols; and to strengthen their faith in God's promises and covenant, the tables whereof were contained in that house. Soldiers in the field must not think it enough that others pray for them: they must pray for themselves. And they are here encouraged to expect a gracious answer. Praying should always go along with fighting.

48. And return - Sincerely, universally, and steadfastly.

49. Their course - Hebrew. their right, against their invaders and oppressors. For they had forfeited all their rights to God only, but not to their enemies; whom tho' God used as scourges to chastise his peoples sins, yet they had no pretense of right to their land.

55. He stood - He spoke this standing, that he might be the better heard, and because he blessed as one having authority. Never were words more pertinently spoken: never was a congregation dismissed, with that which was more likely to affect them, and to abide with them.

56. Blessed, &c. - This discharge he gives in the name of all Israel, to the everlasting honour of the Divine faithfulness, and the everlasting encouragement of all those that build upon the Divine promises.

58. Incline - That he may not only bless us with outward prosperity, but especially, with spiritual blessings: and that as he hath given us his word to teach and direct us, so he would by his holy Spirit, effectually incline us to obey it.

61. Perfect - Let your obedience be universal, without dividing; upright, without dissembling; and constant, without declining.

63. Offered - Not all in one day, but in the seven, or it may be in the fourteen days, mentioned ver. 65.

64. Middle of the court - Of the priests court, in which the great altar was. This he consecrated as he did the great altar, by sacrifices; but with this difference, that he consecrated that for perpetual use: but this only for the present occasion, being warranted to do so both by the necessity of it for God's service, and for the present solemn work, for which the brazen altar was not sufficient; and by the direction of God's spirit, wherewith Solomon was endowed, as being a prophet, as well as a king. Here therefore he suddenly reared up divers altars, which, after this solemnity were demolished.

65. Seven - Seven for the dedication of the temple, or altar; and the other seven for the feast of tabernacles. And it seems to be expressed in this manner, to intimate, that these fourteen days of rejoicing, were not altogether, but that there was some interval between them, which indeed was necessary, because the day of atonement was on the tenth day of this month, Lev. xxiii, 27. And because these fourteen days ended on the twenty-second day, 2 Chron. vii, 10, it may seem most probable, that the feast of the dedication was kept before the tenth day: and the feast of tabernacles some days after it.

66. He sent - Solomon having joined with the people in the solemn assembly, which was kept on the eighth day; in the close of that day took his solemn farewell, and dismissed them with his blessing; and the next morning when the heads and elders with divers of the people came to take their leave of the king, he sent them away.

## IX

God in a vision answers Solomon's prayer, ver. 1-9. The mutual presents of Solomon and Hiram, ver. 10-14. His workmen and buildings, ver. 15-24. His devotion, ver. 25. His navy, ver. 26- 28.

3. For ever - As long as the Mosaic dispensation lasts; whereas hitherto my worship has been successively in several places. Eyes - My watchful and gracious providence. Heart - My tender affection. Shall be there - Shall be towards this place and people.

5. Then - Upon that condition; for my promise to David was conditional.

8. High - Glorious and renowned. Astonished - At its unexpected and wonderful ruin. Hiss - By way of contempt and derision.

11. Galilee - Or, near the land of Galilee, bordering upon it; in those parts which were near, and adjoining to Hiram's dominions: with the cities, understand the territories belonging to them. These cities, though they were within those large bounds which God fixed to the land of promise, Gen. xv, 18 Josh. i, 4, yet were not within those parts which were distributed by lot in Joshua's time. It is probable they were not inhabited by Israelites, but by Canaanites, or other Heathens; who being subdued, and extirpated by David or Solomon, those cities became a part of their dominions; and afterwards were reckoned a part of Galilee, as Josephus notes.

13. Cabul - That is, of dirt, as most interpret it. Because, though the land was very good, yet being a thick and stiff clay, and therefore requiring great pains to manure it, it was very unsuitable to the disposition of the Tyrians, who were delicate, and lazy, and luxurious, and wholly given to merchandise. And on his returning them, there is no doubt but Solomon gave him an equivalent more to his taste.

14. Sent - And this seems to be here added, both to declare the quantity of the gold sent, which had been only named before, ver. 11, and as the reason why he resented Solomon's action, because so great a sum required a better recompense.

15. Raised - Both the levy of men; of which, chap. v, 13, and the levy of money upon his people and subjects. He raised this levy, both to pay what he owed to Hiram, and to build the works following.

21. Those - He used them as bondmen, and imposed bodily labours upon them. "But why did not Solomon destroy them as God had commanded, when now it was fully in his power to do so?" The command of destroying them, Deut. vii, 2, did chiefly, if not only, concern that generation of Canaanites, who lived in, or, near the time of the Israelites entering into Canaan. And that command seems not to be absolute, but conditional, and with some exception for those who should submit and embrace the true religion, as may be gathered both from Josh. xi, 19, and from the history of the Gibeonites. For if God's command had been absolute, the oaths of Joshua, and of the princes, could not have obliged them, nor dispensed with such a command.

25. Three times - That is, at the three solemn feasts: and undoubtedly at all other appointed times.

26. Made - Not now, but in the beginning of his reign.

27. Knowledge of the sea - For which the Tyrians were famous. He sent also ships to join with Solomon's, not from Tyre, the city of Phoenicia; but from an island in the Red-sea, called Tyre, because it was a colony of the Tyrians, as Strabo notes.

28. Ophir - A place famous for the plenty and fineness of the gold there. It is agreed, that it was a part of the East-Indies, probably Ceylon, which though very remote from us, yet was far nearer the Red-sea, from whence they might easily sail to it in those ancient times, because they might (according to the manner of those first ages) sail all along near the coast, though the voyage was thereby more tedious, which was the reason why three years were spent in it. And here, and here only were to be had all the commodities which Solomon fetched from Ophir, chap. x, 22. Fetched - In all there came to the king four hundred and fifty talents, whereof it seems thirty talents were allowed to Hiram and his men, and so there were only four hundred and twenty that came clear into the king's treasury.

## X

The queen of Sheba's interview with Solomon, ver. 1-10. His riches, ver. 11-15. Targets, ivory throne, vessels, ver, 16-23. Presents, chariots and horses, tribute, ver. 24-29.

1. Sheba - Of that part of Arabia, called Shabaea, which was at great distance from Jerusalem, bordering upon the Southern Sea; for there, much more than in Ethiopia, were the commodities which she brought, ver. 2, 10. Name of the Lord - That is, concerning God; the name of God being often put for God; concerning his deep knowledge in the things of God. For it is very probable she had, as had divers other Heathens, some knowledge of the true God, and an earnest desire to know more concerning him. Questions - Concerning natural, and civil, and especially, Divine things.

2. All her heart - Of all the doubts and difficulties wherewith her mind was perplexed.

4. House - Or, the houses, the temple and the king's house, in both which there were evidences of singular wisdom.

5. Sitting - The order and manner in which his courtiers, or other subjects (who all were his servants in a general sense) sat down at meals, at several tables in his court. Attendance - Upon the king, both at his table, and in his court; and when he went abroad to the temple or other places. Apparel - Both the costliness of it, and especially the agreeableness of it to their several places and offices. Went up - From his own palace. See 2 Kings xvi, 18, but the ancients, and some others, translate the words thus, and the burnt-offerings which he offered up in the house of the Lord; under which, is the chief, all other sacrifices are understood: when she saw the manner of his offering sacrifices to the Lord; which doubtless she would not neglect to see; and in the ordering of which she might discern many characters of excellent wisdom, especially when she had so excellent an interpreter as Solomon was, to inform her of the reasons of all the circumstances of that service. No spirit - She was astonished, and could scarcely determine whether she really saw these things, or whether it was only a pleasant dream.

8. Happy, &c. - With much more reason may we say this of Christ's servants: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be always praising thee.

14. Six hundred, &c. - Which amounts to about three millions of our money. And this gold did not come from Ophir in India, or Tharshish; but from Arabia and Ethiopia, which then were replenished with gold, though exhausted by the insatiable avarice of succeeding Ages.

15. Merchant-men - Hebrew. of the searchers; either merchants, who use to search out commodities: or, the gatherers of the king's revenues, who used to search narrowly into all wares, that the king might not be defrauded of his rights. Spice-merchants - Or rather, of the merchants in general, as the word is often used. So this and the former particular contain both the branches of the king's revenue, what he had from the land, and what he had from the merchants and traders. Kings - Of those parts of Arabia which were next to Canaan, which were either conquered by David, or submitted to pay tribute to Solomon. But we must not think all these to be kings of large dominions; many of them were only governors of cities, and the territories belonging to them, such as were formerly in Canaan, and were anciently called kings. The country - Or, of the land; the land of Arabia: whereof some parts were so far conquered, that he had governors of his own over them, who were each of them to take care of the king's revenue in his jurisdiction; and part only so far, that they still had kings of their own, but such as were tributaries to him.

16. Targets - For pomp and magnificence, and to be carried before him, by his guard, when he went abroad. The Roman magistrates had rods and axes carried before them, in token of their power to correct the bad: but Solomon shields and targets, to shew he took more pleasure in his power to defend and protect the good.

17. Shields - Smaller than targets.

19. Round - Made like the half of a circle.

21. Nothing - Comparatively. Such hyperbolical expressions are frequent both in scripture and other authors. But if gold in abundance, would make silver seem so despicable, shall not wisdom and grace, and the foretastes of heaven, make gold seem much more so?

22. Tharshish - Ships that went to Tharshish. For Tharshish was the name of a place upon the sea, famous for its traffick with merchants, and it was a place very remote from Judea, as appears from the three years usually spent in that voyage. But whether it was Spain, where in those times there was abundance of gold and silver, as Strabo and others affirm; or, some place in the Indies, it is needless to determine.

24. All the earth - That is, all the kings of the earth, (as it is expressed 2 Chron. ix, 23,) namely of those parts of the earth.

28. Horses, &c. - The two chief commodities of Egypt. Price - Solomon received them from Pharaoh at a price agreed between them, and gave this privilege to his merchants, for a tribute to be paid out of it.

29. Chariot - This is not to be understood of the chariots and horses themselves, but for the lading of chariots and horses, which consisting of fine linen and silk, were of great value: and the king's custom, together with the charges of the journey, amounted to these sums. Hittites - A people dwelling principally in the northern and eastern parts of Canaan, Josh. i, 4, whom the Israelites, contrary to their duty, suffered to live amongst them, Judg. iii, 5, who afterwards grew numerous and potent, and, it may be, sent out colonies (after the manner of the ancient times) into some parts of Syria and Arabia. And possibly, these kings of the Hittites may be some of those kings of Arabia, ver. 15.

## XI

Solomon's many wives turn his heart from God, ver. 1-8. God reproves and threatens him, ver. 9-13. Stirs up Hadad and Rezon against him, ver. 14-25. An account of Jeroboam, ver. 26-40. Solomon's death and burial, ver. 41-43.

3. Seven hundred wives, &c. - God had particularly forbidden the kings to multiply either horses or wives, Deut. xvii, 16, 17, we saw chap.

chap. x, 29, how he broke the former law, multiplying horses: and here we see, how he broke the latter, multiplying wives. David set the example. One ill act of a good man may do more mischief than twenty of a wicked man. Besides, they were strange women, of the nations which God had expressly forbidden them to marry with. And to compleat the mischief, he clave unto these in love; was extravagantly fond of them, Solomon had much knowledge. But to what purpose, when he knew not how to govern his appetites?

4. Was old - As having now reigned nigh thirty years. When it might have been expected that experience would have made him wiser: then God permitted him to fall so shamefully, that he might be to all succeeding generations an example of the folly, and weakness of the wisest and the best men, when left to themselves. Turned his heart - Not that they changed his mind about the true God, and idols, which is not credible; but they obtained from him a publick indulgence for their worship, and possibly persuaded him to join with them in the outward act of idol-worship; or, at least, in their feasts upon their sacrifices, which was a participation of their idolatry.

5. Milcom - Called also Moloch.

6. Did evil - That is, did not worship God wholly, but joined idols with him.

7. An high place - That is, an altar upon the high place, as the manner of the Heathens was. The hill - In the mount of olives, which was nigh unto Jerusalem, 2 Sam. xv, 30, and from this act was called the mount of corruption, 2 Kings xxiii, 13. As it were, to confront the temple.

8. And sacrificed, &c. - See what need those have to stand upon their guard, who have been eminent for religion. The devil will set upon them most violently: and if they miscarry, the reproach is the greater. It is the evening that commends the day. Let us therefore fear, lest having run well, we come short.

12. Fathers sake - For my promise made to him, 2 Sam. vii, 12-15.

13. One tribe - Benjamin was not entirely his, but part of it adhered to Jeroboam, as Bethel, chap. xii, 29, and Hephron, 2 Chron. xiii, 19, both which were towns of Benjamin.

15. In Edom - By his army, to war against it. To bury - The Israelites who were slain in the battle, 2 Sam. viii, 13, 14, whom he honourably interred in some certain place, to which he is said to go up for that end. And this gave Hadad the opportunity of making his escape, whilst Joab and his men were employed in that solemnity. Had smitten - Or, and he smote, as it is in the Hebrew: which is here noted as the cause of Hadad's flight; he understood what Joab had done in part, and intended farther to do, even to kill all the males and therefore fled for his life.

18. Midian - He fled at first with an intent to go into Egypt, but took Midian, a neighbouring country, in his way, and staid there a while, possibly 'till he had by some of his servants tried Pharaoh's mind, and prepared the way for his reception. Paran - Another country in the road from

Edom to Egypt, where he hired men to attend him, that making his entrance there something like a prince, he might find more favour from that king and people. Land - To support himself and his followers out of the profits of it.

19. Found favour - God so disposing his heart, that Hadad might be a scourge to Solomon for his impieties.

21. Joab - Whom he feared as much as David himself. Own country - Whither accordingly he came; and was there, even from the beginning of Solomon's reign. And it is probable, by the near relation which was between his wife and Solomon's; and, by Pharaoh's intercession, he obtained his kingdom with condition of subjection and tribute to be paid by him to Solomon; which condition he kept 'till Solomon fell from God, and then began to be troublesome, and dangerous to his house and kingdom.

23. Who fled - When David had defeated him. Zobah - A part of Syria, between Damascus and Euphrates.

24. A band - Of soldiers, who fled upon that defeat, 2 Sam. x, 18, and others who readily joined them, and lived by robbery; as many Arabians did. Damascus - And took it, whilst Solomon was wallowing in luxury.

25. All adversity - He was a secret enemy, all that time; and when Solomon had forsaken God, he shewed himself openly. Beside - This infelicity was added to the former; whilst Hadad molested him in the south, Rezon threatened him in the north. But what hurt could Hadad or Rezon have done, to so powerful a king as Solomon, if he had not by sin made himself mean and weak? If God be on our side, we need not fear the greatest adversary. But if he be against us, he can make us fear the least: yea, the grasshopper shall be a burden. Syria - Over all that part of Syria, enlarging his empire the more, and thereby laying a foundation for much misery to Solomon's kingdom.

28. Charge - The taxes and tributes.

29. Went - Probably to execute his charge. Were alone - Having gone aside for private conference; for otherwise it is most likely that he had servants attending him, who, though they hear not the words, yet might see the action, and the rending of Jeroboam's coat; and thus it came to Solomon's ears, who being so wise, could easily understand the thing by what he heard of the action, especially when a prophet did it.

39. For this - For this cause, which I mentioned ver. 33. Not for ever - There shall a time come when the seed of David shall not be molested by the kingdom of Israel, but that kingdom shall be destroyed, and the kings of the house of David shall be uppermost, as it was in the days of Asa, Hezekiah and Judah. And at last the Messiah shall come, who shall unite together the broken sticks of Judah and Joseph, and rule over all the Jews and Gentiles too.

40. Solomon - To whose ears this had come. Shishak - Solomon's brother-in-law, who yet might be jealous of him, or alienated from him, because he had taken so many other wives to his sister, might cast a greedy eye upon the great riches which Solomon had amassed together, and upon which, presently after Solomon's death, he laid violent hands, 2 Chron. xii, 9.

41. The book - In the publick records, where the lives and actions of kings were registered from time to time, so this was only a political, not a sacred book.

42. Forty years - His reign was as long as his father's, but not his life; sin shortened his days.

43. Slept - This expression is promiscuously used concerning good and bad; and signifies only, that they died as their fathers did. But did he repent before he died? This seems to be put out of dispute by the book of Ecclesiastes; written after his fall; as is evident, not only from the unanimous

testimony of the Hebrew writers, but also, from the whole strain of that book, which was written long after he had finished all his works, and after he had liberally drunk of all sorts of sensual pleasures, and sadly experienced the bitter effects of his love of women, Eccles vii, 17, &c. which makes it more than probable, that as David writ Psalm li, 1-19. So Solomon wrote this book as a publick testimony and profession of his repentance.

## XII

Rehoboam succeeds and Jeroboam returns out of Egypt, ver. 1, 2. The peoples petition to Rehoboam, and his answer, ver. 3-15. Ten tribes revolt and make Jeroboam king, ver. 16-20. God forbids Rehoboam to make war upon them, ver. 21-24. Jeroboam sets up two golden calves, ver. 25-33.

1. Were come - Rehoboam did not call them thither, but went thither, because the Israelites prevented him, and had pitched upon that place, rather than upon Jerusalem, because it was most convenient for all, being in the center of the kingdom; and because that being in the potent tribe of Ephraim, they supposed there they might use that freedom of speech, which they resolved to use, to get there grievances redressed. So out of a thousand wives and concubines, he had but one son to bear his name, and he a fool! Is not sin an ill way of building up a family?

3. They sent - When the people sent him word of Solomon's death, they also sent a summons for him to come to Shechem. That the presence and countenance of a man of so great interest and reputation, might lay the greater obligation upon Rehoboam to grant them ease and relief.

4. Grievous - By heavy taxes and impositions, not only for the temple and his magnificent buildings, but for the expenses of his numerous court, and of so many wives and concubines. And Solomon having so grossly forsaken God, it is no wonder if he oppressed the people.

7. This day - By complying with their desires, and condescending to them for a season, till thou art better established in thy throne. They use this expression, fore-seeing that some would dissuade him from this course, as below the majesty of a prince. And answer - Thy service is not hard, it is only a few good words, which it is as easy to give as bad ones.

8. Young men - So called, comparatively to the old men: otherwise they were near forty years old.

10. Shall be thicker - Or rather, is thicker, and therefore stronger, and more able to crush you, if you proceed in these mutinous demands, than his loins, in which is the principal seat of strength.

15. From the Lord - Who gave up Rehoboam to so foolish and fatal a mistake, and alienated the peoples affections from him; and ordered all circumstances by his wise providence to that end.

16. In David - In David's family and son; we can expect no benefit or relief from him, and therefore we renounce all commerce with him, and subjection to him. They named David, rather than Rehoboam; to signify, that they renounced not Rehoboam only, but all David's family. Son of Jesse - So they call David in contempt; as if they had said, Rehoboam hath no reason to carry himself with such pride and contempt toward his people; for if we trace his original, it was as mean

and obscure as any of ours. To your tents - Let us forsake him, and go to our own homes, there to consider, how to provide for ourselves.

17. Judah - The tribe of Judah; with those parts of the tribes of Levi, and Simeon, and Benjamin, whose dwellings were within the confines of Judah.

18. Sent Adoram - Probably to pursue the counsel which he had resolved upon, to execute his office, and exact their tribute with rigor and violence, if need were.

19. Rebelled - Their revolt was sinful, as they did not this in compliance with God's counsel, but to gratify their own passions.

20. Was come - From Egypt; which was known to them before who met at Shechem, and now by all the people. Was none - That is, no entire tribe.

24. From me - This event is from my counsel and providence, to punish Solomon's apostasy.

25. Shechem - He repaired, and enlarged, and fortified it; for it had been ruined long since, Judg. ix, 45. He might chuse it as a place both auspicious, because here the foundation of his monarchy was laid; and commodious, as being near the frontiers of his kingdom. Penuel - A place beyond Jordan; to secure that part of his dominions.

26. Said, &c. - Reasoned within himself. The phrase discovers the fountain of his error, that he did not consult with God, who had given him the kingdom; as in all reason, and justice, and gratitude he should have done: nor believed God's promise, chap. xi, 38, but his own carnal policy.

27. Will turn - Which in itself might seem a prudent conjecture; for this would give Rehoboam, and the priests, and Levites, the sure and faithful friends of David's house, many opportunities of alienating their minds from him, and reducing them to their former allegiance. But considering God's providence, by which the hearts of all men, and the affairs of all kingdoms are governed, and of which he had lately seen so eminent an instance; it was a foolish, as well as wicked course.

28. Calves - In imitation of Aaron's golden calf, and of the Egyptians, from whom he was lately come. And this he the rather presumed to do, because he knew the people of Israel were generally prone to idolatry: and that Solomon's example had exceedingly strengthened those inclinations; and therefore they were prepared for such an attempt; especially, when his proposition tended to their own ease, and safety, and profit, which he knew was much dearer to them, as well as to himself, than their religion. Too much - Too great a trouble and charge, and neither necessary, nor safe for them, as things now stood. Behold thy gods - Not as if he thought to persuade the people, that these calves were that very God of Israel, who brought them out of Egypt: which was so monstrously absurd and ridiculous, that no Israelite in his right wits could believe it, and had been so far from satisfying his people, that this would have made him both hateful, and contemptible to them; but his meaning was, that these Images were visible representations, by which he designed to worship the true God of Israel, as appears, partly from that parallel place, Exod. xxxii, 4, partly, because the priests and worshippers of the calves, are said to worship Jehovah; and upon that account, are distinguished from those belonging to Baal, chap. xviii, 21, xxii, 6, 7, and partly, from Jeroboam's design in this work, which was to quiet the peoples minds, and remove their scruples about going to Jerusalem to worship their God in that place, as they were commanded: which he doth, by signifying to them, that he did not intend any alteration in the substance of their religion; nor to draw them from the worship of the true God, to the worship of any of those Baals, which were set up by Solomon; but to worship that self-same God whom they worshipped in Jerusalem, even the true God, who brought them out of Egypt; only to vary a circumstance: and that as they worshipped God at Jerusalem, before one visible sign, even the ark, and the sacred cherubim there; so his

subjects should worship God by another visible sign, even that of the calves, in other places; and as for the change of the place, he might suggest to them, that God was present in all places, where men with honest minds called upon him; that before the temple was built, the best of kings, and prophets, and people, did pray, and sacrifice to God in divers high places, without any scruple. And that God would dispense with them also in that matter; because going to Jerusalem was dangerous to them at this time; and God would have mercy, rather than sacrifice.

29. Beth-el, &c. - Which two places he chose for his peoples conveniency; Beth-el being in the southern, and Dan. in the northern parts of his kingdom.

30. A sin - That is, an occasion of great wickedness, not only of idolatry, which is called sin by way of eminency; nor only of the worship of the calves, wherein they pretended to worship the true God; but also of the worship of Baal, and of the utter desertion of the true God; and of all sorts of impiety. To Daniel - Which is not here mentioned exclusively, for they went also to Beth-el, ver. 32, 33, but for other reasons, either because that of Daniel was first made, the people in those parts having been long leavened with idolatry, Judg. xviii, 30, or to shew the peoples readiness and zeal for idols; that those who lived in, or near Beth-el, had not patience to stay 'till that calf was finished, but all of them were forward to go as far as Daniel, which was in the utmost borders of the land, to worship an idol there; when it was thought too much for them to go to Jerusalem to worship God.

31. An house - Houses, or chapels, besides the temples, which are built at Daniel and Beth-el; he built also for his peoples better accommodation, lesser temples upon divers high places. Of the lowest - Which he might do, either,

1. because the better sort refused it, or,
2. because such would be satisfied with mean allowances; and so he could put into his own purse a great part of the revenues of the Levites, which doubtless he seized upon when they forsook him, and went to Jerusalem, 2 Chron. xi, 13, 14, or,
3. because mean persons would depend upon his favour, and therefore be pliable to his humour, and firm to his interest, but the words in the Hebrew properly signify, from the ends of the people; which may be translated thus, out of all the people; promiscuously out of every tribe. Which exposition seems to be confirmed by the following words, added to explain these, which were not of the sons of Levi; though they were not of the tribe of Levi. And that indeed was Jeroboam's sin; not that he chose mean persons, for some of the Levites were such; and his sin had not been less, if he had chosen the noblest and greatest persons; as we see in the example of Uzziah. But that he chose men of other tribes, contrary to God's appointment, which restrained that office to that tribe. Levi - To whom that office was confined by God's express command.

32. A feast - The feast of tabernacles. So he would keep God's feast, not in God's time, which was the fifteenth day of the seventh month, and so onward, Levit xxiii, 34, but on the fifteenth day of the eighth month. And this alteration he made, either,

1. to keep up the difference between his subjects, and those of Judah as by the differing manners, so by the distinct times of their worship. Or,

2. lest he should seem directly to oppose the God of Israel, (who had in a special manner obliged all the people to go up to Jerusalem at that time,) by requiring their attendance to celebrate the feast elsewhere, at the same time. Or,
3. to engage as many persons as possibly he could, to come to his feast; which they would more willingly do when the feast at Jerusalem was past and all the fruits of the earth were perfectly gathered in. Fifteenth day - And so onward till the seven days ended. Like that in Judah - He took his pattern thence, to shew, that he worshipped the same God, and professed the same religion for substance, which they did: howsoever he differed in circumstances. He offered - Either,
   1. by his priests. Or, rather,
   2. by his own hands; as appears from chap. xiii, 1, 4, which he did, to give the more countenance to his new-devised solemnity. Nor is this strange; for he might plausibly think, that he who by his own authority had made others priests might much more exercise a part of that office; at least, upon an extraordinary occasion; in which case, he knew David himself had done some things, which otherwise he might not do. So he did - He himself did offer there in like manner, as he now had done at Dan.

33. Devised - Which he appointed without any warrant from God.

## XIII

A prophet threatens Jeroboam's altar, and gives a sign, which immediately comes to pass, ver, 1-5. He restores Jeroboam's withered hand, and leaves Bethel, ver. 6-10. The old prophet deceives and entertains him, ver. 11-19. He is threatened with death, ver. 20-23. Slain by a lion and buried, ver. 24-32. Jeroboam is hardened in his idolatry, ver. 33, 34.

1. Man of God - An holy prophet. By the word, &c. - By Divine inspiration and command.

2. The altar - And consequently, against all that worship. O altar - He directs his speech to the altar, because the following signs were wrought upon it. Josiah - Which being done above three hundred years after this prophecy, plainly shews the absolute certainty of God's providence; and fore-knowledge even in the most contingent things. For this was in itself uncertain, and wholly depended upon man's will, both as to the having of a child, and as to the giving it this name. Therefore God can certainly and effectually over-rule man's will which way he pleaseth; or else it was possible, that this prediction should have been false; which is blasphemous to imagine. The priests - The bones of the priests, 2 Kings xxiii, 15, 16, whereby the altar should be defiled. How bold was the man, that durst attack the king in his pride, and interrupt the solemnity he was proud of? Whoever is sent on God's errand, must not fear the faces of men. It was above three hundred and fifty years ere this prophecy was fulfilled. Yet it is spoken of as sure and nigh at hand. For a thousand years are with God as one day.

3. Gave a sign - That is, he then wrought a miracle, to assure them of the truth of his prophecy.

4. Put forth, &c. - To point out the man whom he would have the people lay hands on. The altar - Where it was employed in offering something upon it. Dried up - Or, withered, the muscles and sinews, the instruments of motion, shrunk up. This God did, to chastise Jeroboam for offering violence to the Lord's prophet: to secure the prophet against farther violence: and, that in this example God might shew, how highly he resents the injuries done to his ministers, for the faithful discharge of their office.

6. Thy God - Who hath manifested himself to be thy God and friend, in a singular manner; and therefore will hear thy prayers for me, though he will not regard mine, because I have forsaken him and his worship. Besought - To assure Jeroboam, that what he had said, was not from ill-will to him, and that he heartily desired his reformation, and not his ruin. Restored - Because he repented of that violence, which he intended against that prophet, for which God inflicted it: and that this goodness of God to him, might have led him to repentance; or, if he continued impenitent, leave him without excuse.

9. For so, &c. - My refusal of thy favour, is not from any contempt, or hatred of thy person; but in obedience to the just command of my God, who hath forbidden me all father converse or communication with thee. Eat nor drink - In that place, or with that people. Whereby God declares, how detestable they were in God's eyes; because they were vile apostates from the true God, and embraced this idol-worship, against the light of their own consciences, merely to comply with the king's humour and command. Nor turn - That by thy avoiding the way that led thee to Beth-el as execrable, although thou wentest by my special command, thou mightest teach all others, how much they should abhor that way, and all thoughts of going to that place, or to such people, upon any unnecessary occasion.

11. A prophet - One to whom, and by whom God did sometimes impart his mind; as it is manifest from ver. 20, 21, and one that had a respect to the Lord's holy prophets, and gave credit to their predictions: but whether he was a good man, may be doubted, seeing we find him in a downright lie, ver. 18. And altho' an holy prophet may possibly have continued in the kingdom of Israel, he would never have gone from his own habitation, to dwell at Beth- el, the chief seat of idolatry, unless with design to preach against it: which it is evident he did not; his sons seem to have been present at, and, and to have joined with others in that idolatrous worship.

21. Cried - With a loud voice, the effect of his passion, both for his own guilt and shame, and for the prophet's approaching misery.

22. Shall not, &c. - Thou shalt not die a natural, but a violent death; and that in this journey, before thou returnest to thy native habitation. But is it not strange that the lying prophet escapes, while the man of God is so severely punished? Certainly there must be a judgment to come, when these things shall be called over again, and when those who sinned most and suffered least in this world, will receive according to their works.

23. Saddled for him - But, it is observable, he doth not accompany him; his guilty conscience making him fear to be involved in the same judgment with him.

24. Slew him - "But why doth God punish a good man so severely for so small an offense?" His sin was not small, for it was a gross disobedience to a positive command. And it cannot seem strange if God should bring his deserved death upon him in this manner, for the accomplishment of his own glorious designs, to vindicate his own justice from the imputation of partiality; to assure the truth of his predictions, and thereby provoke Jeroboam and his idolatrous followers to repentance;

and to justify himself in all his dreadful judgments which he intended to inflict upon Jeroboam's house, and the whole kingdom of Israel.

28. He found, &c. - Here was a concurrence of miracles: that the ass did not run away from the lion, according to his nature, but boldly stood still, as reserving himself to carry the prophet to his burial; that the lion did not devour its prey, nor yet go away when he had done his work, but stood still, partly to preserve the carcase of the prophet from other wild beasts or fowls, partly, as an evidence that the prophet's death was not casual, nor the effect of a lion's ravenous disposition, but of God's singular and just judgment; and consequently, that his prediction was divine, and should be infallibly accomplished in its proper time; and partly, as a token of God's favour to the deceased prophet, of whose very carcase he took such special care: thereby signifying, that although for wise and just reasons he thought fit to take away his life, yet his remains was precious to him.

30. His grave - So that threatening, ver. 22, was fulfilled; and withal, the memory of his prophecy was revived and preserved among them, and his very carcase resting there, might be a witness of their madness and desperate wickedness, in continuing in their abominable idolatry, after such an assurance of the dreadful effects of it. They - The old prophet and his sons, and others, whom common humanity taught to lament the untimely death of so worthy a person. Alas, &c. - Which was an usual form of expression in funeral-Lamentations.

31. When I am dead,&c. - Tho' he was a lying prophet, yet he desired to die the death of a true prophet. Gather not my Soul with the sinners of Beth-el, but with this man of God: Because what he cried against the altar of Beth-el, shall surely come to pass. Thus by the mouth of two witnesses was it established, if possible to convince Jeroboam.

32. Samaria - That is, of the kingdom of Samaria; as it was called, though not when this fact was done, yet before these books were written. Samaria was properly this name of one city, chap. xxi, 1, but from hence the whole kingdom of Israel was so called.

33. After this - That is, after all these things: the singular number put for the plural; after so many, and evident, and successive miracles. Made again - He abated not so much as a circumstance in his idolatrous worship. Whosoever - Without any respect to tribe or family, or integrity of body, or mind, or life; all which were to be regarded in the priesthood.

34. Sin - Either, an occasion of sin, and means of hardening all his posterity in their idolatry: or, a punishment, for so the word sin is often used. This his obstinate continuance in his idolatry, after such warnings, was the utter ruin of all his family. They betray themselves effectually, who endeavour to support themselves by any sin.

## XIV

Jeroboam sends to the prophet, to inquire concerning his sick son, ver. 1-6. The destruction of Jeroboam's household told, ver. 7-16. The death of his child, ver. 17, 18. The conclusion of his reign, ver. 19, 20. The declension of Rehoboam's house and kingdom, ver. 21-28. The conclusion of his reign, ver. 28-31.

1. At that time - Presently after the things described in the former chapter; which, though related in the beginning of his reign, yet might be done a good while after it, and so Ahijah the prophet might be very old, as he is described to be ver. 4. It is probable he was his eldest son.

2. His wife - Because she might without suspicion inquire concerning her own child; and because she would inquire exactly, and diligently, and faithfully acquaint him with the truth. Disguise - Change thy habit, and voice, and go like a private and obscure person. This caution proceeded: first, from the pride of his heart, which made him loth to confess his folly in worshipping such helpless idols, and to give glory to the God whom he had forsaken. Secondly, from jealousy and suspicion, lest the prophet knowing this, should either give her no answer, or make it worse than indeed it was. Thirdly, from policy, lest his people should by his example be drawn to forsake the calves, and to return to the God of Judah.

3. And take - A present, after the manner, but mean, as became an ordinary country woman, which she personated. It had been more pious to inquire, why God contended with him.

6. Thou wife - By which discovery he both reproves their folly, who thought to conceal themselves from God, and withal gives her assurance of the truth, and certainty of that message which he was to deliver. 8. David - Who though he fell into some sins, yet, first, he constantly persevered in the true worship of God; from which thou art revolted. Secondly, he heartily repented of, and turned from all his sins whereas thou art obstinate and incorrigible.

9. Above all - Above all the former kings of my people, as Saul, and Solomon, and Rehoboam. Images - Namely the golden calves: not as if they thought them to be other gods in a proper sense; for it is apparent they still pretended to worship the God of their fathers, but because God rejected their whole worship, and, howsoever they accounted it, he reckoned it a manifest defection from him, and a betaking themselves to other gods, or devils, as they are called, 2 Chron. xi, 15, whom alone they served and worshipped therein, whatsoever pretenses they had to the contrary. To provoke - Whereby thou didst provoke me. For otherwise this was not Jeroboam's design in it, but only to establish himself in the throne. Hast cast - Despised and forsaken me, and my commands, and my worship, as we do things which we cast behind our backs.

10. Shut up - Those who had escaped the fury of their enemies invading them, either because they were shut up in caves, or castles, or strong towns, or, because they were left, over-looked or neglected by them, or spared as poor, impotent, helpless creatures. But now, saith he, they shall be all searched out, and brought to destruction. Dung - Which they remove, as a loathsome thing, out of their houses, and that throughly and universally.

11. Eat - So both sorts shall die unburied.

12. When, &c. - Presently upon thy entrance into the city; when thou art gone but a little way in it, even as far as to the threshold of the king's door, ver. 17, which possibly was near the gates of the city. And by this judge of the truth of the rest of my prophecy.

13. Shall mourn - For the loss of so worthy and hopeful a person, and for the sad calamities which will follow his death, which possibly his moderation, and wisdom, and virtue, might have prevented. So they should mourn, not simply for him, but for their own loss in him. Grave - Shall have the honour of burial. Some good - Pious intentions of taking away the calves, and of permitting or obliging his people to go up to Jerusalem to worship, if God gave him life and authority to do it, and of trusting God with his kingdom. In the house - Which is added for his greater commendation; he was good in the midst of so many temptations and wicked examples; a good branch of a bad flock.

14. A king - Baasha, chap. xv, 28. That day - When he is so raised; in the very beginning of his reign, chap. xv, 29. But what? - But what do I say, he shall raise, as it were a thing to be done at a great distance of time: the man is now in being if not in power, who shall do this: this judgment shall be shortly executed. Sometimes God makes quick work with sinners. He did so with the house of Jeroboam. It was not twenty four years from his first elevation, to the final extirpation of his family.

15. Is shaken - Hither and thither, with every wind. So shall the kingdom and people of Israel be always in an unquiet and unsettled posture, tossed to and fro by foreign invasions and civil wars; by opposite kings and factions, and by the dissensions of the people. The river - Euphrates, so called by way of eminency, this was accomplished in part 2 Kings xv, 29, and more fully, 2 Kings xvii, 6. Groves - For the worship of their idols, God having before condemned the making and worshipping of the calves, by which they pretended to worship the true God; he now takes notice that they were not contented with the calves, but (as it is in the nature of idolatry, and all sin, to proceed from evil to worse) were many of them fallen into a worse kind of idolatry, even their worship of the heathenish Baals, which they commonly exercised in groves.

16. Who made, &c. - By his invention, and making the occasion of their sin, the calves; by his example, encouraging those and only those that worshipped the calves; and by his authority requiring and compelling them to do it. This is mentioned as a monstrous aggravation of his wickedness, that he was not content with his own sin, but was the great author of drawing others into sin, and of corrupting and undoing the whole kingdom, which therefore God would never forgive him, but upon all occasions mentions him with this eternal brand of infamy upon him.

17. Tirzah - An ancient and royal city, in a pleasant place, where the kings of Israel had a palace, whither Jeroboam was now removed from Shechem, either for his pleasure, or for his son's recovery, by the healthfulness of the place. The threshold - Of the king's house, which probably was upon, or by the wall of the city, and near the gate.

18. Mourned - And justly: not only for the loss of an hopeful prince, but because his death plucked up the floodgates, at which an inundation of judgments broke in.

19. The chronicles - not that canonical book of chronicles; for that was written long after this book: but a book of civil records, the annals, wherein all remarkable passages were recorded by the king's command from day to day; out of which the sacred penman by the direction of God's spirit, took those passages which were most useful for God's honour, and mens edification.

21. Forty one years - Therefore he was born a year before Solomon was king, as appears from chap. xi, 42, this is noted as an aggravation of Rehoboam's folly, that he was old enough to have been wiser. An Ammonitess - A people cursed by God, and shut out of the congregation of his people for ever. This is observed as one cause both of God's displeasure in punishing Solomon with such a son, and of Rehoboam's apostacy after his three first years, 2 Chron. xi, 17. None can imagine how fatal and how lasting are the consequence of being unequally yoked with an unbeliever.

22. In the sight of the Lord - In contempt and defiance of him, and the tokens of his special presence. Jealousy - As the adulterous wife provokes her husband, by breaking the marriage covenant.

23. They also - Followed the example of the Israelites, although they were better instructed, and had the temple in their kingdom, and liberty of access to it, and the privilege of worshipping God in his own way, and the counsels, and sermons, and examples of the priests and Levites, and the dreadful example of Israel's horrid apostacy, to caution and terrify them. High places - Which

was unlawful, and, now especially when the temple was built, and ready to receive them; unnecessary, and therefore expressed a greater contempt of God and his express command. Groves - Not only after the manner of the Heathens and Israelites, but against a direct and particular prohibition. Under every green tree - The people were universally corrupted: which is prodigious, all things considered, and is a clear evidence of the greatness and depth of the original corruption of man's nature.

24. Abomination - They dishonoured God by one sin, and then God left them to dishonour themselves by another.

25. Fifth year - Presently after his and his people's apostacy, which was not 'till his fourth year: while apostate, Israel enjoyed peace and some kind of prosperity, of which difference, two reasons may be given: first, Judah's sins were committed against clearer light, and more powerful means and remedies of all sorts, and therefore deserved more severe and speedy judgments. Secondly, God discovered more love to Judah in chastizing them speedily, that they might be humbled, reformed, and preserved, as it happened; and more anger against Israel, whom he spared to that total destruction which he intended to bring upon them. Sishak - He is thought to be Solomon's brother-in-law. But how little such relations signify among princes, when their interest is concerned, all histories witness. Besides Rehoboam was not Solomon's son by Pharaoh's daughter and so the relation was in a manner extinct. Came up - Either, from a desire to enlarge his empire: or, by Jeroboam's instigation: or from a covetous desire of possessing those great treasures which David and Solomon had left: and above all, by God's providence, disposing his heart to this expedition for Rehoboam's punishment.

26. He took - First the city: which may seem strange, considering the great strength of it, and how much time it took Nebuchadnezzar and Titus to take it. But, first, it might cost Shishak also a long siege though that be not here related. Secondly, it is probable David and Solomon in their building and altering the city, had more respect to state and magnificence than to its defense, as having no great cause to fear the invasion of any enemies. And it is certain, that after the division between Judah and Israel, the kings of Judah added very much to the fortifications of it.

27. Brazen shields - This was an emblem of the diminution of his glory. Sin makes the gold become dim, it changes the most fine gold and turns it into brass.

28. To the house, &c. - By which it seems the affliction had done him some good, and brought him back to the worship of God, which he had forsaken.

30. Was war - Not an invasive war with potent armies, which was forbidden, chap. xii, 24, and not revived 'till Abijam's reign, 2 Chron. xiii, 1-3, but a defensive war from those hostilities which by small parties and skirmishes they did to one another.

31. An Ammonitess - This is repeated as a thing very observable.

## XV

The reigns of Abijam and Asa over Judah, ver. 1-24. Of Nadab and Baasha over Israel, ver. 25-34.

1. Abijam reigned - So his reign began with Jeroboam's eighteenth year, continued his whole nineteenth year, and ended within his twentieth year, in which also Asa's reign began. And thus one and the same year may be attributed to two several persons.

2. Three years - That is, part of three years. Abishalom - Or, of Absalom, as he is called 2 Chron. xi, 21. And because he is here mentioned as a known person, without any addition of his kindred or quality, some conceive that this was Absalom's daughter, called properly Tamar, 2 Sam. xiv, 27, and from her royal grandmother, 2 Sam. iii, 3, Maacah.

4. A lamp - A son and successor to perpetuate his name and memory, which otherwise had gone into obscurity. Jerusalem - That he might maintain that city, and temple, and worship, as a witness for God, in the world, against the Israelites and heathen world.

5. Save only - This and the like phrases are not to be understood as exclusive of every sinful action, hut only of an habitual and continued apostasy from God, as the very phrase of turning aside from God, or from his commands, doth constantly imply. And thus it is most true. For David's other sins were either sudden and transient acts, soon repented of and blotted out, as in the cases of Nabal and Achish; or, mistakes of his judgment, which was not fully convinced of the sinfulness of such actions: whereas that which concerned Uriah's wife was a designed and studied sin, long continued in, defended with a succession of other sins, presumptuous, and scandalous to his government, and to the true religion.

6. War between, &c. - Upon Jeroboam's invading him with a great army: acting then in his own defense, he totally routed Jeroboam, so that he was quiet the rest of his reign.

10. Mother's - That is, his grandmother's, as appears from ver. 2, who is called his mother, as David is called Abijam's father, ver. 3. And his grand-mother's name may be here mentioned, rather than his mother's, because his mother was either an obscure person, or was dead, or unwilling to take care of the education of her son, and so he was educated by the grand-mother, who, though she poisoned his father Abijam with her idolatrous principles, ver. 12, yet could not infect Asa, nor withhold him from prosecuting his good purposes of reforming religion.

11. Right - As to the government of his kingdom, and the reformation, and establishment of God's worship. That is right indeed which is so in God's eyes. Those are approved whom he commendeth.

12. Sodomites - All whom he could find out; but some escaped his observation, as appears from chap. xxii, 46. Idols, &c. - And if his father had made them, he had the more need to remove them, that he might cut off the entail of the curse.

13. He removed - He took from her either the name and authority of queen regent, which she, having been Rehoboam's wife, and Abijam's mother, took to herself during Asa's minority; or, the dignity of the queen mother, and those guards, or instruments of power, which she had enjoyed and misemployed. An Idol - Hebrew. a terror, or horror, that is, an horrible idol; which it may be so called, because it was of a more terrible shape than ordinary, and not to be seen without horror. Kidron - That when it was burnt to powder, it might be thrown into the water, and be unfit for any use.

14. High places - 2 Chron. xiv, 3. He took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places where they were worshipped: but as for those high places where the true God was worshipped he did not take them away; partly, because he thought there was no great evil in them, which had been used by David and Solomon, and other good men; partly, because he thought the removal of them might do more hurt than their continuance, by occasioning the total neglect of God's worship

by many of the people, who either could not, or, through want of faith and zeal, would not go up to Jerusalem to worship, now especially, when the Israelites, formerly their friends, were become their enemies, and watched all opportunities to invade or molest them. Was perfect - That is, he sincerely and constantly adhered to the worship of God. Though he could not hinder the people from using the high places, yet he entirely devoted himself to the worship of God in the manner and place prescribed by him.

15. His father - Abijam, when he was in distress, and going to fight with Jeroboam, 2 Chron. xiii, 1-3, though afterwards he did not perform his vows, nor bring in what he had devoted; probably he was prevented by death.

17. Built - That is, repaired and fortified.

18. Were left - What either Shishak had left, or Abijam, or Asa, or others, both of Israel or Judah had dedicated; which probably was not inconsiderable, because Asa had got great spoils from Zerah, 2 Chron. xiv, 9-15, and he and his numerous and prosperous people, did at this time express a great zeal for the house and worship of God. Sent them - Wherein he committed three great faults, amongst many others, first, he alienated things consecrated to God, without necessity. Secondly, he did this out of distrust of that God whose power and goodness he had lately experienced. Thirdly, he did this for an ill intent, to hire him to the breach of his league and covenant with Baasha, ver. 19, and to take away part of that land which by right, and the special gift of God, belonged to the Israelites.

21. Tirzah - Now the royal city of Israel. There he abode to defend his own kingdoms, and durst not return to oppose Asa, lest the Syrian king should make a second invasion. So Asa met with success in this ungodly course as good men sometimes meet with disappointment in a good cause and course. So there is no judging of causes by events.

22. None, &c. - All sorts of persons were obliged to come, except those who were disabled by age, or infirmity, or absence, or by the public service of the king and kingdom in other places. Built - Repaired and strengthened them, for they were built before.

23. Nevertheless - Notwithstanding the great things which he had done, and the glory and prosperity which he enjoyed, he felt the effects of human infirmity, and of his own sins.

25. Two years - Not compleat, as appears from ver. 28, 33.

26. In his sin - In the worship of the calves which his father had made.

28. Even, &c. - It was threatened, chap. xiv, 15, that Israel should be as a reed shaken in the water. And so they were, when, during the single reign of Asa, their government was in seven or eight different hands. Jeroboam was upon the throne at the beginning of his reign, and Ahab at the end of it: between whom were Nadab, Baashah, Elah, Zimri, Tibni, and Omri, undermining and destroying one another. This they got by deserting the house both of God and of David.

29. Any - Any of the males of that family. According, &c. - So God overruled Baasha's ambition and cruelty, to fulfil his own prediction.

30. Because - So that same wicked policy which he used to establish the kingdom in his family, proved his and their ruin: which is very frequently the event of ungodly counsels.

## XVI

The ruin of Baasha's family foretold, ver. 1-7. And executed by Zimri, ver. 8-14. Zimri's short reign, ver. 15-20. The struggle between Omri and Tibni, and Omri's reign, ver. 21-28. The beginning of Ahab's reign, ver. 29-33.

1. Hanani - He was sent to Asa, king of Judah. But the son, who was young and more active, was sent on this longer and more dangerous expedition to Baasha, king of Israel.

2. I made thee - Though that invading the kingdom was from himself, and his own wicked heart; yet the translation of the kingdom from Nadab to Baasha simply considered, was from God, who by his providence disposed of all occasions, and of the hearts of the soldiers and people, so that Baasha should have opportunity of executing God's judgment upon Nadab; nay, the very act of Baasha, the killing his master Nadab, was an act of divine justice. And if Baasha had done this in obedience to God's command, and with a single design, to execute God's vengeance threatened against him, it had been no more a sin, than Jehu's act in killing his master king Jehoram, upon the same account, 2 Kings ix, 24. But Baasha did this, merely to gratify his own pride, or covetousness, or malice, ver. 7.

7. Came, &c. - The meaning is, the message which came from the Lord to Jehu, ver. 1, &c. was here delivered by the hand, the ministry of Jehu, unto Baasha. Jehu did what God commanded him in this matter, tho' it was not without apparent hazard to himself.

8. Two years - One compleat, and part of the other, ver. 10.

9. Chariots - Of all his military chariots, and the men belonging to them: the chariots for carriage of necessary things, being put into meaner hands. Tirzah - Whilst his forces were elsewhere employed, ver. 15, which gave Zimri advantage to execute his design.

11. Kinfolks - Hebrew. avengers; to whom it belonged to revenge his death.

13. Vanities - Idols called vanities; because they are but imaginary deities, and mere nothings; having no power to do either good or hurt.

15. Gibbethon - Which had been besieged before, but, it seems, was then relieved, or afterwards recovered by the Philistines; taking the advantage of the disorders and contentions which were among their enemies.

19. For his sins - This befell him for his sins. In walking, &c. - This he might do, either before his reign, in the whole course of his life, which is justly charged upon him, because of his impenitency: or during his short reign; in which, he had time enough to publish his intentions, about the worship of the calves; or to sacrifice to them, for his good success.

21. Were divided - Fell into a civil war: yet neither this, nor any other of God's dreadful judgments could win them to repentance.

22. Prevailed - Partly, because they had the army on their side; and principally, by the appointment of God, giving up the Israelites to him who was much the worst, ver. 25, 26. Died - A violent death, in the battle: but not till after a struggle of some years. But why in all these confusions of the kingdom of Israel, did they never think of returning to the house of David? Probably because the kings of Judah assumed a more absolute power than the kings of Israel. It was the heaviness of the yoke that they complained of, when they first revolted from the house of David. And it is not unlikely, the dread of that made them averse to it ever after.

23. Twelve years - That is, and he reigned twelve years, not from this thirty-first year of Asa, for he died in his thirty-eighth year, ver. 29, but from the beginning of his reign, which was in Asa's twenty-seventh year, ver. 15, 16. So he reigned four years in a state of war with Tibni, and eight years peaceably.

24. Two talents - Two talents is something more than seven hundred pounds.

26. Did worse - Perhaps he made severer laws concerning the calf worship; whence we read of the statutes of Omri, Micah vi, 16.

31. A light thing - The Hebrew runs, was it a light thing,&c., that is, was this but a small sin, that therefore he needed to add more abominations? Where the question, as is usual among the Hebrew, implies a strong denial; and intimates, that this was no small sin, but a great crime; and might have satisfied his wicked mind, without any additions. Jezebel - A woman infamous for her idolatry, and cruelty, and sorcery, and filthiness. Eth-baal - Called Ithbalus, or Itobalus in heathen writers. So she was of an heathenish and idolatrous race. Such as the kings and people of Israel were expressly forbidden to marry. Baal - The idol which the Sidonians worshipped, which is thought to be Hercules. And this idolatry was much worse than that of the calves; because in the calves they worshipped the true God; but in these, false gods or devils.

34. In his days - This is added,

1. as an instance of the certainty of divine predictions, this being fulfilled eight hundred years after it was threatened; and withal, as a warning to the Israelites, not to think themselves innocent or safe, because the judgment threatened against them by Ahijah, chap. xiv, 15, was not yet executed. Or,
2. as an evidence of the horrible corruption of his times, and of that high contempt of God which then reigned. The Bethelite - Who lived in Bethel, the seat and sink of idolatry, wherewith he was throughly leavened. He laid, &c. - That is, in the beginning of his building, God took away his first-born, and others successively in the progress of the work, and the youngest when he finished it. And so he found by his own sad experience, the truth of God's word.

## XVII

Elijah foretells the drought, ver. 1. Is fed by ravens, ver. 2-7. By a widow, whose meal and oil are multiplied, ver. 8-16. He raises her dead son, ver. 17-24

1. Elijah - The most eminent of the prophets, who is here brought in, like Melchisedek, without any mention of his father, or mother, or beginning of his days; like a man dropt out of the clouds, and raised by God's special providence as a witness for himself in this most degenerate time that by his zeal, and courage and miracles, he might give some check, to their various and abominable idolatries, and some reviving to that small number of the Lord's prophets, and people, who yet remained in Israel. He seems to have been naturally of a rough spirit. And rough spirits are called to rough services. His name signifies, my God Jehovah is he: he that sends me, and will own me, and bear me out. Said to Ahab - Having doubtless admonished him of his sin and danger before;

now upon his obstinacy in his wicked courses, he proceeds to declare, and execute the judgment of God upon him. As the Lord, &c. - I Swear by the God of Israel, who is the only true and living God; whereas the gods whom thou hast joined with him, or preferred before him, are dead and senseless idols. Before whom - Whose minister I am, not only in general, but especially in this threatening, which I now deliver in his name and authority. There shall not, &c. - This was a prediction, but was seconded with his prayer, that God would verify it, James v, 17, And this prayer was truly charitable; that by this sharp affliction, God's honour, and the truth of his word (which was now so horribly and universally contemned) might be vindicated; and the Israelites (whom impunity had hardened in their idolatry) might be awakened to see their own wickedness, and the necessity of returning to the true religion. Those years - That is, These following years, which were three and an half, Luke iv, 25 James v, 17. My word - Until I shall declare, that this judgment shall cease, and shall pray to God for the removal of it.

3. Hide thyself - Thus God rescues him from the fury of Ahab and Jezebel, who, he knew, would seek to destroy him. That Ahab did not seize on him immediately upon these words must be ascribed to God's over-ruling providence.

4. Have commanded - Or, I shall command, that is, effectually move them, by instincts which shall be as forcible with them, as a law or command is to men. God is said to command both brute creatures, and senseless things; when he causeth them to do the things which he intends to effect by them. The ravens - Which he chuseth for this work; to shew his care and power in providing for the prophet by those creatures, which are noted for their greediness, that by this strange experiment he might be taught to trust God in those many and great difficulties to which he was to be exposed. God could have sent angels to minister to him. But he chose winged messengers of another kind to shew he can serve his own purposes as effectually, by the meanest creatures as by the mightiest. Ravens neglect their own young, and do not feed them: yet when God pleaseth, they shall feed his prophet.

6. And flesh - Not raw, but boiled by the ministry of some angel or man, and left in some place 'till the ravens came for it: in all which, there is nothing incredible, considering the power and providence of God.

7. A while - Hebrew. at the end of days; that is, of a year; for so the word days is often used. Dried - God so ordering it, for the punishment of those Israelites who lived near it, and had hitherto been refreshed by it: and for the exercise of Elijah's faith, and to teach him to depend upon God alone.

9. Zarephath - A city between Tyre and Sidon, called Sarepta by St. Luke iv, 26, and others. Zidon - To the jurisdiction of that city, which was inhabited by Gentiles. And God's providing for his prophet, first, by an unclean bird, and then by a Gentile, whom the Jews esteemed unclean, was a presage of the calling of the Gentiles, and rejection of the Jews. So Elijah was the first prophet of the Gentiles. Commanded - Appointed or provided, for that she had as yet no Revelation or command of God about it, appears from ver. 12.

12. She said - Therefore though she was a Gentile, yet she owned the God of Israel as the true God. Two sticks - A few sticks, that number being often used indefinitely for any small number. And die - For having no more provision, we must needs perish with hunger. For though the famine was chiefly in the land of Israel, yet the effects of it were in Tyre and Sidon, which were fed by the corn of that land. But what a poor supporter was this likely to be? who had no fuel, but what she gathered in the streets, and nothing to live upon herself, but an handful of meal and a little oil!

To her Elijah is sent, that he might live upon providence, as much as he had done when the ravens fed him.

13. But make, &c. - This he requires as a trial of her faith, and obedience, which he knew God would plentifully reward; and so this would be a great example to encourage others to the practice of the same graces.

14. The barrel, &c. - The meal of the barrel So the cruse of oil for the oil of the cruse.

15. Many days - A long time, even above two years, before the following event about her son happened. And surely the increase of her faith to such a degree, as to enable her thus to deny herself and trust the promise, was as great a miracle in the kingdom of grace, as the increase of her oil in the kingdom of providence. Happy are they who can thus against hope believe and obey in hope.

16. Wasted not - See how the reward answered the service. She made one cake for the prophet and was repaid with many for herself and her son. What is laid out in charity is set out to the best interest, an upon the best securities.

17. No breath - That is, he died. We must not think it strange, if we meet with sharp afflictions, even when we are in the way of eminent service to God.

18. She said - Wherein have I injured thee? Or, why didst thou come to sojourn in my house, if this be the fruit of it? They are the words of a troubled mind. Art thou come - Didst thou come for this end, that thou mightest severely observe my sins, and by thy prayers bring down God's just judgment upon me, as thou hast brought down this famine upon the nation? To call, &c. - To God's remembrance: for God is said in scripture, to remember sins, when he punisheth them; and to forget them, when he spares the sinner.

19. Into a loft - A private place, where he might more freely pour out his soul to God, and use such gestures as he thought most proper.

20. He cried - A prayer full of powerful arguments. Thou art the Lord, that canst revive the child: and my God; and therefore wilt not, deny me. She is a widow, add not affliction to the afflicted; deprive her not of the support and staff of her age: she hath given me kind entertainment: let her not fare the worse for her kindness to a prophet, whereby wicked men will take occasion to reproach both her, and religion.

21. Come into him - By which it is evident, that the soul was gone out of his body, this was a great request; but Elijah was encouraged to make it; by his zeal for God's honour, and by the experience which he had of his prevailing power with God in prayer.

22. Into him again - This plainly supposes the existence of the soul in a state of separation, and consequently its immortality: probably God might design by this miracle to give an evidence hereof, for the encouragement of his suffering people.

## XVIII

Elijah sends notice to Ahab of his coming, ver. 1-16. His interview with Ahab, ver. 17-19. His interview with all Israel upon mount Carmel, ver. 21-39. He slays the prophets of Baal, ver. 40. Obtains rain, and runs before Ahab to Jezreel, ver. 41-46.

1. The third year - Either,
    1. From the time when he went to hide himself by the brook Cherith; six months before which time the famine might begin. And so this being towards the end of the third year, it makes up these three years and six months, James v, 17. Or,
    2. From the time of his going to Sarepta, which probably was a year after the famine begun; So this might be in the middle of the third year, which also makes up the three years and six months. Go to Ahab - To acquaint him with the cause of this judgment, and to advise him to remove it, and upon that condition to promise him rain. Will send - According to thy word and prayer, which thou shalt make for it. Thus God takes care to maintain the honour of his prophet, and in judgment remembers mercy to Israel, for the sake of the holy seed yet left among them, who suffered in this common calamity.

2. Elijah went - Wherein he shews a strong faith, and resolute obedience, and invincible courage, that he durst at God's command run into the mouth of this raging lion.

3. Obadiah - Being valued by Ahab for his great prudence and fidelity, and therefore indulged as to the worship of the calves and Baal. "But how could he and some other Israelites be said to fear the Lord, when they did not go up to Jerusalem to worship, as God had commanded?" Although they seem not to be wholly excusable in this neglect, yet because they worshipped God in spirit and truth, and performed all moral duties to God and their brethren, and abstained from idolatry, being kept from Jerusalem by violence, God bares with their infirmity herein.

4. Prophets - This name is not only given to such as are endowed with an extraordinary spirit of prophecy, but to such ministers as devoted themselves to the service of God in preaching, praying, and praising God. And fed - With the hazard of his own life, and against the king's command; as wisely considering, that no command of an earthly prince could over-rule the command of the king of kings. Bread and water - With meat and drink. See how wonderfully God raises up friends for his ministers and people where one would least expect them!

7. And fell - By this profound reverence, shewing his great respect and love to him.

8. Thy Lord - Ahab: whom, though a very wicked man, he owns for Obadiah's Lord and king; thereby instructing us, that the wickedness of kings doth not exempt their subjects from obedience to their lawful commands.

9. He said - Wherein have I offended God, and thee, that thou shouldest expose me to certain ruin.

10. No nation - Near his own, where he could in reason think that Elijah had hid himself. It does not appear, that Ahab sought him, in order to put him to death: but rather in hopes of prevailing upon him, to pray for the removal of the drought.

12. Carry thee - Such transportations of the prophets having doubtless been usual before this time, as they were after it. Slay me - Either as one that hath deluded him with vain hopes: or, because I did not seize upon thee, and bring thee to him. But I, &c. - He speaks not these words, in a way of boasting; but that he might move the prophet to spare him, and not put him upon that hazardous action.

17. Ahab said - Have I at last met with thee, O thou disturber of my kingdom, the author of this famine, and all our calamities?

18. He answered - These calamities are not to be imputed to me, but thine and thy father's wickedness. He answered him boldly, because he spoke in God's name, and for his honour and service. Ye - All of you have forsaken the Lord, and thou in particular, hast followed Baalim.

19. Send - Messengers, that this controversy may be decided, what is the cause of these heavy judgments. All Israel - By their heads, or representatives, that they may be witnesses of all our transactions. Carmel - Not that Carmel, in Judah, but another in Issachar by the midland sea, which he chose as a convenient place being not far from the center of his kingdom, to which all the tribes might conveniently resort, and at some distance from Samaria, that Jezebel might not hinder. Prophets of Baal - Who were dispersed in all the parts of the kingdom. Of the groves - Who attended upon those Baal's or idols that were worshipped in the groves, which were near the royal city, and much frequented by the king and the queen.

20. Ahab sent - He complied with Elijah's motion; because the urgency of the present distress made him willing to try all means to remove it; from a curiosity of seeing some extraordinary events; and principally, because God inclined his heart.

21. And said - Why do you walk so lamely and unevenly, being so unsteady in your opinions and practices, and doubting whether it is better to worship God or Baal? If the Lord - Whom you pretend to worship. Follow - Worship him, and him only, and that in such place and manner as he hath commanded you. If Baal - If Baal can prove himself to be the true God. Answered not - Being convinced of the reasonableness of his proposition.

22. I only - Here present, to own the cause of God. As far the other prophets of the Lord, many of them were slain, others banished, or hid in caves.

23. Let then, &c. - To put this controversy to a short issue.

24. By Fire - That shall consume the sacrifice by fire sent from heaven; which the people knew the true God used to do. It was a great condescension in God, that he would permit Baal to be a competitor with him. But thus God would have every mouth to be stopped, and all flesh become silent before him. And Elijah doubtless had a special commission from God, or he durst not have put it to this issue. But the case was extraordinary, and the judgment upon it would be of use not only then, but in all ages. Elijah does not say, The God that answers by water, tho' that was the thing the country needed, but that answers by fire, let him be God; because the atonement was to be made, before the judgment could be removed. The God therefore that has power to pardon sin, and to signify that by consuming the sin-offering, must needs be the God that can relieve us against the calamity.

25. Dress it first - And I am willing to give you the precedency. This he did, because if he had first offered, and God had answered by fire, Baal's priests would have desisted from making the trial on their part; and because the disappointment of the priests of Baal, of which he was well assured, would prepare the way for the people's attention to his words, and cause them to entertain his success with more affection; and this coming last would leave the greater impression upon their hearts. And this they accepted, because they might think, that if Baal answered them first, which they presumed he would, the people would be so confirmed and heightened in their opinion of Baal, that they might murder Elijah before he came to his experiment.

26. Dressed - Cut it in pieces, and laid the parts upon the wood. From morning - From the time of the morning sacrifice; which advantage Elijah suffered them to take. They leapt upon - Or, beside the altar: or, before it. They used some superstitious and disorderly gestures, either pretending to

be acted by the spirit of their God, and to be in a kind of religious extasy; or, in way of devotion to their God.

27. Mocked them - Derided them and their gods, which had now proved themselves to be ridiculous and contemptible things.

28. Cut themselves - Mingling their own blood with their sacrifices; as knowing by experience, that nothing was more acceptable to their Baal (who was indeed the devil) than human blood; and hoping thereby to move their God to help them. And this indeed was the practice of divers Heathens in the worship of their false gods.

29. Prophesied - That is, prayed to, and worshipped their God.

30. The altar - This had been built by some of their ancestors for the offering of sacrifice to the God of Israel, which was frequently done in high places. Broken down - By some of the Baalites, out of their enmity to the true God, whose temple, because they could not reach, they shewed their malignity in destroying his altars.

31. Twelve stones - This he did, to renew the covenant between God and all the tribes, as Moses did, Exod. xxiv, 4, to shew, that he prayed and acted in the name, and for the service of the God of all the Patriarchs, and of all the tribes of Israel, and for their good: and, to teach the people, that though the tribes were divided as to their civil government, they ought all to be united in the worship of the same God. Israel - Jacob was graciously answered by God when he prayed to him, and was honoured with the glorious title of Israel, which noted his prevalency with God and men. And I, calling upon the same God, doubt not of a like gracious answer; and if ever you mean to have your prayers granted, you must seek to the God of Jacob.

33. With water - This they could quickly fetch, either from the river Kishon; or, if that was dried up, from the sea; both were at the foot of the mountain. This he did to make the miracle more glorious, and more unquestionable.

36. The evening sacrifice - This time he chose, that he might unite his prayers with the prayers of the godly Jews at Jerusalem, who at that time assembled together to pray. Lord God of, &c. - Hereby he shews faith in God's ancient covenant, and also reminds the people, of their relation both to God and to the patriarchs. Done these things - Brought this famine, gathered the people hither, and done what I have done, or am doing here; not in compliance with my own passions, but in obedience to thy command.

37. Hast turned - Let them feel so powerful a change in their hearts, that they may know it is thy work. Back again - Unto thee, from whom they have revolted.

38. Consumed - Solomon's altar was consecrated by fire from heaven; but this was destroyed, because no more to be used.

39. They fell - In acknowledgment of the true God. He is God - He alone; and Baal is a senseless idol. And they double the words, to note their abundant satisfaction and assurance of the truth of their assertion.

40. Elijah said - He takes the opportunity, whilst the peoples hearts were warm with the fresh sense of this great miracle. The brook Kishon - That their blood might be poured into that river, and thence conveyed into the sea, and might not defile the holy land. Slew them - As these idolatrous priests were manifestly under a sentence of death, passed upon such by the sovereign Lord of life and death, so Elijah had authority to execute it, being a prophet, and an extraordinary minister of God's vengeance. The four hundred prophets of the groves, it seems, did not attend, and so escaped,

which perhaps Ahab rejoiced in. But it proved, they were reserved to be the instruments of his destruction, by encouraging him to go up to Ramoth-Gilead.

41. Get up - From the river, where he had been present at the slaughter of Baal's priests, to thy tent: which probably was pitched on the side of Carmel. Eat, &c. - Take comfort, and refresh thyself: for neither the king, nor any of the people could have leisure to eat, being wholly intent upon the decision of the great controversy. For there is, &c. - The rain is as certainly coming, as if you heard the noise which it makes.

42. The top of Carmel - Where he might pour out his prayers unto God; and whence he might look towards the sea. He had a large prospect of the sea from hence. The sailors at this day call it cape Carmel. Between his knees - That is, bowed his head so low, that it touched his knees; thus abasing himself in the sense of his own meanness, now God had thus honoured him.

43. Go - While I continue praying. Elijah desired to have timely notice of the first appearance of rain, that Ahab and the people might know that it was obtained from Jehovah by the prophet's prayers, and thereby be confirmed in the true religion.

44. Like a man's hand - Great blessings often rise from small beginnings, and showers of plenty from a cloud of a span long. Let us therefore never despise the day of small things, but hope and wait for greater things from it.

46. The hand, &c. - God gave him more than natural strength, whereby he was enabled to outrun Ahab's chariot, for so many miles together. He girded, &c. - That his garments, which were long, might not hinder him. Ran before Ahab - To shew how ready he was to honour and serve the king, that by this humble and self-denying carriage, it might appear, what he had done was not from envy or passion, but only from a just zeal for God's glory: that by his presence with the king and his courtiers, he might animate and oblige them to proceed in the reformation of religion: and, to demonstrate, that he was neither ashamed of, nor afraid for what he had done, but durst venture himself in the midst of his enemies.

## XIX

Elijah flees from Jezebel, ver. 1-3. Is fed by an angel, ver. 4- 8. God manifests himself and directs him, ver. 9-18. He calls Elisha, ver. 19-21.

1. All the prophets - Of Baal.

2. Jezebel sent - She gives him notice of it before hand: partly, out of the height of her spirit, as scorning to kill him secretly: partly, out of her impatience, till she had breathed out her rage: and principally, from God's all-disposing providence, that so he might have an opportunity of escaping. Do to me, &c. - So far was she from being changed by that evident miracle, that she persists in her former idolatry, and adds to it a monstrous confidence, that in spight of God she would destroy his prophet.

3. Left his servant - Because he would not expose him to those perils and hardships which he expected: and because he desired solitude, that he might more freely converse with God.

4. Into the wilderness - The vast wilderness of Arabia. He durst not stay in Judah, tho' good Jehosaphat reigned there, because he was allied to Ahab, and was a man of an easy temper, whom Ahab might circumvent, and either by force or art seize upon Elijah. It is enough - I have lived long enough for thy service, and am not like to do thee any more service; neither my words nor works are like to do any good upon these unstable and incorrigible people. I am not better - That I should continue in life, when other prophets who have gone before me, have lost their lives.

7. Angel of the Lord, &c. - He needed not to complain of the unkindness of men, when it was thus made up by the ministration of angels. Wherever God's children are, they are still under their father's eye.

8. And went - He wandered hither and thither for forty days, 'till at last he came to Horeb, which in the direct road was not above three or four days journey. Thither the spirit of the Lord led him, probably beyond his own intention, that he might have communion with God, in the same place that Moses had.

9. Unto a cave - Perhaps the same wherein Moses was hid when the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed his name.

10. I have been, &c. - I have executed my office with zeal for God's honour, and with the hazard of my own life, and am fled hither, not being able to endure to see the dishonour done to thy name by their obstinate idolatry and wickedness. I only - Of all thy prophets, who boldly and publickly plead thy cause: for the rest of thy prophets who are not slain, hide themselves, and dare not appear to do thee any service. They seek my life - I despair of doing them any good: for instead of receiving my testimony, they hunt for my life. It does by no means appear, that he was at all to blame, for fleeing from Jezebel. If they persecute you in one city flee into another. Besides, the angels feeding and preparing him for his journey, and the peculiar blessing of God upon that food, indicated the divine approbation.

11. And behold - This is a general description of the thing, after which the manner of it is particularly explained. Strong wind - Whereby he both prepares Elijah to receive this discovery of God with greatest humility, reverence, and godly fear; and signifies his irresistible power, to break the hardest hearts of the Israelites, and to bear down all opposition that was or should be made against him in the discharge of his office. The Lord was not - The Lord did not vouchsafe his special and gracious presence to Elijah in that wind, which possibly was to teach him not to wonder if God did not accompany his terrible administration at mount Carmel with the presence of his grace, to turn the hearts of the Israelites to himself.

12. A still voice - To intimate, that God would do his work in and for Israel in his own time, not by might or power, but by his own spirit, Zech iv, 6, which moves with a powerful, but yet with a sweet and gentle gale.

13. He wrapped, &c. - Through dread of God's presence, being sensibly that he was neither worthy nor able to endure the sight of God with open face. And stood, &c. - Which God commanded him to do; and as he was going towards the mouth of the cave, he was affrighted and stopped in his course, by the dreadful wind, and earthquake, and fire; when these were past, he prosecutes his journey, and goeth on to the mouth of the cave.

16. The son, &c. - That is, his grand-son, for he was the son of Jehosaphat, 2 Kings ix, 2. This was intended as a prediction that by these God would punish the degenerate Israelites, plead his own cause among them, and avenge the quarrel of his covenant.

17. Shall Elisha slay - One or other of these should infallibly execute God's judgments upon the apostate Israelites. Elisha is said to slay them, either, because he slew those forty two children, 2 Kings ii, 24, besides others whom upon like occasions he might destroy; or, because he by God's appointment inflicted the famine, 2 Kings viii, 1, or rather, by the sword which came out of his mouth: the prophets being said to pull down and to destroy what they declare and foretel shall be pulled down. Hazael began to slay them before Jehu was king, though his cruelty was much increased afterward. Jehu destroyed those whom Hazael did not, as king Joram himself, and Ahaziah, and all the near relations of Ahab.

18. I have left - Or, I have reserved to myself; I have kept from the common contagion: therefore thou art mistaken to think that thou art left alone. Seven thousand - Either, definitely so many: or rather, indefinitely, for many thousands; the number of seven being often used for a great number. Kissed him - That is, all those who have not worshipped Baal, nor professed reverence or subjection to him: which idolaters did to their idols, by bowing the knee, and by kissing them.

19. Was plowing - Who had twelve ploughs going, whereof eleven were managed by his servants, and the last by himself; according to the simplicity of those ancient times, in which men of good estate submitted to the meanest employments. Cast his mantle - By that ceremony conferring upon him the office of a prophet, which God was pleased to accompany with the gifts and graces of his spirit.

20. He ran - Being powerfully moved by God's spirit to follow Elijah, and wholly give up himself to his function. Let me kiss - That is, bid them farewell. Go - And take thy leave of them, and then return to me again. For what, &c. - Either first, to hinder thee from performing that office. That employment to which I have called thee, doth not require an alienation of thy heart from thy parents, nor the total neglect of them. Or, secondly, to make such a change in thee, that thou shouldst be willing to forsake thy parents, and lands, and all, that thou mayest follow me. Whence comes this marvelous change? It is not from me, who did only throw my mantle over thee; but from an higher power, even from God's spirit, which both changed thy heart, and consecrated thee to thy prophetical office: which therefore it concerns thee vigourously to execute, and wholly to devote thyself to it.

21. From him - From Elijah to his parents; whom when he had seen and kissed, he returned to Elijah. The instruments - That is, with the wood belonging to the plow, &c. to which more was added, as occasion required. But that he burned, to shew his total relinquishing of his former employment. And gave - That is, he made thereof a feast for his servants who had been ploughing with him, and for him, and his other friends and neighbours who came to take their leave of him. Hereby he shewed how willingly and joyfully he forsook all his friends, that he might serve God in that high and honourable employment. It is of great advantage to young ministers, to spend some time under the direction of those that are aged and experienced; and not to think much, if occasion be, to minister unto them. Those who would be fit to teach, must have time to learn; those should first serve, who may hereafter rule.

## XX

Ben-hadad's invasion of Israel and insolent demand, ver. 1- 12. Ahab, encouraged by a prophet, overthrows him twice, ver. 13-30. Makes a covenant with him, ver. 31-34. Is reproved and threatened by a prophet, ver. 35-43.

1. Gathered his host - To war against Israel: wherein his design was to enlarge the conquest which his father had made, but God's design was to punish Israel for their apostacy and idolatry.

3. Thy silver, &c. - I challenge them as my own, and expect to have them forthwith delivered, if thou expect peace with me.

4. The king said - I do so far comply with thy demand, that I will own thee for my Lord, and myself for thy vassal, and will hold my wives, and children, and estate, as by thy favour, and with an acknowledgment.

5. Saying, &c. - Although I did before demand not only the dominion of thy treasures, and wives, and children, as thou mayst seem to understand me, but also the actual portion of them; wherewith I would then have been contented.

6. Yet, &c. - Yet now I will not accept of those terms, but together with thy royal treasures, I expect all the treasures of thy servants or subjects; nor will I wait 'till thou deliver them to me, but I will send my servants into the city, and they shall search out and take away all thou art fond of, and this to prevent fraud and delay; and then I will grant thee a peace.

7. Seeketh mischief - Though he pretended peace, upon these terms propounded, it is apparent by those additional demands, that he intends nothing less than our utter ruin. I denied not - I granted his demands in the sense before mentioned.

10. And said, &c. - If I do not assault thy city with so numerous an army, as shall turn all thy city into an heap of dust, and shall be sufficient to carry it all away, though every soldier take but one handful of it.

11. Let not him, &c. - Do not triumph before the victory, for the events of war are uncertain.

13. And behold, &c. - God, though forsaken and neglected by Ahab, prevents him with his gracious promise of help: that Ahab and the idolatrous Israelites, might hereby be fully convinced, or left without excuse, that Ben-hadad's intolerable pride, and contempt of God, and of his people, might be punished: and that the remnant of his prophets and people who were involved in the same calamity with the rest of the Israelites, might be preserved and delivered. I am the Lord - And not Baal, because I will deliver thee, which he cannot do.

14. He said, &c. - Not by old and experienced soldiers, but by those young men; either the sons of the princes, and great men of the land, who were fled thither for safety; or their pages, or servants that used to attend them: who are bred up delicately, and seem unfit for the business. Thou - Partly to encourage the young men to fight courageously, as being the presence of their prince: and partly, that it might appear, that the victory was wholly due to God's gracious providence, and not to the valour or worthiness of the instruments.

15. All Israel - All that were fit to go out to war; all, except those whom their age, or the same infirmity excused.

18. Take them - He bids them not fight, for he thought they needed not to strike one stroke; and that the Israelites could not stand the first brunt.

20. His man - Him who came to seize upon him, as Ben-hadad had commanded. Fled - Being amazed at the unexpected and undaunted courage of the Israelites, and struck with a divine terror.

21. The king went - Proceeded further in his march. Smote the chariots - The men that fought from them.

22. Mark, and see - Consider what is necessary for thee to do by way of preparation. The enemies of the children of God, are restless in their malice and tho' they may take some breathing time for themselves, they are still breathing out slaughter against the church. It therefore concerns us always to expect our spiritual enemies, and to mark and see what we do.

23. Said to him - They suppose that their gods were no better than the Syrian gods and that there were many gods who had each his particular charge and jurisdiction; which was the opinion of all heathen nations; that some were gods of the woods, other of the rivers, and others of the mountains; and they fancied these to be the latter, because the land of Canaan was a mountainous land, and the great temple of their God at Jerusalem, stood upon an hill, and so did Samaria, where they had received their last blow: it is observable, they do not impute their ill success to their negligence, and drunkenness, and bad conduct, nor to the valour of the Israelites; but to a divine power, which was indeed visible in it. In the plain - Wherein there was not only superstition, but policy; because the Syrians excelled the Israelites in horses, which are most serviceable in plain ground.

24. Take the kings away - Who being of softer education, and less experienced in military matters, were less fit for service; and being many of them but mercenaries, and therefore less concerned in his good success, would be more cautions in venturing themselves. Captains - That is, experienced soldiers of his own subjects, who would faithfully obey the commands of the general (to which the kings would not so readily yield) and use their utmost skill and valour for their own interest and advancement.

27. And went - Being encouraged by the remembrance of their former success, and an expectation of assistance from God again. And pitched - Probably upon some hilly ground, where they might secure themselves, and watch for advantage against their enemies; which may be the reason why the Syrians durst not assault them before the seventh day, ver. 29. Little flocks - Few, and weak, being also for conveniency of fighting, and that they might seem to be more than they were, divided into two bodies.

30. The wall - Or, the walls (the singular number, for the plural) of the city; in which they were now fortifying themselves. This might possibly happen thro' natural causes; but most probably, was effected by the mighty power of God, sending some earthquake, or violent storm which threw down the walls upon them; or doing this by the ministry of angels. And if ever miracle was to be wrought, now seems to have been the proper season for it; when the blasphemous Syrians denied the sovereign power of God, and thereby in some sort obliged him, to give a proof of it; and to shew, that he was the God of the plains, as well as of the mountains; and that he could as effectually destroy them in their strongest holds, as in the open fields; and make the very walls, to whose strength they trusted for their defense, to be the instruments of their ruin. But it may be farther observed, that it is not said, that all these were killed by the fall of this wall; but only that the wall fell upon them, killing some, and wounding others.

31. He will save thy life - This encouragement have all poor sinners, to repent and humble themselves before God. The God of Israel is a merciful God; let us rend our hearts and return to him.

32. My brother - I do not only pardon him, but honour and love him as my brother. What a change is here! From the height of prosperity, to the depth of distress. See the uncertainty of human affairs! Such turns are they subject to, that the spoke of the wheel which is uppermost now, may soon be the lowest of all.

33. Thy brother - Understand, Liveth: for that he inquired after, ver. 32.

34. Streets - Or, Markets, &c. places where thou mayest either receive the tribute which I promise to pay thee, or exercise judicature upon my subjects in case of their refusal. So he made, &c. - He takes no notice of his blasphemy against God; nor of the injuries which his people had suffered from him.

35. In the word - In the name, and by the command of God, whereof doubtless he had informed him. Smite me - So as to wound me, ver. 37. He speaks what God commanded him, though it was to his own hurt; by which obedience to God, he secretly reproacheth Ahab's disobedience in a far easier matter. And this the prophet by God's appointment desires, that looking like a wounded soldier, he might have the more free access to the king. Refused - Not out of contempt of God's command, but probably, in tenderness to his brother.

36. Slew him - We cannot judge of the case; this man might be guilty of many other heinous sins unknown to us but known to God; for which, God might justly cut him off: which God chose to do upon this occasion, that by the severity of this punishment of a prophet's disobedience, proceeding from pity to his brother, he might teach Ahab the greatness of his sin, in sparing him through foolish pity, whom by the laws of religion, and justice, and prudence, he should have cut of.

38. With ashes - Or, with a cloath, or band; (as the Hebrew doctors understand the word) whereby he bound up his wound, which probably was in his face; for it was to be made in a conspicuous place, that it might be visible to Ahab and others.

39. He said - This relation is a parable; an usual way of instruction in the eastern parts, and most fit for this occasion wherein an obscure prophet was to speak to a great king; impatient of a down-right reproof, and exceeding partial in his own cause. A man - My commander as the manner of expression sheweth.

40. Thy judgment - Thy sentence; thou must perform the condition. Either suffer the one, or do the other.

42. Thy life - "What was the great sin of Ahab in this action, for which God so severely punisheth him?" The great dishonour hereby done to God, in suffering so horrid a blasphemer, to go unpunished, which was contrary to an express law, Lev. xxiv, 16. And God had delivered him into Ahab's hand, for his blasphemy, as he promised to do, ver. 28, by which act of his providence, compared with that law, it was most evident, that this man was appointed by God to destruction, but Ahab was so far from punishing this blasphemer, that he doth not so much as rebuke him, but dismisseth him upon easy terms, and takes not the least care for the reparation of God's honour, and the people were punished for their own sins, which were many, and great; though God took this occasion to inflict it.

## XXI

Ahab covets Naboth's vineyard, ver. 1-4. Jezebel procures Naboth to be stoned, ver. 5-14. Ahab goes to take possession, ver. 15, 16 Elijah meets him, and denounces the judgment of God, ver. 17-24. Upon his humiliation a reprieve is granted, ver. 25-29.

3. The Lord forbid - For God had expressly, and for divers weighty reasons forbidden the alienation of lands from the tribes and families to which they were allotted. And although these might have been alienated 'till the jubilee, yet he durst not sell it to the king for that time; because he supposed, if once it came into the king's hand, neither he, nor his posterity, could ever recover it; and so he should both offend God, and wrong his posterity.

7. Dost thou govern - Art thou fit to be king, that hast not courage to use thy power.

9. A fast - To remove all suspicion of evil design in Ahab, and to beget a good opinion of him amongst his people, as if he were grown zealous for God's honour, and careful of his people's welfare, and therefore desirous to inquire into all those sins which provoked God against them. On high - On a scaffold, or high- place, where malefactors were usually placed, that they might be seen, and heard by all the people.

10. Blaspheme God and the king - Indeed his blaspheming God would only be the forfeiture of his life, not his estate. Therefore he is charged with treason also, that his estate may be confiscated, and so Ahab have his vineyard.

13. Stoned him - And it seems his sons too, either with him or after him. For God afterward says, (2 Kings ix, 26) I have seen the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons. Let us commit the keeping of our lives and comforts to God; for innocence itself will not always be our security.

19. Saying - Thou hast murdered an innocent man; and instead of repenting for it, hast added another piece of injustice and violence to it, and art going confidently and chearfully to reap the fruit of thy wickedness. Thy blood - The threatening was so directed at first; but afterwards, upon his humiliation, the punishment was transferred from him to his son, as is expressed, ver. 29, yet upon Ahab's returning to sin, in the next chapter, he brings back the curse upon himself, and so it is no wonder if it be in some sort fulfilled in him also.

20. Hast thou found - Dost thou pursue me from place to place? Wilt thou never let me rest? Art thou come after me hither with thy unwelcome messages? Thou art always disturbing, threatening, and opposing me. I have - The hand of God hath found and overtaken thee. Sold thyself - Thou hast wholly resigned up thyself to be the bondslave of the devil, as a man that sells himself to another is totally in his master's power. To work evil, &c. - Impudently and contemptuously. Those who give themselves up to sin will certainly be found out, sooner or later, to their unspeakable amazement.

23. By the wall - Or, in the portion, as it is explained 2 Kings ix, 36.

24. Him that dieth, &c. - Punishments after death are here most insisted on. And these, tho' lighting on the body only, yet undoubtedly were designed as figures of the soul's misery in an after state.

25 Was none - None among all the kings of Israel which had been before him. Whom Jezebel - This is added to shew, that temptations to sin are no excuse to the sinner.

27. Softly - Slowly and silently, after the manner of mourners, or those who are under a great consternation.

29. Humbleth himself - His humiliation was real, though not lasting, and accordingly pleasing to God. This discovers the great goodness of God, and his readiness to shew mercy. It teaches us to take notice of that which is good, even in the worst of men. It gives a reason why wicked persons often prosper: God rewards what little good is in them. And it encourages true penitents. If even Ahab goes to his house reprieved, doubtless they shall go to their houses justified.

## XXII

Ahab invites Jehoshaphat to join in recovering Ramoth- gilead, ver. 1-4. His false prophets promise him success, ver. 5, 6. He sends for Micaiah, ver. 7-10. Farther promises, ver. 11, 12. Micaiah's uprightness and prediction, ver. 13-23. He is abused and imprisoned, ver. 24-28. An account of the battle, wherein Ahab is slain, ver. 29-40. The good reign of Jehoshaphat, ver. 41-50. The wicked reign of Ahaziah, ver. 51-53.

2. Came down, &c. - It is strange, that so good a man would be so closely connected with a king revolted from the worship of God! But he appears to have been of too easy a temper, which betrayed him to many inconveniencies.

3. Is ours - Belongeth to us by right. both by God's donation, and by our last agreement with Ben-hadad, chap. xx, 34, which yet he refuseth to deliver up.

5. Inquire - A good man, wherever he goes, will take God along with him, will acknowledge him in all his ways, and look to him for success. And wherever he goes, he ought to take his religion along with him: and not be ashamed to own it, even among those who have no kindness for it.

6. The prophets - Doubtless his own false prophets, or the priests of the groves; who yet gave in their answer in the name of Jehovah; either, in compliance with Jehoshaphat, or by Ahab's direction, that Jehoshaphat might be deceived by them, into a good opinion of the war.

8. One man - In this place, for whom I can speedily send: for there were also other prophets elsewhere in the kingdom, but these were not at hand. Micaiah - Not one of the twelve prophets, who lived about a hundred and fifty years after this time, but another of that name. Let not, &c. - Let us neither hate his person, nor despise his message; but first hear it, and then do as we see cause.

9. Micaiah - It seems, he had imprisoned him; for ver. 26, he bids the officer carry him back, namely to the place where he was before. Probably this was he that had reproved him, for letting Ben-hadad go: And for that, had lain in prison three years. But this did not make him less confident, or less faithful in delivering his message.

14. Said - What answer God shall put in to my mouth. Bravely resolved! And as became one who had an eye to a greater king than either of these.

15. Go - Using the very words of the false prophets, in way of derision. Micaiah's meaning is plainly this, because thou dost not seek to know the truth, but only to please thyself, go to the battle, as all thy prophets advise thee, and try the truth of their prediction by thy own experience.

17. I saw - In the spirit, or in a vision. The hills - Upon the mountains of Gilead, nigh Ramoth, where they lay encamped by Ahab's order. As sheep - As people who have lost their king. Return - Discharged from the war: which was fulfilled, ver. 26.

18. Evil - Nay, but what evil was it, to tell him, what would be the event, if he proceeded in his expedition, while it was in his own power, whether he would proceed, or no? The greatest kindness we can do to one that is walking in a dangerous way, is to tell him of his danger.

19. He said - I will give thee a distinct and true account of the whole matter, in God's name and presence. I saw - By the eyes of my mind: for he could not see the Lord with bodily eyes. The Host - The angels, both good and bad, the one possibly on his right, the other on his left hand. Nor is it strange that the devils are called the host of heaven; if you consider, first, that their original seat was in heaven. Secondly, that the name of heaven is often given to all that part of the world which is above the earth, and among the rest, to the air, and where the devil's residence and dominion lies, Eph. ii, 2, and that both Michael and his angels, and the Dragon and his angels, are said to be, and to wage war in heaven, Rev. xii, 7, either the air, or the church.

20. Who shall - This is not to be grossly understood, as if God were at a loss to find out an expedient to accomplish his own will; but only to bring down divine things to our shallow capacities, and to express the various means which God hath to execute his own designs.

21. A spirit - An evil spirit came, and presented himself before the throne.

22. He said - I will inspire a lie into the minds and mouths of his prophets. Thou shalt - I will give them up into thy hands, and leave them to their own ignorance and wickedness. Go - This is not a command, but only a permission.

24. Zedekiah - The chief of the false prophets, who was much in the king's favour. Which way - In what manner went it? Forasmuch as I and my brethren have consulted the Lord, and have the same spirit which thou pretendest to have.

25. Hide thyself - Probably he went with Ahab to the battle, after which he was glad to shelter himself where he could.

27. Bread, &c. - With a very course and sparing diet, whereby he may be only supported to endure his torment.

31. Save only - This he ordered, truly supposing this to be the best way to put an end to the war: and by the providence of God, which disposeth the hearts of kings as he pleaseth; and inclined them to this course, that they might, though ignorantly, accomplish his counsel. Perhaps Ben-hadad only designed to have taken him prisoner, that he might now give him as honourable a treatment, as he had formerly received from him.

34. The joints - Where the several parts of his armour were joined together. The only place about him where this arrow of death could find entrance. No armour is proof against the darts of divine vengeance. Case the criminal in steel, and it is all one: he that made him, can make his sword approach him. And that which to us seems altogether casual, comes by the determinate counsel of God.

37. Died - Finding too late the truth of Micaiah's words; and Zedekiah's horns of iron, pushing not the Syrians, but himself, into destruction.

39. Ivory house - Not that it was made of solid ivory, but because the other materials were covered, or inlaid with ivory.

41. Of Ahab - Who reigned twenty two years; therefore he reigned about eighteen years with Ahab.

43. High places - He took them away, but not fully; or not in the beginning of of his reign.

44. Made peace - With Ahab first, and then with his son. This is noted as a blemish in his government, 2 Chron. xix, 2, and proved of most mischievous consequence to his posterity.

47. A deputy - Sent, and set over them by the kings of Judah, from the time of David, until the days of Jehoram, 2 Chron. xxi, 8.

49. Would not - He did join with Ahaziah before this time, and before the ships were broken: for the breaking of the ships mentioned here, is noted to be the effect of his sin, in joining with Ahaziah, 2 Chron. xx, 37. And Jehoshaphat being warned and chastised by God for this sin, would not be persuaded to repeat it.

51. Ahaziah, &c. - Ahaziah was made king by his father, and reigned in conjunction with him a year or two before Ahab's death, and as long after it; even as Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat was made king by his father in his life-time, which possibly was done in compliance with Ahab's desire upon marriage of his daughter to Jehoshaphat's son; and it may be Ahab, to induce him to do so, give him an example of it, and made his son his partner in the kingdom.

52. In the way - Which seems added, to shew, how little the example of parents, or ancestors, is to be valued where it is opposed to the will and word of God.

53. His father, &c. - Most unhappy parents, that thus help to damn their own children's souls!

## NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS

THE former book of Kings had an illustrious beginning in the glory of the kingdom of Israel. This has a melancholy conclusion, in the desolations of the kingdom of Israel first, and then of Judah. Here is Elijah fetching fire from heaven, and ascending in fire to heaven, chap. 1, 2. Elisha working many miracles, chap. 3-7. Hazael anointed, for the correction of Israel, Jehu, for the destruction of the house of Ahab and of Baal, chap. 8-10. The reigns of several kings, both of Judah and Israel, chap. 11-16. The captivity of the ten tribes, chap. 17. The glorious reign of Hezekiah, chap. 18-20. The wicked reign of Manasseh, and the good one of Josiah, chap. 21-23. The destruction of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon, chap. 24, 25.

### I

The rebellion of Moab, ver. 1. The message of Ahaziah to Baal- zebub, ver.

2. God's message to him, ver. 3-8. The destruction of the men sent to seize Elijah, ver. 9-12. He spares the third messenger, and goes to the king, ver. 13-16. Ahaziah's death, ver. 17; 18.

1. Moab - This had been subdued by David, as Edom was; and upon the division of his kingdom, Moab was adjoined to that of Israel, and Edom to that of Judah, each to that kingdom upon which it bordered. But when the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were weak and forsaken by God, they took that opportunity to revolt from them; Moab here, and Edom a little after.

2. Chamber - In which, the lattess might be left to convey light into the lower room. But the words may be rendered, through the battlements (or through the lattess in the battlements) of the

roof of the house. Where, standing and looking through, and leaning upon this lattess, it broke, and he fell down into the court or garden. Baal-zebub - Properly, the God of flies; an idol so called, because it was supposed to deliver those people from flies; Jupiter and Hercules were called by a like name among the Grecians. And it is evident, both from sacred and prophane histories, That the idol-gods, did sometimes through God's permission, give the answers; though they were generally observed, even by the Heathens themselves, to be dark and doubtful.

3. And say - Dost thou not cast contempt on the God of Israel, as if he were either ignorant of the event of thy disease, or unable to give thee relief; and as if Baal-zebub had more skill and power than he?

5. Why, &c. - Before you have been at Ekron: which he knew by their quick return.

8. An hairy man - His garment was rough and hairy, such as were worn by eminent persons in Greece, in ancient times; and were the proper habit of the prophets. Girdle - As John the baptist also had. That by his very outward habit, he might represent Elijah, in whose spirit and power he came.

9. Man of God - So he calls him by way of scorn. Come - The king commands thee to come to him: which if thou refuseth, I am to carry thee by force.

10. Let fire, &c. - Elijah did this, not to secure himself, he could have done that some other way: nor to revenge himself, for it was not his own cause that he acted in: but to prove his mission, and to reveal the wrath of God from heaven against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

11. And said - He discovers more petulancy than the former; and shews, how little he was moved by the former example.

13. Besought - Expressing both reverence to his person, and a dread of God's judgments. There is nothing to be got by contending with God: if we would prevail with him, it must be by supplication. And those are wise who learn submission from the fatal consequences of obstinacy in others.

16. He said - To his very face. Nor durst the king lay hands upon him, being daunted with the prophet's presence, and confidence; and affrighted by the late dreadful evidence of his power with God.

17. Jehoram - His brother. The son of Jehoshaphat - Jehoshaphat, in his seventeenth year, when he went to Ahab, and with him to Ramoth-Gilead, appointed his son Jehoram his vice-roy, and (in case of his death) his successor. In the second year from that time, when Jehoram was thus made vice-king in his father's stead; this Jehoram, Ahab's son, began to reign: and in the fifth year of the reign of this Jehoram son of Ahab, which was about the twenty- fourth year of Jehoshaphat's reign, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat was made king of Judah, together with his father.

## II

Elisha keeps close to Elijah, and walks with him through Jordan, ver. 1-8. Elijah is taken up, and Elisha laments the loss of him, ver. 9-12. He divides Jordan, ver. 13, 14. Is acknowledged by the sons of the prophets, ver. 15. Who send to seek Elijah, ver. 16-18. Elisha heals the unwholesome waters, ver. 19-22. Destroys the mocking children, ver. 23-25

1. About to take, &c. - It is supposed, (tho' not expressly revealed) that Elijah flourished about twenty years, before he was translated, body and soul, to heaven, only undergoing such a change, as was necessary to qualify him for being an inhabitant in that world of Spirits. By translating him, God gave in that dark and degenerate age, a very sensible proof of another life, together with a type of the ascension of Christ, and the opening of the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

2. Tarry here - This he desires, either,

1. That being left alone, he might better prepare himself for his great change. Or,
2. Out of indulgence to Elisha, that he might not be overwhelmed with grief at so sad a sight. Or,
3. That he might try his love, and whet his desire to accompany him; it being highly convenient for God's honour, that there should be witnesses of so glorious a translation. To Beth-el - Which was truth, tho' not the whole truth: for he was to go a far longer journey. But he was first to go to Beth-el, as also to Jericho, to the schools of the prophets there, that he might comfort, and strengthen their hearts in God's work, and give them his dying counsels.

3. And said - This was revealed to some of the sons of the prophets, and by them to the whole college. In the kingdom of Judah they had priest and Levites, and the temple service. The want of these in the kingdom of Israel, God graciously made up by these colleges, where men were trained up and employed, in the exercises of religion, and whither good people resorted, to solemnize the appointed feasts, with prayer and hearing, tho' they had not conveniencies for sacrifice. From thy head - Hebrew. from above thy head: which phrase may respect, either, the manner of sitting in schools, where the scholar sat at his master's feet. Or, the manner of Elijah's translation, which was to be by a power sent from heaven, to take him up thither. Hold you your peace - Do not aggravate my grief, nor divert me with any unseasonable discourses. He speaks as one that was himself, and would have them calm and sedate, and with awful silence waiting the event.

7. To view - To observe this great event, Elijah's translation to heaven, which they expected every moment: and whereof they desired to be spectators, not to satisfy their own curiosity, but that they might be witnesses of it to others.

8. Smote the waters - These waters of old yielded to the ark, now to the prophet's mantle; which to those that wanted the ark, was an equivalent token of God's presence. When God will take his children to himself, death is the Jordan, which they must pass through. And they find a way thro' it, a safe and comfortable way. The death of Christ has divided those waters, that the ransomed of the Lord may pass over.

9. A double portion - Or, rather double to what the rest of the sons of the prophets receive at thy request. He alludes to the double portion of the first-born, Deut. xxi, 17. But though Elisha desired no more, yet God gave him more than he desired or expected; and he seems to have had a greater portion of the gifts of God's Spirit, than even Elijah had.

10. A hard thing - A rare and singular blessing, which I cannot promise thee, which only God can give; and he gives it only when, and to whom he pleaseth. If thou seest - This sign he proposed, not without the direction of God's Spirit, that hereby he might engage him more earnestly to wait, and more fervently to pray for this mercy.

11. A chariot of fire - In this form the angels appeared. The souls of all the faithful, are carried by an invisible guard of angels, into the bosom of Abraham. But Elijah being to carry his body with him, this heavenly guard appeared visibly: Not in an human shape, tho' so they might have born

him in their arms, but in the form of a chariot and horses, that he may ride in state, may ride in triumph, like a prince, like a conqueror. See the readiness of the angels to do the will of God, even in the meanest services for the heirs of salvation! Thus he who had burned with holy zeal for God and his honour, was now conveyed in fire into his immediate presence.

12. My father - So he calls him for his fatherly affection to him, and for his fatherly authority which he had over him, in which respect the scholars of the prophets are called their sons. He saw his own condition like that of a fatherless child, and laments it accordingly. The chariot, &c. - Who by thy example, and counsels, and prayers, and power with God, didst more for the defense and preservation of Israel than all their chariots and horses. The expression alludes to the form of chariots and horses which he had seen.

13. Which fell - God so ordering it for Elisha's comfort, and the strengthening of his faith, as a pledge, that together with Elijah's mantle, his Spirit should rest upon him. And Elijah himself was gone to a place, where he needed not the mantle, either to adorn him, or to shelter him from weather, or to wrap his face in.

14. The Lord - Who at Elijah's request divided these waters, and is as able to do it again.

15. Bowed themselves - They had been trained up in the schools: Elisha was taken from the plough. Yet, when they perceive, that God is with him, and that this is the man whom he delights to honour, they readily submit to him as their head and father, as the people to Joshua when Moses was dead. "Those that appear to have God's Spirit and presence with them, ought to have our esteem and best affections, notwithstanding the meanness of their extraction and education."

16. Strong men - Able to take such a journey. Lest, &c. - They thought, either that God had not finally taken him away from them, but only for a time; or that God had only taken away his soul, and that his body was cast down into some place, which they desired to seek, that they might give it an honourable burial.

17. Was ashamed - That is, to deny them any longer, lest they should think his denial proceeded from a neglect of his master, or a contempt of them.

19. Barren - Either it was so originally, at least, as to that part of the city where the college of the prophets was: or, it became so from the curse of God inflicted upon it, when Hiel rebuilt it. However, upon the prophet's care, it grew exceeding fruitful, and therefore is commended for its fertility in later writers.

20. A new cruse - That there might be no legal pollution in it which might offend God, and hinder his miraculous operation. Put salt - A most improper remedy; for salt naturally makes waters brackish, and lands barren. Hereby therefore he would shew, that this was effected solely by the Divine power, which could work either without means, or against them.

21. Death - Hurt, or danger, to man or beast, by drinking of it.

23. To Beth-el - To the other school of prophets, to inform them of Elijah's translation, and his succession to the same office; and to direct, and comfort, and stablish them. Children - Or, young men: as this Hebrew word often signifies. It is more than probable they were old enough to discern between good and evil. The city - Beth-el was the mother-city of idolatry, where the prophets planted themselves, that they might bear witness against it, and dissuade the people from it; though, it seems, they had but small success there. Mocked him - With great petulancy and vehemency, as the word signifies; deriding both his person and ministry, and that from a prophane contempt of the true religion, and a passionate love to that idolatry which they knew he opposed. Go up - Go up into heaven, whither thou pretendest Elijah is gone. Why didst not thou accompany thy friend

and master to heaven? Bald-head - So they mock his natural infirmity, which is a great sin. The repetition shews their heartiness and earnestness, that it was no sudden slip of their tongue, but a scoff proceeding from a rooted impiety and hatred of God and his prophets. And very probably it was their usual practice, to jeer the prophets as they went along the streets, that they might expose them to contempt, and if possible drive them out of their town. Had the abuse done to Elisha been the first offense of the kind, they might not have been so severely punished. But mocking the messengers of the Lord, was one of the crying sins of Israel.

24. Cursed them - Nor was this punishment too great for the offense, if it be considered, that their mocking proceeded from a great malignity of mind against God; that they mocked not only a man, and an ancient man, whose very age commanded reverence; and a prophet; but even God himself, and that glorious work of God, the assumption of Elijah into heaven; that they might be guilty of many other heinous crimes, which God and the prophet knew; and were guilty of idolatry, which by God's law deserved death; that the idolatrous parents were punished in their children; and that, if any of these children were more innocent, God might have mercy upon their souls, and then this death was not a misery, but a real blessing to them, that they were taken away from that education which was most likely to expose them not only to temporal, but eternal destruction. In the name - Not from any revengeful passion, but by the motion of God's Spirit, and by God's command and commission. God did this, partly, for the terror and caution of all other idolaters and prophane persons who abounded in that place; partly, to vindicate the honour, and maintain the authority of his prophets; and particularly, of Elisha, now especially, in the beginning of his sacred ministry. Children - This Hebrew word signifies not only young children, but also those who are grown up to maturity, as Gen. xxxii, 22, xxxiv, 4, xxxvii, 30, Ruth i, 5.

## III

The character of Jehoram, ver. 1-3. He and his allies invade Moab, ver. 4-8. Their distress and relief, ver. 9-20. Their success, ver. 21-25. The king of Moab sacrifices his son, and they retire, ver. 26, 27.

3. The sins - The worship of the calves: which all the kings of Israel kept up as a wall of partition between their subjects and those of Judah. So that altho' he had a little religion, yet he had not enough to over-rule this policy.

4. A sheep-master - A man of great wealth (which in those times and places consisted much in cattle) which enabled and emboldened him to rebel against his sovereign.

7. He said - He joins with him in this war; because the war was just in itself, and convenient for Jehoshaphat, both in the general, that revolters should be chastised: lest the examples should pass into his dominions, and the Edomites be encouraged to revolt from him, as they did from his son; and in particular, that the Moabites should be humbled, who had invaded his land before this time, 2 Chron. xx, 1, and might do so again if they were not brought low; for which a fair opportunity now offered.

9. King of Edom - That is, the vice-roy under Jehosaphat, 1 Kings xxii, 47, here called king: because that word is sometimes used for any prince or chief ruler. Seven days - Because they made a great army, which could move but slowly; and they fetched a greater compass than was usual, for some advantage which they expected by it. No water - A frequent want in those parts; and now, it seems, increased by the extraordinary heat and dryness of the season.

11. Is there not, &c. - This he should have asked before, when they first undertook the expedition, as he did in a like case, 1 Kings xxii, 5, and for that neglect he now suffers; but better late than never: his affliction brings him to the remembrance of his former sin, and present duty. Poured water - Who was his servant; this being one office of a servant: and this office was the more necessary among the Israelites, because of the frequent washings which their law required. Probably it was by a special direction from God, that Elisha followed them, unasked, unobserved. Thus does God prevent us with the blessings of his goodness; and provide for those who provide not for themselves.

12. The word, &c. - He is a true prophet. Which Jehoshaphat might easily understand, because being a good man, many would be ready to inform him of. Went - To his tent; which was either in the camp, or not far from it: they did not send for him, but went to him, that by giving him this honour, they might engage him to give them his utmost assistance.

13. What have I, &c. - I desire to have no discourse with thee. Get thee - To the calves, which thou after thy father's example dost worship; and to the Baals which thy mother yet worshippeth by thy permission; let these idols whom thou worshippest in thy prosperity, now help thee in thy distress.

14. Jehoshaphat - Whom I reverence and love for his piety. It is good being with those who have God's favour, and the love of his people. Wicked men often fare the better, for the friendship and society of good men.

15. Minstrel - One that can sing and play upon a musical instrument. This he requires, that his mind which had been disturbed at the sight of wicked Jehoram, might be composed, and that he might be excited to more fervent prayer whereby he was prepared to receive the prophetic inspiration. Those that desire communion with God must keep their spirits quiet and serene. All hurry of spirit, and all turbulent passions, make us unfit for divine visitations. The hand, &c. - The spirit of prophecy, so called, to note that it was no natural nor acquired virtue inherent in him; but a singular gift of God, given to whom and when he pleased.

19. Ye shall smite - And if this command seem severe, it must be considered, that the Moabites were a very wicked people, perfidious, cruel, implacable enemies to God's people upon all occasions, and now in a state of rebellion.

20. The meal-offering - That is, the morning sacrifice: which doubtless was attended with the solemn prayers of God's people. At this time Elisha joined his prayers with the prayers of God's people, especially those at Jerusalem. And this time God chose to answer their prayers, and to work this miracle, that thereby he might determine the controversy between the Israelites and the Jews, about the place and manner of worship, and give a publick testimony from heaven for the Jews, and against the Israelites. God that commands all the waters both above and beneath the firmament, sent them abundance of water on a sudden.

21. The border - Of their country, to defend the passage.

25. Kir-haraseth - This was the royal city of the Moabites, into which the remnant of the Moabites were gathered, where also their king was with them. The stones - The walls and buildings of this

city only were left; their whole country being destroyed. The slingers - Such as slung great stones against the walls to break them down, according to the manner of those times. Made breaches in the walls, by which they might enter the city, and take it.

26. To break thro' - That he might make an escape: which he chose to do on the king of Edom's quarter; because he thought his was the weakest side.

27. His son - Or rather, his own son: whom he sacrificed; partly, to obtain the favour of his God, according to the manner of the Phoenicians and other people in publick calamities; and partly, to oblige the Israelites to quit the siege out of compassion; or, as despairing to conquer (at least without greater loss of men than it was worth) him who was resolved to defend the city to the utmost extremity. On the wall - That the besiegers might see it, and be moved by it. There was, &c. - Or, great trouble or repentance upon Israel, the Israelitish king and people (who was the first cause of the war, and had brought the rest into confederacy with him) were greatly grieved for this barbarous action, and resolved to prosecute the war no farther.

## IV

Elisha multiplies the widow's oil, ver. 1-7. Obtains a son for the Shunamite, ver. 8-17. Raises him again to life, ver. 18-37. Heals the deadly pottage, ver. 38-41. Feeds an hundred men with twenty small loaves, ver. 42-44.

1. Prophets - Who, though they were wholly devoted to sacred employment, were not excluded from marriage, any more than the priests and Levites. Fear the Lord - His poverty therefore was not procured by his idleness, or prodigality; but by his piety, because he would not comply with the king's way of worship, and therefore lost all worldly advantages. Bondmen - Either, to use them as his slaves, or to sell them to others, according to the law.

2. What shall I - How shall I relieve thee, who am myself poor?

7. Unto her son - To one of them: for she had two, ver. 1. The oil stayed - To teach us, that we should not waste any of his good creatures; and that God would not work miracles unnecessarily. We are never straiten'd in God, and in his power and bounty, and the riches of his grace. All our straitness is in ourselves. It is our faith that fails, not his promise. Were there more vessels, there is enough in God to fill them, enough for all, enough for each.

8. Great - For estate, or birth and quality.

9. This is - A prophet, and that of eminent holiness: by our kindness to whom, we shall procure a blessing to ourselves.

10. On the wall - That he may be free from the noise of family business, and enjoy that privacy, which, I perceive, he desireth for his prayers and meditations. A bed, &c. - He will not be troublesome or chargeable to us: he cares not for rich furniture or costly entertainment, and is content with bare necessaries.

12. She stood - The relation seems to be a little perplexed, but may be thus conceived. It is in this verse recorded in the general, that the prophet sent Gehazi to call her, and that she came to him upon that call: then follows a particular description of the whole business, with all the circumstances,

first, of the message with which Gehazi was sent when he went to call her, and of her answer to that message, ver. 13, and of Gehazi's conjecture thereupon, ver. 14, and then of her coming to the prophet at his call: which is there repeated to make way for the following passages.

13. I dwell - I live among my kindred and friends; nor have I any cause to seek relief from higher powers.

14. He said - Hast thou observed any thing which she wants or desires? For the prophet kept himself much in his chamber, whilst Gehazi went more freely about the house, as his occasions led him.

16. Do not lie - Do not delude me with vain hopes. She could not believe it for joy.

17. Time of life - See note on Gen. xviii, 10.

21. Bed of the man of God - Being apt to believe, he that so soon took away what he had given, would restore what he had taken away. By this faith women received their dead raised to life. In this faith she makes no preparation for the burial of her child, but for his resurrection.

23. New moon, &c. - Which were the usual times in which they resorted to the prophets for instruction. It shall be well - My going will not be troublesome to him, nor prejudicial to thee or me.

26. It is - So it was in some respects, because it was the will of a wise and good God, and therefore best for her. When God calls away our dearest relations by death, it becomes us to say, it is well both with us and them. It is well, for all is well that God doth: all is well with them that are gone, if they are gone to heaven. And all is well with us that stay behind, if by the affliction we are furthered in our way thither.

27. The feet - She fell at his feet and touched them, as a most humble and earnest supplicant. Withal, she intimated, what she durst not presume to express in words, that she desired him to go along with her. Let her alone - Disturb her not, for this gesture is a sign of some extraordinary grief. Hid it - Whereby he signifies, that what he knew or did, was not by any virtue inherent in himself, but from God, who revealed to him only what and when he pleased.

28. She said - This child was not given to me upon my immoderate desire, for which I might have justly been thus chastised, but was freely promised by thee in God's name, and from his special favour. Deceive me - With vain hopes of a comfort that I should never have. And I had been much happier if I had never had it, than to lose it so quickly.

29. Gird up - Tie up thy long garments about thy loins for expedition. If thou meet, &c. - Make no delay nor stop by the way, neither by words nor actions.

30. Will not leave thee - Until thou goest home with me. For she had no great confidence in Gehazi, nor was her faith so strong as to think that the prophet could work so great a miracle at this distance.

31. Neither voice - Neither speech, nor sense, nor any sign of life, in the child. This disappointment might proceed from hence, that Elisha having changed his mind, and yielded to her importunity to go with her, did alter his course, and not join his fervent prayers with Gehazi's action. Not awaked - Not revived.

33. Shut the door - Upon himself and the dead child, that he might pray to God without distraction, and might more freely use those means which he thought fit.

34. And put - One part upon another successively; for the disproportion of the bodies would not permit it to be done together. Grew warm - Not by any external heat, which could not be

transmitted to the child's body by such slight touches of the prophet's body; but from a principle of life, which was already infused into the child, and by degrees enlivened all the parts of his body.

35. He walked - He changeth his postures for his own necessary refreshment, and walked to and fro, exercising his mind in prayer to God. And went - Repeating his former actions, to teach us not to be discouraged in our prayers, if we be not speedily answered. Opened his eyes - So the work begun in the former verse is here perfected. Although miracles were for the most part done in an instant, yet sometimes they were done by degrees.

36. Unto him - To the door.

40. Death - That is, some deadly thing.

41. Into the pot - Together with the pottage which they had taken out of it.

42. First fruits - Which were the priests due, Num. xviii, 12, but these, and probably the rest of the priests dues, were usually brought by the pious Israelites, according to their ability and opportunity, to the Lord's prophets, because they were not permitted to carry them to Jerusalem.

## V

Naaman hears of Elisha, ver. 1-4. The king of Syria sends him to the king of Israel, ver. 5-7. He goes to Elisha and is healed, ver. 8-14. His grateful acknowledgment to Elisha, ver. 15-19. Gehazi follows him, and receives gifts from him, ver. 20-24. The leprosy of Naaman entailed on Gehazi's family, ver. 25-27.

5. Go to, &c. - It was very natural for a king to suppose, that the king of Israel could do more than any of his subjects.

10. Elisha sent - Which he did, partly, to exercise Naaman's faith and obedience: partly, for the honour of his religion, that it might appear he sought not his own glory and profit, but only God's honour, and the good of men.

11. Was wroth - Supposing himself despised by the prophet.

12. Are not, &c. - Is there not as great a virtue in them to this purpose? But he should have considered, that the cure was not to be wrought by the water, but by the power of God.

13. My father - Or, our father. So they call him, to shew their reverence and affection to him.

16. He refused - Not that he thought it unlawful to receive presents, which he did receive from others, but because of the special circumstances of the case; this being much for the honour of God that the Syrians should see the generous piety, and kindness of his ministers and servants, and how much they despised all that worldly wealth and glory, which the prophets of the Gentiles so greedily sought after.

17. Two mules burden of earth - So he seems to farm the money which he brought with him, to express how little value he now set upon it. Ten talents (above three thousand five hundred pounds) in silver, with six thousand pieces of gold, (beside ten changes of raiment) were a burden for several mules. Shall I not give this to thy servant, Gehazi, if thou thyself will accept of nothing? This seems a more probable interpretation than the common one, that he wanted to build an altar

therewith. For what altar could be built of the earth which two mules could carry into Syria? Unless they were as large and as strong as Elephants.

18. Rimmon - A Syrian idol, called here by the LXX, Remman, and Acts vii, 43, Remphan. My hand - Or, arm, upon which, the king leaned, either for state, or for support.

20. Gehazi - One would expect Elisha's servant should have been a saint: but we find him far otherwise. The best men, the best ministers, have often had those about them, that were their grief and shame. This Syrian - A stranger, and one of that nation who are the implacable enemies of God's people. As the Lord - He swears, that he might have some pretense for the action to which he had bound himself by his oath; not considering, that to swear to do any wicked action, is so far from excusing it, that it makes it much worse.

23. Urged him - Who at first refused it upon a pretense of modesty.

26. Olive yards, &c. - Which Gehazi intended to purchase with this money: and therefore the prophet names them, to inform him, that he exactly knew, not only his outward actions, but even his most secret intentions. What a folly is it, to presume upon sin in hopes of secrecy? When thou goest aside into any bye-path, doth not thy own conscience go with thee? Nay, doth not the eye of God go with thee? What then avails the absence of human witnesses?

27. For ever - That is, for some generations; as that word is often used and as may be thought by comparing this with Exod. xx, 55. (?) White - Which is the worst kind of leprosy, and noted by physicians to be incurable. Those who get money by any way displeasing to God, make a dear purchase. What was Gehazi profited by his two talents, when he lost his health, if not his soul, forever?

## VI

Elisha causes iron to swim, ver. 1-7. Discloses to the king of Israel the secret counsels of the king of Syria, ver. 8-12. Saves himself out of the hands of those who were sent to apprehend him, ver. 13-23. Samaria is besieged by the Syrians, and reduced to extremity, ver. 24-33.

2. Jordan - To the woods near Jordan. A beam - A piece of timber for the building. Hence it may be gathered, that although the sons of the prophets principally devoted themselves to religious exercises, yet they sometimes employed themselves about manual arts.

10. Sent - Soldiers to secure the place and passage designed.

16. They - Angels, unspeakably more numerous, God, infinitely more powerful.

17. He saw, &c. - Fire is both dreadful and devouring: that power which was engaged for Elisha, could both terrify and consume the assailants. Elijah gave a specimen of Divine justice, when he called for flames of fire on the heads of his persecutors to consume them. Elisha gives a specimen of Divine mercy, in heaping coals of fire on the heads of his persecutors to melt them.

22. Wouldest thou smite - It is against the laws of humanity, to kill captives, though thou thyself hast taken them with thy own sword and bow; which might seem to give thee some colour to destroy them; but much more unworthy will it be in cold blood to kill these, whom not thy arms, but God's providence hath put into thy hands. Set bread - Give them meat and drink, which may refresh and

strengthen them for their journey. This was an action of singular piety and charity, in doing good to their enemies, which was much to the honour of the true religion; and of no less prudence, that hereby the hearts of the Syrians might be mollified towards the Israelites.

23. No more - For some considerable time.

24. Ben-hadad - He whom Ahab wickedly spared, now comes to requite his kindness, and to fulfil that Divine prediction. Ben- hadad was a name very frequent among the kings of Syria, if not common to them all.

25. Famine in Samaria - Probably the siege was so sudden, that they had no time to lay in provisions. Pieces - Supposed to be shekels; and the common shekel being valued at fifteen pence of English money, this amounts to five pounds. A vast price, especially for that which had on it so little meat, and that unwholesome and unclean. A kab - A measure containing twenty- four eggs. Dung - This Hebrew word is of a doubtful signification, and no where else used, probably it means a sort of pease, which in the Arabick language (near a-kin to the Hebrew) is called doves dung: for this was a food much in use amongst the poorer Israelites, and was a very coarse food, and therefore fit to be joined with the asses head: and a kab was the usual measure of all sorts of grains and fruits of that sort.

27. Whence shall I help thee - Dost thou ask of me corn or wine, which I want for myself? If God does not, I cannot help thee. Creatures are helpless things without God. Every creature is all that, and only that which God makes it to be.

29. We boiled - A dreadful judgment threatened to them in case of their apostacy, Deut. xxviii, 56, 57, in which they were now deeply plunged.

31. God do so, &c. - Because he had encouraged them to withstand the Syrians, by promising them help from God.

32. He said - Being admonished by God of his danger. This son - The genuine son of that wicked Ahab the murderer of the Lord's prophets. This expression may seem very harsh and unfit; nor is it to be drawn into imitation by others: but it must be considered, that he was an extraordinary prophet, intrusted with a power in some sort superior to that of Joram, and had authority to control and rebuke him in the name of the king of kings. Hold him - That he may not break in upon me, and take away my life, before the king comes.

33. He said - Or, the king, who, though not here named, may be presumed to be present, both by the prophet's prediction of his speedy coming, and by the presence of the Lord, on whose hand the king leaned, chap. vii, 2. This evil - This dreadful famine, which is now so extreme, that women are forced to eat their own children. The Lord - Hath inflicted it, and (for ought I see) he will not remove it. All penal evil is of the Lord, as the first cause and sovereign judge. And this we ought to apply to particular cases: if all evil, then this evil which we are groaning under. Whoever are the instruments, God is the principal agent. What should I, &c. - Thou bidst me wait upon God for help: but I perceive I may wait long enough before deliverance comes: I am weary with waiting, I can wait no longer.

## VII

Elisha foretells plenty, and the death of the unbelieving Lord, ver. 1, 2. Four lepers discover that the Syrians are fled, and bring the news into the city, ver. 3-11. The king sends messengers in order to be assured of the truth, ver. 12-15. Sudden plenty and the death of the unbelieving Lord, ver. 16-20.

1. Measure - Hebrew. Seah, a measure containing six cabs, or about a peck and pottle of our measure.

2. Windows - Through which he could rain down corn, as once he did Manna.

6. Hittites - Under which name (as elsewhere under the name of the Amorites) he seems to understand all the people of Canaan. For though the greatest number of that people were destroyed, yet very many of them were spared, and many of them upon Joshua's coming, fled away, some to remote parts, others to the lands bordering upon Canaan, where they seated themselves, and grew numerous and powerful. Kings - Either the king of Egypt, the plural number being put for the singular, or, the princes and governors of the several provinces in Egypt.

7. Fled - None of them had so much sense as to send scouts to discover the supposed enemy, much less, courage enough to face them. God can when he pleases, dispirit the boldest, and make the stoutest heart to tremble. They that will not fear God, he can make them fear at the shaking of a leaf. Perhaps Gehazi was one of these lepers, which might occasion his being taken notice of by the king, chap. viii, 4.

13. Behold, &c. - The words may be rendered, Behold, they are of a truth (the Hebrew prefix, Caph, being not here a note of similitude, but an affirmation of the truth and certainty of the things, as it is taken Num. xi, 1 Deut. ix, 10,) all the multitude of the horses of Israel that are left in it: behold, I say, they are even all the multitude of the horses of the Israelites, which (which multitude) are consumed, reduced to this small number, all consumed except these five. And this was indeed worthy of a double behold, to shew what mischief the famine had done both upon men and beasts, and to what a low ebb the king of Israel was come, that all his troops of horses, to which he had trusted, were shrunk to so small a number.

20. And so it fell out, &c. - See how heinously God resents our distrust of his power, providence and promise! Whenever God promises the end, he knows where to provide the means.

## VIII

Elisha's advice to the Shunamite, ver. 1, 2. The king restores her land, ver. 3-6. Elisha's prophecy to Hazael, and the death of Ben-hadad, ver. 7-15. The reign of Jehoram, ver. 16-24. Succeeded by Ahaziah, ver. 25-29.

1. Sojourn - In any convenient place out of the land of Israel. The Lord, &c. - Hath appointed to bring a famine. This expression intimates, that all afflictions are sent by God, and come at his call or command. Seven years - A double time to the former famine under Elijah, which is but just,

because they were still incorrigible under all the judgments of God, and the powerful ministry of Elisha.

3. Her house - Which having been forsaken by her, were possessed by her kindred.

4. Gehazi the servant - Formerly his servant. The law did not forbid conversing with lepers, but only dwelling with them.

8. Inquire of the Lord,&c. - In his health he bowed down in the house of Rimmon; but now he tends to inquire of the God of Israel. Among other instances of the change of mens minds by affliction or sickness, this is one; that it often gives them other thoughts of God's ministers, and teacheth them to value those whom they before hated and despised.

9. Thy son - He who before persecuted him as an enemy, now in his extremity honours him like a father.

10. Howbeit - Here is no contradiction: for the first words contain an answer to Benhadad's question, shall I recover? To which the answer is, thou mayest, notwithstanding thy disease, which is not mortal. The latter words contain the prophet's addition to that answer, which is, that he should die, not by the power of his disease, but by some other cause.

11. He settled - The prophet fixed his eyes upon Hazael. Until - 'Till Hazael was ashamed, as apprehending the prophet discerned something of an evil and shameful nature in him.

13. A dog - So fierce, barbarous, and inhuman. King - And when thou shalt have power in thy hand, thou wilt discover that bloody disposition, and that hatred against God's people, which now lies hid from others, and possibly from thyself.

15. Spread it - So closely, that he choaked him therewith.

16. Jehoram - Jehoram was first made king or vice-roy, by his father divers years before this time, at his expedition to Ramoth- Gilead, which dominion of his, ended at his father's return. But now Jehoshaphat, being not far from his death, and having divers sons and fearing some competition among them, makes Jehoram king the second time, as David did Solomon upon the like occasion.

18. He walked - After his father's death. The daughter - Athaliah. This unequal marriage, though Jehoshaphat possibly designed it as a means of uniting the two kingdoms under one head, is here and elsewhere noted, as the cause both of the great wickedness of his posterity, and of those sore calamities which befel them. No good could be reasonably expected from such an union. Those that are ill matched are already half-ruined.

19. Alway - Until the coming of the Messiah: for so long, and not longer, this succession might seem necessary for the making good of God's promise and covenant made with David. But when the Messiah, was once come, there was no more need of any succession, and the scepter might and did without any inconvenience depart from Judah, and from all the succeeding branches of David's family, because the Messiah was to hold the kingdom forever in his own person, though not in so gross a way as the carnal Jews imagined. A light - A son and successor.

29. Ramah - The same place with Ramoth, or Ramoth-Gilead.

## IX

A prophet commissions Jehu to take upon him the government, and destroy the house of Ahab, ver. 1-10. Jehu communicates this to his captains, ver. 11-15. Marches to Jezreel, ver. 16-20. Kills Joram, ver. 21-26. Ahaziah, ver. 27-29. And Jezebel, ver. 30-37.

1. Ramoth - The kings of Israel and Judah were both absent, and Jehu, as it seems, was left in chief command.

7. I may avenge,&c. - That they were idolaters was bad enough: yet that is not mentioned here: the controversy God has with them, is for being persecutors. Nothing fills the measure of the iniquity of any prince so as this doth, nor brings a surer or sorer ruin.

11. Mad fellow - They perceived him to be a prophet by his habit, and gestures, and manner of speech. And these prophane soldiers esteemed the prophets mad-men. Those that have no religion, commonly speak of those that are religious with disdain, and look upon them as crack-brained. They said of our Lord, He is beside himself; of St. Paul, that much learning had made him mad. The highest wisdom is thus represented as folly, and they that best understand themselves, as men beside themselves.

13. They hasted - God putting it into their hearts thus readily to own him. Under him - Under Jehu. A ceremony used in the eastern parts towards superiors, in token of reverence to his person, that they would not have his feet to touch the ground, and that they put themselves and their concerns under his feet, and into his disposal. The stairs - In some high and eminent place, whence he might be seen and owned by all the soldiers, who were called together upon this great occasion.

21. Portion of Naboth - The very sight of that ground was enough to make Jehu triumph and Joram tremble. The circumstances of events are sometimes so ordered by Divine providence, as to make the punishment answer the sin, as face answers face in a glass.

22. Whoredoms, &c. - This may be understood, either literally; spiritual whoredom, which is idolatry, being often punished with corporal: and witchcraft was often practiced by idolaters: or spiritually, of her idolatry, which is often called whoredom, because it is a departing from God, to whom we are tied by many obligations; and witchcraft, because it doth so powerfully bewitch men's minds; and because it is a manifest entering into covenant with the devil. He mentions not Joram's, but his mother's sins; because they were more notorious and infamous: and because they were the principal cause why God inflicted, and he was come to execute these judgments. The way of sin can never be the way of peace.

24. The arrow - It was one of God's arrows, which he ordained against the persecutor.

27. He died - The history is briefly and imperfectly described here, and the defects supplied in (the book of Chronicles, is great part written for that end, to supply things omitted in the book of Kings) out of both it may be thus compleated: he fled first to Megiddo, and thence to Samaria, where he was caught, and thence brought to Jehu, and by his sentence was put to death at Megiddo.

31. Had Zimri - Remember thy brother traitor Zimri had but a very short enjoyment of the benefit of his treason.

34. And said - It seems he had forgot the charge given him above, ver. 10. A king's daughter - He doth not say, because she was a king's wife, lest he should seem to shew any respect to that wicked house of Ahab, which God had devoted to utter destruction.

## X

Jehu cuts off all Ahab's sons, ver. 1-10. And kindred, ver. 11- 14. Takes Jehonadab with him, ver. 11-17. Slays the worshippers of Baal, ver. 18-25. Abolishes his worship, ver. 26-28. Yet retains the worship of the Calves, ver. 29-31. Which God punishes by Hazael, ver. 32-33. Jehu's death, ver. 34-37

5. The house - The chief governor of the kings palace. City - The chief magistrate or military governor.

7. Sent them - Jehu justly required this, because the sovereign Lord of all mens lives commanded it, but the Samaritans wickedly obeyed it, without any knowledge of, or regard to God's command.

11. Left none - In that place and kingdom; for he did leave some of the royal seed of Judah.

15. Rechab - A Kenite, 1 Chron. ii, 55, and a man of singular prudence and piety. Coming - To congratulate with him, for the destruction of that wicked family; and to encourage him to proceed in fulfilling the will of God. Him - Jehu saluted Jehonadab. Is, &c. - Dost thou heartily approve of me, and my present proceedings.

18. Jehu said - The words being manifestly false, and spoken with a design to deceive, cannot be excused, this being an unmovable principle, That we must not do the least evil, that the greatest good may come.

25. City - To some buildings belonging to this house of Baal, which may be here called the city; because they were very numerous and capacious. For as there were divers chambers and rooms built without the temple, belonging to it, for the use of the priests, and Levites. So it may probably be conceived, That this famous temple of Baal had many such buildings; in some of which, the priests of Baal, or of the groves, (whereof there were great numbers belonging to the king's court, 1 Kings xviii, 19,) peradventure might dwell; and others of them might be for divers uses belonging to the house, and service of Baal.

27. Draught-house - A sink or common shore.

29. Jehu departed not - So that it is plain, his religion was but superficial: otherwise it would not have given way to his policy.

30. Done well - In part, and so far as is here expressed.

31. Took no heed - Sin, clearly shewed that his heart was not right with God.

## XI

Athaliah usurps the government and destroys all the seed royal; only Joash escapes, ver. 1-3. He is made king, ver. 4-12. Athaliah is slain, ver. 13-16. Joash reigns well, ver. 17-21.

1. She destroyed - This was the fruit of Jehoshaphat's marrying his son to a daughter of that idolatrous house of Ahab. And this dreadful judgment God permitted upon him and his, to shew how much he abhors all such affinities.

2. They hid - Jehosheba and her husband Jehoiada. Bed-chamber - Which was in the house of the Lord. So that it was one of those chambers adjoining to the temple, that were for the uses of the priests and Levites only: which made it more proper for this purpose. Now was the promise made to David bound up in one life. And yet it did not fail. Thus to the Son of David will God, according to his promise, secure a spiritual seed: which tho' sometimes reduced to a small number, brought very low, and seemingly lost, yet will be preserved to the end of time. It was a special providence that Joram tho' a king, a wicked king, married his daughter to Jehoiada, a priest, an holy priest. This some might think a disparagement to the royal family; but it saved the royal family from ruin. For Jehoiada's interest in the temple, gave her an opportunity to preserve the child: and her interest in the royal family, gave him an opportunity of setting him on the throne. See what blessings they lay up in store for their families who marry their children to those that are wise and good.

4. The house - Into the courts of that house, for into the house none but the priests or Levites might enter.

5. Of you - Levites, who were distributed into twenty four courses, to minister in turns, each course consisting of about a thousand men for a week. Enter in - That come into the temple to attend your ministry. King's house - Of that part which lead to the king's palace, which Athaliah now possessed.

6. Sur - The chief gate of the temple. The guard - Either,

1. the king's guard. Or,
2. the guard of the temple; this gate was in the south-side. So, &c. - So you shall guard all the gates or entrances into the temple that neither Athaliah nor any of her soldiers may break in.

7. That go, &c. - Who having finished their course, should have gone home, but were detained, 2 Chron. xxiii, 8. Shall keep - While the rest guard the entrances into the temple; these shall have a special care of the king's person.

8. Ranges - Or, fences, the wall wherewith the courts of the temple were environed.

12. Testimony - The book of the law, which he put into the king's hand, to mind him of his duty at his entrance upon his kingdom, which was to read and write out that holy book, Deut. xvii, 18, and to govern himself and his kingdom by it: the law of God being frequently and most properly called a testimony, because it is a witness of God's will, and man's duty.

15. Host - Of these companies of Levites, who are elsewhere called the Lord's host, and now were the king's host.

17. A covenant - A sacred covenant whereby he solemnly engaged both the king, and people, that they should be the Lord's people; that they should renounce, and root out all idolatry, and set up and maintain God's true worship. Between the king - This was a civil covenant, whereby the king engaged himself to rule them justly, and in the fear of God; and the people obliged themselves to defend and obey him.

## XII

Jehoash reigns well while Jehoiada lives, ver. 1-3. Repairs the temple, ver. 4-16. Compounds with Hazael, ver. 17, 18. Dies ingloriously, ver. 19-21.

3. Burnt incense - To the true God.

4. And Jehoash said, &c. - Remembering that he owed his preservation and restoration to the temple, and that he was made by God the guardian of his temple, he now takes care to repair it. Dedicated things - The money which had been either formerly or lately vowed or dedicated to the service of God and of his house. That is brought - Or rather, that shall be brought: for though the people might vow to bring it thither in convenient time, yet it is not likely they would bring much money thither in the tyrannical and idolatrous reign of Athaliah. The money - The half shekel, which was paid for every one that was numbered from twenty years old and upward. Is set at - Hebrew. the money of souls, or persons according to his taxing, the money which every man that had vowed his person to God, paid according to the rate which the priest put upon him. That cometh - All that shall be freely offered.

15. Faithfully - For they perceived by many experiments that they were faithful.

20. And slew Joash - We are told, in the Chronicles, that his murdering the prophet, Jehoiada's son, was the provocation. In this, how unrighteous so ever they were, yet the Lord was righteous. And this was not the only time, that he let even kings know, it was at their peril, if they touched his anointed, or did his prophets any harm. Thus fell Joash, who began in the spirit, and ended in the flesh. And indeed God usually sets marks of his displeasure upon apostates, even in this life.

## XIII

The reign of Jehoahaz, ver. 1-9. A general account of the reign of Joash, ver. 10-13. Elisha falls sick, encourages Joash and dies, ver. 14-19. A dead body is raised by touching his bones, ver. 20-21. Hazael oppresses Israel, and dies, ver. 22-24. Joash beats the Syrians, ver. 25.

6. The grove - Which Ahab had planted for the worship of Baal, and which should have been destroyed, Deut. vii, 5.

7. He - The king of Syria. People - Of his army, or men of war.

8. His might - For though his success was not good, he shewed much personal valour. Which is noted to intimate, that the Israelites were not conquered, because of the cowardice of their king, but merely from the righteous judgment of God, who was now resolved to reckon with them for their apostacy.

14. Fallen sick, &c. - He lived long: for it was sixty years since he was first called to be a prophet. It was a great mercy to Israel and especially to the sons of the prophets, that he was continued so long, a burning and a shining light. Elijah finished his testimony, in a fourth part of

that time. God's prophets have their day set them, longer or shorter, as infinite wisdom sees fit. But all the latter part of his time, from the anointing of Jehu, which was forty five years before Joash began his reign, we find no mention of him, or of any thing he did, 'till we find him here upon his death bed. Yet he might be useful to the last, tho' not so famous as he had sometimes been.

17. Eastward - Toward Syria, which lay northeastward, from the land of Israel: this arrow is shot against the Syrians, as a token what God intended to do against them.

18. Smite - The former sign portended victory, this was to declare the number of the victories.

20. Moabites invaded - The mentioning this immediately on the death of Elisha intimates, that the removal of God's faithful prophets, is a presage of judgments approaching.

21. He revived - Which miracle God wrought, to do honour to that great prophet, and that by this seal he might confirm his doctrine, to strengthen the faith of Joash, and of the Israelites, in this promise of their success against the Syrians; and in the midst of all their calamities to comfort such Israelites as were Elisha's followers, with the hopes of eternal life, whereof this was a manifest pledge, and to awaken the rest of that people to a due care and preparation for it.

23. Had compassion - The slowness of God's process against sinners even when they remain impenitent must be construed to the advantage of his mercy, not the impeachment of his justice.

## XIV

The good character of Amaziah, ver. 1-4. He avenges his father's death, ver. 5, 6. Overthrows the Edomites, ver. 7. Is defeated by Joash, ver. 8-14. The death and burial of Joash, ver. 15, 16. Amaziah is killed by conspirators, ver. 17-20. The beginning of Azariah's reign, ver. 21, 22. The reign and death of Jeroboam, ver. 23-29.

4. High places - It is hard to get clear of those corruptions, which by long usage have gained prescription.

6. Slew not - Wherein he shewed faith and courage, that he would obey this command of God, though it was hazardous to himself, such persons being likely to seek revenge for their father's death.

7. Joktheel - Which signifies, the obedience of God, that is, given him by God as a reward of his obedience to God's message by the prophet, 2 Chron. xxv, 8, 9.

8. Sent - This challenge he sent, from self-confidence, and a desire of advancing his glory. But he that is fond either of fighting or going to law, will probably be the first that repents it.

9. Saying, &c. - By the thistle, a low and contemptible, yet troublesome shrub, he understands Amaziah; and by the cedar, himself, whom he intimates to be far stronger than he, and out of his reach. Trod down - And with no less ease shall my soldiers tread down thee and thy forces.

10. Glory - Content thyself with that glory, and let not thine ambition betray thee to ruin.

12. Tents - Josephus says, when they were to engage, they were struck with such a terror, that they did not strike a stroke, but every man made the best of his way.

13. Ahaziah - Amaziah's pedigree comes in somewhat abruptly, the son of Joash, the son of Ahaziah: Probably because he now smarted, for the iniquity of his ancestors.

20. On horses - Or, with horses, in a chariot.

21. Azariah - This Azariah is called Uzziah, chap. xv, 30, both names signifying the same thing for substance; that, God's help; and this, God's strength. But this was not done till twelve years after his father's death: so long the government was in the hands of protectors.

25. The sea - Unto the dead sea, once a goodly plain, Gen. xiii, 10, which was their southern border.

26. Was bitter - Whereby he was moved to pity and help them, though they were an unworthy people. Nor any left - Both towns and country were utterly laid waste.

27. Said not - Not yet; he had not yet declared this, as afterwards he did by the succeeding prophets.

29. Jeroboam - It was in the reign of this Jeroboam, that Hosea began to prophesy, and he was the first that wrote his prophecies. At the same time Amos prophesied, soon after Micah, and then Isaiah in the days of Ahaz and Hezekiah. Thus God never left himself without witness, but in the darkest ages of the church, raised up some to be burning and shining lights, to their own age, by their preaching and living; and a few by their writings to reflect light upon us, on whom the ends of the world are come.

## XV

The reign of Azariah, ver. 1-7. Of Zachariah, ver. 8-12. Of Shallum, ver. 13-15. Of Menahem, ver. 16-22. Of Pekahiah, ver. 23-26. Of Pekah, ver. 27-31. Of Jotham, ver. 32-38.

1. To reign - Solely and fully to exercise his regal power.

5. A leper - The cause whereof see 2 Chron. xxvi, 16.

8. Six months - After the throne had been vacant several years, thro' the dissentions that were in the kingdom.

13. Full moon - That dominion seldom lasts long, which is founded in blood and falsehood.

30. Twentieth year - The meaning is, that he began his reign in the twentieth year after the beginning of Jotham's reign; or, which is the same thing, in the fourth year of Ahaz, son of Jotham.

33. To reign - Alone: for he had reigned before this, as his father's deputy.

35. Gate - Not of the temple, but of one of the courts of the temple, probably that which led to the king's palace.

## XVI

The idolatry of Ahaz, ver. 1-4. He hires the king of Assyria to invade Syria and Israel, ver. 5-9. He erects a new altar in the temple, ver. 10-16. Spoils the temple, ver. 17-18. Dies, ver. 19, 20.

3. Pass - By way of oblation, so as to be consumed for a burnt- offering, which was the practice of Heathens, and of some Israelites, in imitation of them.

5. Could not overcome - Because God of his own mere grace, undertook his protection, and disappointed the hopes of his enemies.

7. Sent messengers, &c. - But was it because there was no God in Israel, that he sent to the Assyrian for help? The sin itself was its own punishment; for tho' it served his present turn, yet he made but an ill bargain, seeing he not only impoverished himself, but enslaved both himself and his people.

12. Offered - A sacrifice, and that not to God, but to the Syrian idols, to whom that altar was appropriated.

13. Peace-offerings - For the Heathens; and Ahaz, in imitation of them, offered the same sorts of offerings to their false gods, which the Israelites did to the true.

14. Brazen altar - Of burnt-offerings, made by Solomon, and placed there by God's appointment. From between, &c. - His new altar was at first set below the brazen altar, and at a farther distance from the temple. This he took for a disparagement to his altar; and therefore impiously takes that away, and puts his in its place. And put, &c. - So he put God's altar out of its place and use! A bolder stroke than the very worst of kings had hitherto given to religion.

15. Great altar - This new altar; which was greater than Solomon's. Sacrifice - Whatsoever is offered to the true God, either in my name (for possibly he did not yet utterly forsake God, but worshipped idols with him) or on the behalf of the people, shall be offered on this new altar. Inquire by - That shall be reserved for my proper use, to inquire by; at which I may seek God, or inquire of his will, by sacrifices joined with prayer, when I shall see fit. Having thrust it out from the use for which it was instituted, which was to sanctify the gifts offered upon it, he pretends to advance it above its institution, which it is common for superstitious people to do. But to overdo is to underdo. Our wisdom is, to do just what God has commanded.

18. The covert - The form and use whereof is now unknown. It is generally understood of some building, either that where the priests after their weekly course was ended, abode until the next course came; which was done upon the sabbath-day: or that in which the guard of the temple kept their station; or that under which the king used to sit to hear God's word, and see the sacrifices; which is called, the covert of the sabbath, because the chief times in which the king used it for those ends, was the weekly sabbath, and other solemn days of feasting, or fasting (which all come under the name of sabbaths in the Old Testament) upon which the king used more solemnly, to present himself before the Lord, than at other times. The entry - By which the king used to go from his palace to the temple.

## XVII

The reign of Hoshea, ver. 1, 2. The king of Assyria imprisons him, and carries Israel captive, ver. 3-6. The cause of this captivity, ver. 7-23. The strange nations transplanted into Canaan are plagued with lions, ver. 24-26. An Israelitish priest is sent to them, ver. 27-28. The mongrel religion which followed, ver. 29-41.

1. To reign - He usurped the kingdom in Ahaz's fourth year; but either was not owned as king, by the generality of the people; or was not accepted and established in his kingdom, 'till Ahaz's twelfth year. Nine - After his confirmation and peaceable possession of his kingdom: for in all, he reigned seventeen, or eighteen years; twelve with Ahaz, who reigned sixteen years, and six with Hezekiah.

2. But not, &c. - For he neither worshipped Baal, as many of his predecessors did; nor compelled the people to worship the calves; (one of them, that of Daniel, being destroyed, or carried away before, as the Hebrew writers affirm;) nor, as some add, hindered those by force, who were minded to go to Jerusalem to worship. And yet, the measure of the Israelites sins, being now full, vengeance comes upon them without remedy.

3. Shalmaneser - The son, or successor of Tiglath-pileser. The ancient Hebrew writers made him the same with Sennacherib, who eight years after this time, invaded the kingdom of Judah; it being very frequent in the Eastern parts, for one man to be called by several names. Josephus affirms, that he met with his name in the annals of the Tyrians, which were extant in his days. He came against him, either because he denied the tribute which he had promised to pay; or that he might make him tributary.

6. Carried Israel away, &c. - There, we have reason to think, after some time, they were so mingled with the nations, that they were lost, and the name of Israel was no more in remembrance. They that forgot God, were themselves forgotten, and they that studied to be like the nations, were buried among them. Thus ended Israel as a nation. When we read their entry into Canaan, under Hoshea the son of Nun, who would have thought, that such would be their exit, under Hoshea, the son of Elah? Yet we find St. James writing to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. So that tho' we never read of the return of those that were carried captive, nor have any ground to believe, that they still remain a distinct body in some remote corner of the world, yet a remnant of them did escape, and will remain 'till all Israel shall be saved.

9. Did secretly - This belongs, either,

1. To their gross idolatries, and other abominable practices, which they were ashamed to own before others; or,
2. to the worship of calves: and so the words are otherwise rendered; they covered things that were not right towards the Lord: they covered their idolatrous worship of the calves, with fair pretenses of necessity, the two kingdoms being now divided, and at enmity; and of their honest intention of serving the true God, and retaining the substance of the Jewish religion. City - In all parts and places, both in cities, and in the country; yea, in the most uninhabited parts, where few or none dwell, beside the watchmen, who are left there in towers, to preserve the cattle and fruits of the earth, or to give notice of the approach of enemies.

13. Seers - To whom he declared his mind, by Revelations and visions, and by whom he published it, bearing witness, from heaven to their doctrine by eminent and glorious miracles.

14. Hardened, &c. - Refused to submit their neck to the yoke of God's precepts. A metaphor from stubborn oxen, that will not bow to the yoke.

15. Vanity - Idols; so called because of their nothingness, impotency, and unprofitableness; and by the long worship of idols, they were made like them, vain, sottish, and senseless creatures.

16. Left all - They grew worse and worse; from a partial disobedience to some of God's laws, they fell by degrees to a total apostacy from all. The host - The stars, as Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus.

18. Judah only - And the greatest part of the tribe of Benjamin, with those of the tribes of Simeon and Levi who were incorporated with them.

19. Judah kept not - Judah's idolatry and wickedness are here remembered, as an aggravation of the sin of the Israelites, which was not only evil in itself, but mischievous to their neighbour, who by their examples were instructed in their wicked arts, and provoked to an imitation of them.

20. All Israel - All the tribes of Israel: first, one part of them, and now the rest. But this extends not to every individual person of these tribes; for many of them removed into the kingdom of Judah, and were associated with them.

21. They made - Which action is here ascribed to the people, because they would not tarry 'till God by his providence, had invested Jeroboam with the kingdom which he had promised him; but rashly, and rebelliously, rose up against the house of David, to which they had so great obligations; and set him upon the throne without God's leave or advice. Drave - He not only dissuaded, but kept then, by force from God's worship at Jerusalem, the only place appointed for it. A great sin - So the worship of the calves is called, to meet with that idle conceit of the Israelites, who esteemed it a small sin, especially when they were forced to it by severe penalties; which yet he shews did not excuse it from being a sin, and a great sin too.

25. Therefore - For their gross neglect, and contempt of God, which was contrary to the principles and practices of the Heathens, who used to worship the gods of the nations where they lived, and gave that honour to their false Gods, which here they denied to the true. Hereby also God asserted his own sovereignty over that land, and made them to understand, that neither the Israelites were cast out, nor they brought in by their valour, or strength, but by God's providence, who as he had cast the Israelites out for their neglect of God's service; so both could, and would in his due time, turn them out also, if they were guilty of the same sins.

28. Taught them - The manner of God's worship, as it was practiced in Israel; as may be gathered both from the quality of this person, who was an Israelitish priest; and from the place of his residence, Beth-el, a place infamous for the worship of the calves, and from the manner of their making priests by this man's direction.

32. Sacrificed - Unto the true God: for as to the worship of their own gods, they needed no instruction, and would not permit a person of another religion to minister therein.

33. They feared - They worshipped God externally in that way which the Israelites used. But every nation made gods of their own besides.

34. Unto this day - That is, till the time when this book was written, above three hundred years in all, till the time of Alexander the Great, when they were prevailed upon to call away their idols. Former manners - As the Israelites before their captivity, gave these nations an ill example, in serving the Lord, and Baal together; so, or after their former manner, they do unto this day, in the land of their captivity. They fear not - Though they pretended to fear, and serve both the Lord and idols, yet in truth they did not, and do not fear or worship the Lord, but their own calves, or other vain inventions: and God will not accept that mongrel and false worship, which they pretend to give to the true God. Statutes - God's law delivered to their fathers, and to them, as their inheritance, Psalm 1xix, 111. This is alleged as an evidence, that they did not fear the Lord, whatsoever they pretended, because they lived in the constant breach of his statutes. Israel - A name, signifying his

special interest in God, and power with him, which was given to him, not only for himself, but for his posterity also, whom God frequently honours with that name. And by this great favour he aggravates their sin.

41. So - In like manner, and after their example. These - Who came in their stead.

## XVIII

Hezekiah reforms his kingdom, ver. 1-6. Prospers in all his undertakings, even at the time the ten tribes are led captive, ver. 7- 12. Yet is invaded, and his country put under contribution by Sennacherib, ver. 13-16. Jerusalem is besieged, ver. 17. The virulent speech of Rabshakeh, ver. 18-25. He incites the people to revolt, ver. 26-37.

2. To reign - It is not certain that Ahaz lived only thirty six years, for those sixteen years which he reigned, may be computed, not from the first beginning of his reign, when he reigned with his father; which was at the twentieth year of his age, but from the beginning of his reigning alone.

4. Serpent - The most of them, or such as the people most frequented: for all were not taken away, chap. xxiii, 13, 14, tho' his own father had set them up. We must never dishonour God, in honour to our earthly parents. Brazen serpent - Which had been hitherto kept as a memorial of God's mercy; but being now commonly abused to superstition, was destroyed. To it - Not doubtless as to a God, but only as to an instrument of God's mercy, by and through which, their adoration was directed to God, and given to that only for God's sake. Nehushtan - He said, this serpent, howsoever formerly honoured, and used by God as a sign of his grace, yet now it is nothing but a piece of brass which can do you neither good nor hurt.

5. Trusted - Without calling in foreign succors to establish or help him; which his father Ahaz did; and before him Asa. Before him - Of the kings of Judah only; for David and Solomon were kings of all Israel. The like is said of Josiah, chap. xxiii, 25. Each of them, excelled the other in several respects. Hezekiah in this, that he fell upon this work in the beginning of his reign, which Josiah did not, and with no less resolution, undertaking to do that which none of his predecessors durst do, even to remove the high places, wherein Josiah did only follow his example.

7. Rebelled - He shook off that yoke of subjection, to which his father had wickedly submitted, and reassumed that full and independent sovereignty which God had settled in the house of David. And Hezekiah's case differs much from that of Zedekiah, who is blamed for rebellion against the king of Babylon, both because he had engaged himself by a solemn oath and covenant, which we do not read of Ahaz; and because he broke the covenant which he himself had made; and because God had actually given the dominion of his own land and people to the king of Babylon, and commanded both Zedekiah and his people to submit to him. And whereas Hezekiah is here said to rebel; that word implies, only a defection from that subjection which had been performed to another; which sometimes may be justly done, and therefore that word doth not necessarily prove this to be a sin. And that it was not a sin in him, seems certain, because God owned and assisted him therein; and did not at all reprove him for it, in that message which he sent to him by Isaiah, nor afterwards, though he did particularly reprove him, for his vain-glory, and ostentation, 2 Chron. xxxii, 25, 26.

13. Them - Many of them; universal particles being frequently so used both in scripture, and other authors; and this success God gave him; to lift him up to his own greater and more shameful destruction: to humble and chastise his own people for their manifold sins, and, to gain an eminent opportunity to advance his own honour by that miraculous deliverance which he designed for his people.

14. Three hundred talents, &c. - Above two hundred thousand pounds.

17. Sent - Having received the money, upon which he agreed to depart from Hezekiah and his land, he breaks his faith with Hezekiah, thereby justifying his revolt, and preparing the way for his own destruction.

19. Thus saith, &c. - But what are the greatest men when they come to compare with God, or when God comes to contend with them?

21. This broken reed - Whoever trusts in man, leans on a broken reed: but God is the rock of ages.

22. Is not, &c. - Thus boldly he speaks of the things which he understood not, judging of the great God, by their petty gods; and of God's worship by the vain fancies of the Heathens, who measured piety by the multitude of altars.

25. Am I, &c. - He neither owned God's word, nor regarded his providence; but he forged this, to strike a terror into Hezekiah and the people.

27. To the men - To tell them to what extremities and miseries he will force them.

28. Jews language - The tradition of the Jews is, that Rabshaketh was an apostate Jew. If so, his ignorance of the God of Israel was the less excusable, and his enmity the less strange: for apostates are usually the most bitter and spiteful enemies.

31. A present - Upon which terms, I will give you no disturbance; but quietly suffer each of you to enjoy his own possession.

## XIX

Hezekiah sends to Isaiah to desire his prayers, ver. 1-5. And receives from him an answer of peace, ver. 6, 7. Sennacherib sends a threatening letter to Hezekiah, ver. 8-13 Who recommends his case to God, ver. 14-19. God by Isaiah sends him a comfortable message, ver. 20-34. The army of the Assyrians is destroyed, ver. 35-37

1. Rent his cloaths, &c. - Great men must not think it any disparagement to them, to sympathize with the injured honour of the great God.

3. The children - We are like a poor travailing woman in great extremity, having no strength left to help herself, and to bring forth her infant into the world. We have attempted to deliver ourselves from the Assyrian yoke; and had carried on that work to some maturity, and as we thought, brought it to the birth; but now we have no might to finish. We have begun an happy reformation, and are hindered by this insolent Assyrian, from bringing it to perfection.

4. For the remnant - For Judah, which is but a remnant, now the ten tribes are gone: for Jerusalem, which is but a remnant, now the defensed cities of Judah are taken.

8. Returned - To the king, to give him an account of the treaty; leaving behind him the army under the other commanders.

15. O Lord God of Israel, &c. - He calls him the God of Israel, because Israel was his peculiar people; but yet the God of the whole earth, not as Sennacherib fancied, the God of Israel only. Let them say what they will, thou art sovereign Lord, the God of gods, even thou alone: Universal Lord of all the kingdoms of the earth; and rightful Lord; for thou hast made heaven and earth. Being creator of all, by an incontestable title thou art owner and ruler of all.

16. Him - Rabshakeh: he would not do him the honour to name him.

21. Virgin - So he calls Zion, or Jerusalem; because she was pure in good measure from that gross idolatry wherewith other people were defiled, which is called spiritual whoredom: and to signify, that God would defend her from the rape which Sennacherib intended to commit upon her with no less care than parents do their virgin daughters from those who seek to force and deflower them.

23. Mountains - I have brought up my very chariots to those mountains which were thought inaccessible by my army. Lebanon - An high hill, famous for cedars and fir-trees. Cut down - I will cut down the trees that hinder my march, and plane the way for my numerous army and chariots. Lodgings - Those cities (which he calls lodgings in way of contempt) which are in his utmost borders. I am come into the land of Canaan at one border, Lebanon, and I resolve to march on to the other border, and so destroy the whole country, from one border to the other. Carmel - The forest of mount Carmel, which may seem to be another inaccessible place, like Lebanon.

24. Strange waters - Such as were never discovered by others. Dried up - And as I can furnish my army with water digged out of the earth; so I can deprive my enemies of their water, and can dry up their rivers, and that with the sole of my feet; with the march of my vast and numerous army, who will easily do this, either by marching through them, and each carrying away part with them: or by making new channels, and driving the waters of the river into them.

25. Hast thou not, &c. - Hast thou not long since learned, that which some of thy philosophers could teach thee; that there is a supreme and powerful God, by whose decree and providence all these wars and calamities were sent, and ordered; whose mere instrument thou art, so that thou hast no cause for these vain boastings? This work is mine, not thine. I have, &c. - I have so disposed of things by my providence, that thou shouldest be a great and victorious prince, and that thou shouldest be so successful as thou hast hitherto been, first against the kingdom of Israel, and now against Judah.

26. Therefore - Because I had armed thee with my commission and strength, and taken away their spirit and courage.

27. I know - Though thou dost not know me, yet I throughly know thee, and all thy designs and actions, all thy secret contrivances in the place of thy abode, in thy own kingdom and court; and the execution of thy designs abroad, what thou intendest in thy going out, and with what farther thoughts thou comest in, or returnest to thy own land.

28. My hook, &c. - What a comfort is it, that God has a hook in the nose and a bridle in the jaws of all his and our enemies?

29. A sign - Of the certain accomplishment of the promises here made: that God will not only preserve the city from his present fury, but also, bless his people with a durable prosperity, ver. 30, 31. The third year - This was an excellent sign; especially, considering the waste and havock which the Assyrians had made in the land; and that the Jews had been forced to retire into their strong

hold, and consequently to neglect their tilling, and sowing, and reaping; and yet this year they should have sufficient provision from those fruits of the earth which the Assyrians left; and the second year, which was the year of release, in which they might neither sow, nor reap, from such fruits as the earth brought forth of its own accord; and so in the third year. And eat - You shall not sow, and another reap, as lately you did; but you shall enjoy the fruit of your own labours.

30. The remnant, &c. - They shall be well fixt and provided for themselves, and then do good to others.

31. Go forth - That handful of Jews who were now gathered together, and shut up in Jerusalem, shall go out of their several habitations, and by my singular blessing increase exceedingly. The zeal - Although when you reflect upon yourselves, and consider either your present fewness, and weakness, or your great unworthiness, this may seem too great a blessing for you to expect; yet God will do it from the zeal which he hath, both for his own name, and for the good of his undeserving people.

32. He shall not - The army sent with Rabshaketh did not form a close siege against it, but only disposed themselves so as to block it up at some distance; possibly waiting 'till the king of Assyria had taken Libnah and Lachish, (which they presumed he would speedily do.)

35. Angel - Such an angel as destroyed the first-born of Egypt. Arose - The few that were left alive: all their companions were dead.

36. So Sennacherib, &c. - The manner of the expression intimates the great disorder and distraction of mind he was in.

37. Was worshipping, &c. - The God of Israel had done enough to convince him, that he was the only true God. Yet he persists in his idolatry. Justly then is his blood mingled with his sacrifices, who will not be convinced by so dear-bought a demonstration, of his folly in worshipping idols.

## XX

Hezekiah's sickness and recovery, ver. 1-7. The sign given him, ver. 8-11. He shews the Babylonians all his treasures, ver. 12-13. The Babylonish captivity foretold, ver. 14-19. He dies, ver. 20, 21

1. Those days - In the year of the Assyrian invasion. Set, &c. - Make thy will, and settle the affairs of thy family and kingdom. Not live - Such threatenings, though absolutely expressed, have often secret conditions.

2. Turned his face - As he lay in his bed. He could not retire to his closet, but he retired as well as he could, turned from the company, to converse with God.

3. In truth - Sincerely with an honest mind. I am not conscious to myself of any gross exorbitances, for which thou usest to shorten mens days. Wept - For that horror of death which is and was common to men, especially, in the times of the Old Testament, when the grace of God in Christ was not so fully manifested, as now it is: and, for the distracted condition in which the church and state were then likely to be left, through the uncertainty of the succession to the crown.

4. Court - Of the king's palace. This is noted to shew God's great readiness to hear the prayers of his children.

5. God of, &c. - I am mindful of my promise made to David and his house, and will make it good in thy person. Shalt go - To give me solemn praise for this mercy.

6. Fifteen years - We have not an instance of any other, who was told before-hand just how long, he should live. God has wisely kept us at uncertainties, that we may be always ready.

10. Go down - In an instant: for that motion of the sun is natural for the kind of it, though miraculous for the swiftness of it; but the other would be both ways miraculous.

11. Degrees - These degrees were lines in the dial: but whether each of these lines or degrees noted an hour, or half an hour, or a quarter of an hour, is uncertain. But the sun itself went back, and the shadow with it. This miracle was noted by the Babylonians, who, having understood that it was done for Hezekiah's sake, sent to inquire into the truth and manner of it, 2 Chron. xxxii, 31. Of Ahaz - Which Ahaz had made in the king's palace. This dial he mentions, because the truth of the miracle might be best and soonest discovered there, this dial possibly being visible out of the king's chamber, and the degrees being most distinct and conspicuous in it.

12. Berodach-baladan - He seems to have been the king of Assyria's vice-roy in Babylon, and upon that terrible slaughter in the Assyrian host, and the death of Sennacherib, and the differences among his sons, to have usurped absolute sovereignty over Babylon. And either himself or his son destroyed the Assyrian monarchy, and translated the empire to Babylon. Sent - Partly, for the reasons mentioned, 2 Chron. xxxii, 31, and partly, to assure himself of the assistance of Hezekiah against the Assyrians, their common enemy.

13. His treasures - For though his country had lately been harassed by the Assyrians, yet he had reserved all his treasures and precious things, which he and his fathers had gathered in Jerusalem. Besides, he had considerable spoils out of the Assyrian camp. Also he had many presents sent to him, 2 Chron. xxxii, 23. Shewed - Which he did through pride of heart, 2 Chron. xxxii, 25, 26, being lifted up by the great honour which God had done him, in working such glorious miracles for his sake, and by the great respects rendered to him from divers princes, and now by this great Babylonian monarch. So hard a matter is it even for a good man to be high and humble.

17. Behold - This judgment is denounced against him for his pride; for his ingratitude, whereby he took that honour to himself which he should have given entirely to God; and for his carnal confidence in that league which he had now made with the king of Babylon, by which, it is probable, he thought his mountain to be so strong, that it could not be removed.

18. Thy sons - Of thy grand-children. Eunuchs - They shall be servants to that heathen monarch, whereby both their bodies will be subject to slavery, and their souls exposed to the peril of idolatry, and all sorts of wickedness.

19. Good is, &c. - I heartily submit to this sentence, as being both just, and merciful. True penitents, when they are under divine rebukes, call them not only just, but good. Not only submit to, but accept of the punishment of their iniquity. So Hezekiah did, and by this it appeared, he was indeed humbled for the pride of his heart.

## XXI

The wicked reign of Manasseh, ver. 1-9. Judgment denounced against him and Jerusalem, ver. 10-16. His death, ver. 17, 18. The wicked reign of Amon, ver. 19-22. He is slain, and succeeded by Josiah, ver. 23-26.

1. Reigned - In which time the years of his imprisonment are comprehended.

3. He built, &c. - Trampling on the dust and affronting the memory of his worthy father. All the host of heaven - The sun, moon and stars.

6. Through the fire - Between two fires, by which he dedicated him to Molock, in contempt of the seal of circumcision by which he had been dedicated to God. Times - Lucky, or unlucky days according to the superstitious practice of the heathens.

7. An image - The image of that Baal which was worshipped in the grove.

9. More evil - Partly, because they were not contented with those idols which the Canaanites worshipped, but either invented, or borrowed from other nations many new idols, and partly, because as their light was far more clear, their obligations to God infinitely higher, and their helps against idolatry much stronger than the Canaanites had; so their sins, though the same in kind, were unspeakably worse in respect of these dreadful aggravations.

13. The line - She shall have the same measure, the same judgments which Samaria had. The line is often put for one's lot or portion, because mens portions or possessions used to be measured by lines. A dish - As men do with a dish that hath been used, first wholly empty it of all that is in it, then throughly cleanse and wipe it; and lastly, turn it upside down, that nothing may remain in it; so will I deal with Jerusalem, throughly empty and purge it from all its wicked inhabitants. Yet the comparison intimates, that this should be in order to the purifying, not the final destruction of Jerusalem. The dish shall not be broken in pieces, or wholly cast away, but only wiped.

15. Since, &c. - This forejudgment, though it was chiefly inflicted for the sins of Manasseh and his generation, yet had a respect unto all their former sins.

16. Blood - The blood of those prophets and righteous men who either reproved his sinful practices, or refused to comply with his wicked commands. His sin - His idolatry, which is called sin, by way of eminency. The tradition of the Jews is, that he caused Isaiah in particular to be sawn asunder.

18. Garden - Not in the sepulchre of the kings; probably, by his own choice and command, as a lasting testimony of his sincere repentance and abhorrence of himself for his former crime.

21. He walked, &c. - He revived that idolatry which Manasseh in the latter end of his reign had put down. Those who set bad examples, if they repent themselves, cannot be sure that they whom their example has drawn into sin will repent. It is often otherwise.

## XXII

The general character of Josiah, ver. 1, 2. He repairs the temple, ver. 3-7. The high-priest brings him the original book of the law, ver. 8-10. He sends to consult Huldah the prophetess, ver. 11-14. The destruction of Jerusalem foretold, ver. 15-20.

3. The scribe - The secretary of state.

8. The book - That original book of the law of the Lord, given or written by the hand of Moses, as it is expressed, 2 Chron. xxxiv, 14, which by God's command was put beside the ark, Deut. xxxi, 26, and probably taken from thence and hid, by the care of some godly priest, when some of the idolatrous kings of Judah persecuted the true religion, and defaced the temple, and (which the Jewish writers affirm) burnt all the copies of God's law which they could find. It was now found among the rubbish, or in some secret place.

11. The words - The dreadful comminations against them for the sins still reigning among the people. If Josiah had seen and read it before, which seems more probable, yet the great reverence which he justly bare to the original book, and the strange, and remarkable, and seasonable finding of it, had awakened and quickened him to a more serious and diligent consideration of all the passages contained in it. And what a providence was this, that it was still preserved! Yea, what a providence, that the whole book of God is preserved to us. If the holy scriptures had not been of God, they had not been in being at this day. God's care of the bible, is a plain proof of his interest in it. It was a great instance of God's favour, that the book of the law was thus seasonably brought to light, to direct and quicken that blessed reformation, which Joash had begun. And it is observable, they were about a good work, repairing the temple, when it was found. They that do their duty according to their knowledge, shall have their knowledge increased.

13. Inquire - What we shall do to appease his wrath, and whether the curses here threatened must come upon us without remedy, or whether there be hope in Israel concerning the prevention of them.

14. Huldah - The king's earnest affection required great haste; and she was in Jerusalem, which is therefore noted in the following part of the verse, when Jeremiah might at this time be at Anathoth, or in some more remote part of the kingdom; and the like may be said of Zephaniah, who also might not be a prophet at this time, though he was afterward, in the days of Josiah. College - Where the sons of the prophets, or others, who devoted themselves to the study of God's word, used to meet and discourse of the things of God, and receive the instructions of their teachers.

15. The man - She uses no compliments. Tell the man that sent you - Even kings, though gods to us, are men to God, and shall be so dealt with: for with him there is no respect of persons.

17. The works - Gods made with hands.

19. Tender - He trembled at God's word. He was grieved for the dishonour done to God by the sins of his people. He was afraid of the judgments of God, which he saw coming on Jerusalem. This is tenderness of heart.

20. In peace - That is, in a time of public peace: for otherwise he died in battle. Besides, he died in peace with God, and was by death translated to everlasting peace.

## XXIII

Josiah reads the law to all the people, ver. 1, 2. Renews the covenant between God and them, ver. 3. Cleanses the temple, ver. 4. Roots out idolatry, ver. 5-20. Keeps a solemn passover, ver. 21-23. Clears the land of witches, ver. 24. A general commendation of him, ver. 25. His untimely death, ver. 26-30. The reigns of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, ver. 31-37.

2. Prophets - Either Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Urijah: or, the sons of the prophets. It seems he read it himself. Josiah did not think it beneath him, to be a reader, any more than Solomon did to be a preacher, and David to be even a door keeper in the house of God. All people are concerned to know the scripture, and all in authority, to spread the knowledge of it.

3. Stood - They declared their consent to it, and their concurrence with the king in that act, which possibly they did by standing up, as the king himself stood when he took it. It is of good use, with all possible solemnity, to oblige ourselves to our duty. And he that bears an honest heart, does not startle at assurances.

4. Second order - Either those two who were next in degree to the high-priest, and in case of sickness were to manage his work: or the heads of the twenty four courses which David had appointed. The grove - The image of the grove: it being most frequent to call images by the names of the persons or things which they represent. The fields - Adjoining to the brook of Kidron. To Beth- el - To shew his abhorrence of them, and that he would not give the ashes of them a place in his kingdom: and to pollute and disgrace that place which had been the chief seat and throne of idolatry.

5. Priests - Hebrew. the Chemarim; the highest rank of priests, employed in the highest work, which was to burn incense.

6. The people - Of that people, those idolatrous people, as it is explained, 2 Chron. xxxiv, 4.

7. Sodomites - Sodomy was a part of idol-worship, being done to the honour of some of their idols, and by the appointment of those impure and diabolical spirits, which were worshipped in their idols. Hangings - Or, curtains, either to draw before the idols which were worshipped in the grove, to preserve them from defilement, or to gain more reverence for them: Or, garments for the service of the grove, for the idols or the priests belonging to them. Hebrew. houses, that is, either little chappels made of woven work, like those which were made of silver, Acts xix, 24, within which there were some representations of their grove-idols: or rather, tents made of those curtains for the use above- mentioned.

8. Priests - Belonging to the high-places following, whether such as worshipped idols; or such as worshipped God in those forbidden places. Defiled - By burning dead mens bones upon them, or by putting them to some other unclean use. From Geba - The northern border of the kingdom of Judah. Beer-sheba - The southern border, from one end to the other. Gates - Which were erected by the gates of the city here mentioned, to the honour of their tutelary gods, whom after the manner of the heathen they owned for the protectors of their city and habitations. The governor - This circumstance is noted to shew Josiah's great zeal and impartiality, in rooting out all monuments of idolatry, without any respects unto those great persons who were concerned in them.

9. The priest - Who worshipped the true God there. In Jerusalem - Were not suffered to come thither to the exercise of their priestly function; as a just punishment for the corruption of God's worship, and the transgression of so plain and positive a law of God, Deut. xii, 11, which was much worse in them who had more knowledge to discern the will of God, and more obligations to observe it. Did eat - Of the meal-offerings, allotted to the priests, wherein there was to be no leaven, Lev. ii, 4, 5, 10, 11, and consequently of other provisions belonging to the priests, which are contained under this one kind. Thus their spiritual blemish puts them into the very same state which corporal blemishes brought them, Lev. xxi, 17, &c. And thus he mitigates their punishment: he shuts them out from spiritual services, but allows them necessary provisions.

10. Topheth - Very near Jerusalem, where was the image of Molech, to whom some sacrificed their children, burning them in the fire, others dedicated them, making them pass between two fires. It is supposed to be called Topheth, from toph, a drum; because they beat drums at the burning of the children, that their shrieks might not be heard.

11. Horses - Such the eastern nations used to consecrate to the sun, to signify the swiftness of his motion. The sun - Either, to be sacrificed to the sun: or, to draw those chariots in which the kings, or some other in their stead, went forth every morning to worship the rising sun: for both these were the customs of the Armenians and Persians, as Xenophon testifies. Entering in - By the gate of the outward court of the temple. Chamberlain - Or, officer, to whom the care of these horses were committed. Suburbs - Of the temple: in certain outward buildings belonging to the temple. Chariots - Which were made for the worship of the sun.

12. The top - Upon the roof of the king's house. They were so mad upon their idols, that they were not content with all their publick high places and altars, but made others upon their house-tops, for the worship of the heavenly bodies. Cast - To shew his detestation of them: and to abolish the very remembrance of them.

13. Corruption - The mount of olives, called the mount of corruption, for the gross idolatry there practiced. Which - Not the same individual altars; which doubtless either Solomon upon his repentance, or some other of Josiah's predecessors had taken away, but other altars built by Manasseh or Amon, which because erected by Solomon's example, and for the same use, and in the same place, are called by his name: this brand is left by the Holy Ghost upon his name and memory, as a just punishment of that abominable practice, and a mean to deter others from the like. Abomination - The idol, so called, because it was abominable, and made them abominable to God.

14. Men - Of the idolatrous priests, which he caused to be taken out of their graves, ver. 18. As he carried the ashes of the images to the graves, to mingle them with dead mens bones, so he carried dead mens bones to the places where the images had been, that both ways idolatry might be rendered loathsome. Dead men and dead gods were indeed much alike, and fittest to go together.

15. Beth-el - Probably this city was now under the kingdom of Judah, to which it was added by Abijah long since. And it is probable, since the ten tribes were carried away, many cities had put themselves under the protection of Judah. The golden calf, it seems, was gone; but Josiah would leave no remains of that idolatry.

16. Himself - Josiah's care and zeal was so great, that he would not trust his officers with these things, but would see them done with his own eyes. These words - Three hundred years before it was done.

20. The priests - By this relation it appears, that after the departure of the king of Assyria, divers of the Israelites who had retired to other parts, and kept themselves out of the conqueror's hands, returned together with their priests to their own land, and to their old trade, worshipping idols; to whom, peradventure, they ascribed this their deliverance from that judgment which Jehovah had brought upon them. And burnt - According to that famous prophecy, 1 Kings xiii, 1, 2.

22. Such a passover - Celebrated with such solemn care, and great preparation, and numerous sacrifices, and universal joy of all good men; which was much the greater, because of their remembrance of the former wicked and miserable times under Manasseh, and Amon; and the good hopes they now had of the happy establishment of their nation, and the true religion; and of the prevention of God's judgments denounced against them. Judges - Or, from the days of Samuel, the last of the Judges; as it is expressed 2 Chron. xxxv, 18. None of the kings had taken such care to

prepare themselves, the priests, and people, and accurately to observe all the rites, and diligently to purge out all uncleanness, and to renew their covenant with God. And undoubtedly God was pleased to recompense their zeal in destroying idolatry with uncommon tokens of his presence and favour. All this concurred to make it such a passover as had not been, even in the days of Hezekiah.

24. Images, &c. - Three words noting the same thing, to shew, That all the instruments and monuments of idolatry were destroyed, as God had commanded. Spied - All that were discovered; not only such as were in the place of worship, but such as their priests or zealots had removed, and endeavoured to hide.

25. No king - For his diligent study in God's law, and his exact care, and unwearied industry, and fervent zeal, in rooting out idolators, and all kinds and appearances of idolatry, not only in Judah, but in Israel also; and in the establishment of the true religion in all his dominions, and in the conforming of his own life, and his peoples too, (as far as he could) to the holy law of God: though Hezekiah might excel him in some particulars.

26. Notwithstanding - Because though the king was most hearty in his repentance and acceptable to God, and therefore the judgment was delayed for his time; yet the people were in general corrupt, and secretly averse from Josiah's pious reformation, as appears from the complaints of the prophets, especially Jeremiah and Zephaniah, against them: and by the following history, wherein we see, that as soon as ever Josiah was gone, his children, and the princes, and the people, suddenly and greedily returned to their former abominations. Because - The sins of Manasseh, and for the men of his generation; who concurred with him in his idolatrous and cruel practices, are justly punished in this generation: because of God's sovereign right of punishing sinners when he sees fit: because of that publick declaration of God, that he would visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children: and principally, because these men had never sincerely repented of their own, nor of their fathers sins.

27. I said - Upon the conditions in sundry places expressed, which they broke, and therefore God justly made them to know his breach of promise.

29. The king, &c. - The king of Babylon, who having formerly rebelled against the Assyrian had now conquered him; as appears by the course of the sacred, and the concurrence of the prophane history; and therefore is here and elsewhere called the Assyrian, and the king of Assyria, because now he was the head of that empire. Euphrates - Against Carchemish by Euphrates, as it is expressed, 2 Chron. xxxv, 20, which the Assyrian had taken from Pharaoh's confederates, who therefore sends forces against the Assyrian, that he might both help them, and secure himself. Josiah went - Either to defend his own country from Pharaoh's incursions; or to assist the king of Babylon, with whom he seems to have been in league. Slew - Gave him his death wound there; though he died not 'till he came to Jerusalem. Seen him - When he fought with him, or in the first onset. It does not appear, that Josiah had any clear call to engage in this war; possibly he received his death wound, as a punishment of his rashness.

30. Dead - Mortally wounded. Jehoahaz - Who was younger than Jehoiakim, yet preferred by the people before the elder brother; either because Jehoiakim refused the kingdom for fear of Pharaoh, whom he knew he should hereby provoke. Or because Jehoahaz was the more stout and warlike prince; whence he is called a lion, Ezek xix, 3.

32. His fathers - His grand-parents, Manasseh, and Amon. He restored that idolatry which his father had destroyed. Jerusalem saw not a good day, after Josiah was laid in his grave; but one trouble came after another, 'till within two and twenty years it was destroyed.

33. In bands - Either, because he presumed to take the kingdom without his consent: or because he renewed the war against Pharaoh.

34. Jehoiakim - The giving of names was accounted an act of dominion; which therefore parents did to their children, and conquerors to their vassals or tributaries.

## XXIV

Judah severely punished, ver. 1-4. Jehoiakim dies, ver. 5-6. Nebuchadnezzar's conquests, ver. 7. The wicked reign of Jehoiachin, ver. 8, 9. Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem and carries the people captive, ver. 10-16. The wicked reign of Zedekiah, ver. 17-20

2. Bands - For Nebuchadnezzar's army was made up of several nations, who were willing to fight under the banner of such a puissant and victorious emperor.

3. The sins - Properly and directly for their own sins, and occasionally for the sins of Manasseh, which had never been charged upon them, if they had not made them their own by their repetition of them.

6. With his fathers - But it is not said, he was buried with them. No doubt the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled, that he should not be lamented as his father was, but buried with the burial of an ass.

7. Came not - In this king's days. He could not now come to protect the king of Judah, being scarce able to defend his own kingdom.

8. To reign - In his eighth year he began to reign with his father, who made him king with him as divers other kings of Israel and Judah had done in times of trouble; and in his eighteenth year he reigned alone.

12. Went out - Yielded up himself and the city into his hands; and this by the counsel of Jeremiah, and to his own good. His reign - Of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; as appears by comparing this with chap. xxv, 8, and because Jehoiachin reigned not half a year. Had he made his peace with God, and taken the method that Hezekiah did in the like case, he needed not to have feared the king of Babylon, but might have held out with courage, honour and success. But wanting the faith and piety of an Israelite, he had not the resolution of a man.

13. Vessels - The most and choicest of them, by comparing this with chap. xxv, 14, 15. Solomon made - Though the city and temple had been rifled more than once both by the kings of Egypt and Israel, and by the wicked kings of Judah; yet these golden vessels were preserved from them, either by the case of the priests, who hid them; or by the clemency of the conquerors, or by the special providence of God, disposing their hearts to leave them. Or, if they had been taken away by any of these kings, they might afterwards be recovered good, at the cost of the kings of Judah.

14. All - Not simply all, but the best and most considerable part, as the following words explain it. Captives - Which are more particularly reckoned up, ver. 16, where there are seven thousand mighty men, and a thousand smiths; and those mentioned ver. 15, make up the other two thousand. Craftsmen and smiths - Who might furnish them with new arms, and thereby give him fresh trouble.

17. Zedekiah - That he might admonish him of (what this name signifies) the justice of God, which had so severely punished Jehoiakim for his rebellion; and would no less certainly overtake him, if he should be guilty of the same perfidiousness.

20. Came to pass - Thus the peoples sins were the true cause why God gave them wicked kings, whom he suffered to do wickedly, that they might bring the long-deserved, and threatened punishments upon themselves and their people.

## XXV

Jerusalem is taken, ver. 1-4. Zedekiah taken and sentenced, ver. 5-7. Nebuzaradan burns the city, breaks down the walls, and carries away the spoils, with most of the people, ver. 3-17. The chief officers are put to death, ver. 18-21. The very remnant of the people is scattered, ver. 22-26. Jehoiachin is countenanced, after thirty seven years imprisonment, ver. 27-30.

1. Came - To chastise Zedekiah for his rebellion and perjury. Built - To keep all supplies of men or provisions from entering into the city: and that from thence they might shoot darts, or arrows, or stones.

3. The people - For the common people, but only for the great men. Now they eat their own children for want of food, Lam. iv, 3, &c. Jer. in this extremity, earnestly persuaded the king to surrender; but his heart was hardened to his destruction.

6. Riblah - Where Nebuchadnezzar staid, that he might both supply the besiegers with men, and military provisions, as their occasions required; and have an eye to Chaldea, to prevent or suppress any commotions which might happen there in his absence. They - The king's officers appointed thereunto, examined his cause, and passed the following sentence against him.

7. Slew, &c. - Tho' they were but children, that this spectacle, the last he was to behold, might leave a remaining impression of grief and horror upon his spirit. And in slaying his sons they in effect declared, that the kingdom was no more, and that he nor any of his breed were fit to be trusted: therefore not fit to live. Babylon - Thus two prophecies were fulfilled, which seemed contrary one to the other, that he should go to Babylon, Jer. xxxii, 5, xxxiv, 3, and that he should never see Babylon: which seeming contradiction, because Zedekiah the false prophet could not reconcile, he concluded both were false, and it seems Zedekiah the king might stumble at this difficulty.

8. Months, &c. - So the Chaldeans did not put all to fire and sword, as soon as they had taken the city: but about a month after, orders were sent, to compleat the destruction of it. This space God gave them to repent after all the foregoing days of his patience. But in vain; they still hardened their hearts: and therefore execution is awarded to the utmost.

9. Burnt the house of the Lord - One of the apocryphal writers tells us, that Jeremiah got the ark out of the temple, and conveyed it to a cave in mount Nebo, 2Macc ii, 4, 5. But this is like the other tales of that author, who has no regard either to truth or probability. For Jeremiah was at this time a close prisoner. By the burning of the temple God would shew, how little he cares for the outward pomp of his worship, when the life and power of religion are gone. About four hundred and thirty years the temple of Solomon had stood. And it is observed by Josephus, that the second

temple was burnt by the Romans, the same month, and the same day of the month, that the first temple was burnt by the Chaldeans.

11. People - Whom neither the sword nor famine had destroyed, who were eight hundred and thirty two persons, Jer. lii, 29, being members and traders of that city: for it is likely, there were very many more of the country people fled thither, who were left with others of their brethren to manure the land. Multitude - Of the inhabitants of the country.

12. Left of the poor - So while the rich were prisoners in a strange land, the poor had liberty and peace in their own country! Thus providence sometimes humbles the proud, and favours them of low degree.

21. Out of the land - This compleated their calamity, about eight hundred and sixty years after they were put in possession of it by Joshua.

22. Gedaliah - A righteous and good man, and a friend to the prophet Jeremiah.

24. Swear - Assured them by his promise and oath, that they should be kept from the evils which they feared. This he might safely swear, because he had not only the king of Babylon's promise but also God's promise deliver'd by Jeremiah. And it might seem, a fair prospect was opening again. But how soon was the scene changed! This hopeful settlement is quickly dashed in pieces, not by the Chaldeans, but by some of themselves.

25. Came - Moved with envy to see so mean a person advanced into their place. Ten men - Ten captains or officers, and under each of them many soldiers.

26. Egypt - And here they probably mixt with the Egyptians by degrees, and were heard of no more as Israelites.

27. Seven and twentieth - Or, on the twenty fifth day, as it is, Jer. lii, 31. For then the decree was made, which was executed upon the twenty seventh day.

30. All the days of his life - Let none say, they shall never see good again, because they have long seen little but evil. The most afflicted know not what blessed turn providence may yet give to their affairs.

## NOTES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF CHRONICLES

THE chief design of these books is, to compleat the history of the kings of Judah; to gather up fragments of sacred history, which were omitted in the books of Samuel and Kings; to explain some passages there mentioned, and to give an exact account of the genealogies. This was then a work of great necessity, to preserve the distinction of the tribes and families; that it might appear, Christ came of that nation, tribe and family, of which he was to be born. And this account, having been hitherto neglected, is most seasonably mentioned in these books, compiled by Ezra after the captivity, because this was to be, in a manner, the last part of the Sacred history of the Old Testament. If many things herein are now obscure to us, they were not so to the Hebrew. And all the persons here named were known to them, by those exact genealogies, which they kept in their several families, and in public registers. In this first book we have a collection of Sacred genealogies, from Adam to David, with several histories inserted, chap. 1-9. An account of the translation of the kingdom from Saul to David, and of David's reign, chap. 10-21. An account of the settlement of ecclesiastical

affairs by David, and of his preparations for building the temple, chap. 22-29. These are words of days as the Hebrew title runs, of the best days of the Old Testament Church. But now He is come, for whose sake the registers were preserved, the Jews have lost all their genealogies, even that of the priests, so that there is not any man in the world, that can prove himself of the house of Aaron.

## I

The descents from Adam to Noah and his sons, ver. 1-4. The posterity of Japheth and Ham, ver. 5-16. Of Shem to Abraham, ver. 17-27. Abraham's posterity by Ishmael, ver. 28-31. By Keturah, ver. 32, 33. The posterity of Isaac by Esau, ver. 34-54.

1. Sheth - Adam begat Sheth: and so in the following particulars. For brevity sake he only mentions their names; but the rest is easily understood out of the former books. This appears as the peculiar glory of the Jewish nation, that they alone were able to trace their pedigree from the first man that God created, which no other nation pretended to, but abused themselves and their posterity with fabulous accounts of their originals: the people of Thessaly fancying that they sprang from stones, the Athenians, that they grew out of the earth.

5. The sons of Japheh - The historian repeating the account of the replenishing the earth by the sons of Noah, begins with those that were strangers to the church, the sons of Japheth, who peopled Europe, of whom he says little, as the Jews had hitherto little or no dealings with them. He proceeds to those that had many of them been enemies to the church, and thence hastens to the line of Abraham, breaking off abruptly from all the other families of the sons of Noah, but that of Arphaxad, from whom Christ was to come. The great promise of the Messiah was transmitted from Adam to Seth, from him to Shem, from him to Eber, and so to the Jewish nation, who were intrusted above all nations with that sacred treasure, 'till the promise was performed, and the Messiah was come: and then that nation was made not a people.

14. The Jebusite - The names which follow until ver. 17, are not the names of particular persons, but of people or nations. And all these descended from Canaan, though some of them were afterwards extinct or confounded with others of their brethren by cohabitation or mutual marriages, whereby they lost their names: which is the reason why they are no more mentioned, at least under these names.

17. The sons - Either the name of sons is so taken here as to include grandsons, or, these words, the children of Aram, are understood before Uz, out of Gen. x, 23, where they are expressed.

18. Begat - Either immediately, or mediately by his son Cainan, who is expressed, Luke iii, 35.

19. Divided - In their languages and habitations.

24. Arphaxad - Having given a brief and general account of the original of the world and the people in it, he now returns to a more large and particular account of the genealogy of Shem, from whom the Jews were descended.

28. The sons of Abraham - All nations but the seed of Abraham are already shaken off from this genealogy. Not that we conclude, no particular persons of any other nation but this found favour with God. Multitudes will be brought to heaven out of every nation, and we may hope there were

many, very many people in the world, whose names were in the book of life, tho' they did not spring from the loins of Abraham.

36. Timna - There is another Timna, the concubine of Eliphaz, Gen. xxxvi, 12, but this was one of his sons, though called by the same name; there being some names common both to men and women in the Hebrew and in other languages.

38. Seir - One of another nation, prince of the Horims; whose genealogy is here described, because of that affinity which was contracted between his and Esau's posterity; and those who were not united and incorporated with them, were destroyed by them. See Deut. ii, 12.

54. These are the dukes of Edom - Let us, in reading these genealogies, think of the multitudes that have gone thro' the world, have successively acted their parts in it, and retired into darkness. All these and all theirs had their day; many of them made a mighty noise in the world; until their day came to fall, and their place knew them no more. The paths of death are trodden paths. How soon are we to tread them?

## II

The sons of Jacob, ver. 1-2. Of Judah, to Jesse, ver. 3-12. Of Jesse, ver. 13-17. Of Caleb, the son of Hezron, ver. 18-20. Of Hezron, ver. 21-24. Of Jerahmeel down to Elishama, ver. 25-41. Another branch of Caleb's posterity, ver. 42-49. The sons of Caleb, the son of Hur, ver. 50-55.

3. Judah - Whom he puts first, because the best part of the right of the firstborn, namely, the dominion, was conferred upon him, Gen. xlix, 8, and because the Messiah was to come out of his loins.

6. Dara - If these be the same who are mentioned as the sons of Machol, 1 Kings iv, 31, either the same man had two names, Zerah and Machol, as was usual among the Hebrew: or, one of these was their immediate father, and the other their grand-father. These are named, because they were the glory of their father's house. When the Holy Ghost would magnify the wisdom of Solomon, he saith, he was wiser than these four men. That four brothers should be so eminent, was a rare thing.

7. Carmi - Who is here mentioned, because he was the son of Zimri, who is also called Zabdi, Josh. vii, 1. Achar - Called Achan, Josh. vii, 1, and here Achar, with a little variation for greater significancy: for Achar signifies a troubler.

13. Eliab - Called also Elihu, chap. xxvii, 18, unless that was another person, and the word brother be taken more largely for a kinsman, as it is frequently.

15. Seventh - He had eight sons, 1 Sam. xvi, 10, but probably one of them died presently after that time.

17. Ishmaelite - By birth or habitation, but by profession an Israelite, 2 Sam. xvii, 25.

18. Her sons - The sons of Azubah, who is by way of distinction called his wife, when Jerioth probably was only his concubine, and, it may seem, barren: therefore upon Azubah's death he married another wife. And those other sons of this Caleb mentioned, ver. 42, are his sons by some other wife distinct from all these.

21. Gilead - Of a man so called: a man of noted valour, and the great champion in those parts.

23. Sons of Machir - Partly to his own sons, and partly to his son- in-law Jair, who by reason of that dear affection which was betwixt them, and his forsaking his own tribe and kindred to fight for them and to dwell with them, is here reckoned as his own son.

24. Tekoa - A known place whose father he is called, because he was either the progenitor of the people inhabiting there: or, their prince and ruler: or, the builder of the city.

31. The sons - An expression often used in prophane authors too, where there is but one son.

35. Jarha - Probably he was not only a proselyte, but an eminent man: else an Israelite would not have given him his only daughter.

45. Beth-zur - A place in Judah.

49. Madmannah - This, and divers other following names are the names of places in Judah.

51. Bethlehem - That is, the inhabitants of Bethlehem.

55. Scribes - Either civil, who were public notaries, that wrote and signed legal instruments: or ecclesiastical. And these were either Levites, or Simeonites, or rather Kenites, and are here mentioned not as if they were of the tribe of Judah, but because they dwelt among them, and probably were allied to them by marriages, and so in a manner incorporated with them.

## III

The sons of David, ver. 1-9. His successors in the throne, ver. 10-16. The remains of his family in and after the captivity, ver. 17-24.

3. His wife - Possibly so called because she was his first, and therefore most proper wife, though her son was born after all the rest before mentioned, and therefore she and her son are put in the sixth place, the wive being here named only for the sons sake.

5. Four - All David's children by her, as the text positively affirms: and therefore Solomon is called her, only son, Prov. iv, 3, because she loved him as if he had been so. Ammiel - Called also Eliam, 2 Sam. xi, 3.

6. Eliphelet - And he had two other sons called by the same names, ver.

8, probably they were by different wives: and probably they were then distinguished by some additional clause or title, which is here omitted, because the two first were dead before the two second were born, and therefore the names of the deceased were given to these to preserve their memory.

8. Nine - There are but seven mentioned, 2 Sam. v, 14. Two of them are omitted there, because they died very early, and here we have all the sons of David, which clause is not added 2 Sam. v, 13-16.

15. Shallum - Which most conceive to be the same who is called Jehoahaz, 2 Kings xxiii, 30.

16. Zedekiak - This was another Zedekiah. How seldom has a crown gone in a direct line, from father to son, as it did here, for seventeen generations! This was the recompense of David's piety. About the captivity the lineal descent was interrupted, and the crown went from a nephew to an uncle, a presage of the glory's departing from that house.

17. Assir - Or, of Jechoniah the captive, which is added to shew that he begat his son when he was captive in Babylon.

18. Pedaiah - The sentence seems to be short and imperfect, as is frequent in the Hebrew language, and something is here understood, as, the sons also of Salathiel were Malchiram and Pedaiah, &c. as they gather from hence that the same Zerubbabel is called the son of Pedaiah, ver. 19, and the son (that is, the grandson) of Salathiel, Matt. i, 12.

19. Their sister - Sister to the two last named sons of Zerubbabel, namely, by both parents; and therefore named before the other five, ver.

20, who were her brethren by the father, but not by the mother.

21. Shechaniah - All these both parents and their sons blended together, are mentioned as the sons of Hananiah, and branches of the royal stock.

22. Six - Including the father. But the Hebrew word, Shisha, which is rendered six, may be the proper name of one of the sons of Shemaiah.

## IV

The prosperity of Shobal, ver. 1-4. Of Ashur, ver. 5-8. The character and prayer of Jabez, ver. 9, 10. The posterity of Chelah and others, ver. 11-20. Of Shelah, ver. 21-23. The posterity, cities and victories of Simeon, ver. 24-43.

1. The sons - The posterity: for only Pharez was his immediate son. But they are all mentioned here only to shew Shobal's descent from Judah.

9. honourably - For courage, and for fervent piety. She records this, that it might be a memorandum to herself, to be thankful to God as long as she lived, for bringing her through that sorrow: and a memorandum to him, that she bore him into a vale of tears, in which he might expect few days and full of trouble. And the sorrow in his name might serve to put a seriousness upon his spirit.

10. Called - When he was undertaking some great and dangerous service. Enlarge - Drive out these Canaanites, whom thou hast commanded us to root out. Grieve - That it may not oppress and overcome me: more is understood than is expressed. He useth this expression in allusion to his name, which signifies grief. And God granted, &c. - Prospered him remarkably in his undertakings, in his studies, in his worldly business, and in his conflicts with the Canaanites.

12. Rechab - From these are sprung the present inhabitants of Rechab, a town not elsewhere mentioned.

14. Father - Of the inhabitants of the valley.

21. Shelah - Having treated of the posterity of Judah by Pharez, and by Zara, he now comes to his progeny by Shelah.

22. Had dominion - Which they ruled in the name and for the use of the kings of Judah, to whom Moab was subject from David's time. Ancient things - The sense is those blessed times are long since past. Our ancestors had the dominion over the Heathen, but their degenerate posterity are slaves in Chaldea, were they are employed as potters or gardeners, or in other servile works.

23. There are - He seems to oppose their present servitude to their former glory, and to shew their mean spirits that had rather tarry among the Heathen to do their drudgery, than return to Jerusalem to serve God and enjoy their freedom. The king - Of Babylon: esteeming it a greater honour to serve that earthly monarch in the meanest employments, than to serve the king of kings in his temple.

27. Of Judah - The tribe of Simeon did not increase proportionably to the tribe of Judah in which they dwelt; as appears by those two catalogues, Num. i, 22; xxvi, 14, which is to be ascribed to God's curse upon them, delivered by the mouth of holy Jacob, Gen. xlix, 5-7, and signified by Moses's neglect of them when he blessed all the other tribes.

31. Their cities - Several of these cities though given to Simeon by Joshua, yet through the sloth or cowardice of that tribe, were not taken from the Philistines, until David's time, who took some of them; and, the Simeonites having justly forfeited their right to them by their neglect, gave them to his own tribe. For it is evident concerning Ziklag, one of them, that it was in the Philistines hands in David's time, and by them given to him, and by him annexed to the tribe of Judah, 1 Sam. xxvii, 6.

40. Fat pasture, &c. - Those who thus dwelt (as we do) in a fruitful country, and whose land is wide and quiet and peaceable, have reason to own themselves indebted to that God, who appoints the bounds of our habitation. Of Ham - The Canaanites, who descended from Ham. And accordingly these words contain a reason, why they went and possessed this place, because it was not in the hands of their brethren of Judah, but in the possession of that people which they had authority to expel.

## V

The genealogies of Reuben, ver. 1-10. Of Gad, ver. 11-17. Joined together they conquer the Hagarites, ver. 18-22. Of the half tribe of Manasseh, ver. 23, 24. They are led captive by the king of Assyria, ver. 26, 26.

1. Sons of Israel - This is added emphatically, because they were treated as if they had been the immediate sons of Jacob. Not reckoned - This is the second reason, which sheweth both why Reuben's genealogy was not first mentioned; and if another tribe was to be ranked before it, why that was Judah, and not Joseph, because the order of their genealogy was not to be ruled by the birthright, but by an higher privilege, which was given to Judah.

2. Judah - Not the person, but the tribe of Judah. Prevailed - Excelled the other tribes, especially in the following privilege.

9. Euphrates - From Jordan and the wilderness beyond it unto Euphrates. Or, of the wilderness, which lies towards or reacheth to the river Euphrates, namely, the great wilderness of Kedemoth, Deut. ii, 26, which was extended far and wide towards Euphrates: for that was the eastern border of Reuben's possession, and not Euphrates, to which their habitation never reached. Multiplied - Which forced them to enlarge their habitation as far as they could towards Euphrates.

10. They made war - Thus God did for his people, as he promised them. He cast out the enemy from before them by little and little, and gave them their land as they had occasion for it.

14. These - These seven last named.

20. Helped - By God, ver. 22, who gave them extraordinary courage and success.

22. Was of God - Undertaken in his fear, and carried on in a dependence on him. Then we may expect to prosper in any enterprize, and then only, when we take God along with us.

## VI

The first fathers of the tribe of Levi, ver. 1-3. The line of the priests from Aaron to the captivity, ver. 4-15. Of some other families, ver. 16-30. The work of the Levites, ver. 31-48 Of the priests, ver. 49-53. The cities of the priests and Levites, ver. 54- 81.

10. The priest's office - So did all the rest, but it is implied that he did it worthily, he filled his place, and valiantly discharged his office in Uzziah's time. Solomon built - In Solomon's temple; so called to distinguish it from the second temple which was built or in building when these books were written.

44. Ethan - Called also Jeduthun, chap. ix, 16; 2 Chron. xxxv, 15, and in the titles of divers psalms.

54. Castles - So called, not only because, walled and well guarded by the country; but because they and their possessions were in a particular manner the care of divine providence. As God was their portion, so God was their protector. And a cottage will be a castle to those that abide under the shadow of the Almighty. The lot - Or, the first lot.

66. Coasts - Or, of their borders, of their country contained within its borders.

## VII

The prosperity of Issachar, ver. 1-5. Of Benjamin, ver. 6-12. Of Naphtali, ver. 13. Of Manasseh, ver. 14-19. Of Ephraim, ver. 20-29. Of Asher, ver. 30-40.

6. Three - They were ten, Gen. xlvi, 25, and five of them are named, chap. chap. viii, 1, but here only three are mentioned, either because these were most eminent; or because the other families are now extinct.

7. Heads - Each of them head of that family to which he belonged. For it may seem by comparing this with chap. viii, 3, &c. that these were not the immediate sons of Belah, but his Grand- children descended each from a several father.

14. She - His wife; his concubine is here opposed to her.

15. Second - Of the second son or grandson of Machir; for so Zelophehad was. Had daughters - Only daughters, and no sons.

17. These - Ashriel and Zelophehad, named ver. 14, 15, the relative being here referred to the remoter antecedent; as is frequent in the Hebrew.

18. His - Gilead's sister. Mahalah - Understand, and Shemida, out of the next verse.

21. Slew - This history is not recorded else where in scripture, but it is in the ancient Hebrew writers. The Philistines (one of whose cities Gath was) and the Egyptians were next neighbours; and in those ancient times it was usual for such to make inroads one into another's country, and to carry thence what prey they could take. And as the Philistines had probably made such inroads formerly into Egypt, and particularly into the land of Goshen, which was the utmost part of Egypt bordering upon the Philistines land; so the Israelites might requite them in the like kind: and particularly the children of Ephraim, to their own loss. And this seems to have happened a little before the Egyptian persecution, and before the reign of that new king mentioned Exod. i, 8. And this clause, that were born in that land, may be added emphatically, as the motive which made them more resolute in their fight with the Ephraimites, because they fought in, and for their own land, wherein all their wealth and concerns lay.

23. Bare a son - Thus the breach was in some measure repaired, by the addition of another son in his old age. When God thus restores comfort to his mourners, he makes glad according to the days wherein he afflicted, setting the mercies over against the crosses, we ought to observe the kindness of his providence. Yet the joy that a man was born into his family could not make him forget his grief. For he gives a melancholy name to his son, Beriah, that is, in trouble: for he was born when the family was in mourning. It is good to have in remembrance the affliction and the misery which are past, that our souls may be humbled within us.

## VIII

Some of the heads of the tribe of Benjamin, ver. 1-32. The family of Saul, ver. 33-40.

6. These - These following, ver. 7, because he here speaks of them who were removed. He describes the sons of Benjamin by the places of their habitation, without an exact account of their parents; because their genealogies were broken by that almost total extirpation of this tribe, Judg. xx, 29-48.

28. Heads of the fathers, &c. - Particular notice is taken of these, that others, at their return from captivity, might be induced to settle there too, which it seems few were willing to do, because it was the post of danger. Many great and mighty nations were then upon earth, and many illustrious men in them, whose names are buried in perpetual oblivion, while the names of multitudes of the Israel of God, are here carefully preserved in everlasting remembrance: a figure of God's writing the names of his spiritual Israel, in the Lamb's book of life.

40. Archers - Hebrew. that tread the bow; for the bows of steel, which these used, required great strength to bend them; which therefore they did by treading the bow with their feet, and pulling the string with both their hands.

## IX

The chief of Judah, Benjamin. Ephraim and Manasseh, who returned from captivity and dwelt at Jerusalem, ver. 1-9. The priests, ver. 10-13. The Levites, ver. 14-16. Their various offices in the temple, ver. 17-34. The family of Saul, ver. 35-44.

1. The book - In the publick records, wherein there was an account of that kingdom, and of the several families in it.

2. The first - After the return from Babylon. Dwelt - That took possession of their own lands and cities, which had been formerly allotted them; but of late years had been taken from them for their sins, and possessed by other people. Israelites - The common people of Judah and Israel, called here by the general name of Israelites, which was given them before that unhappy division of the kingdoms, and now is restored to them when the Israelites are united with the Jews in one and the same commonwealth, that so all the names and signs of their former division might be blotted out. And though the generality of the ten tribes were yet in captivity, yet divers of them upon Cyrus's general proclamation, associated themselves, and returned with those of Judah and Benjamin. Levites - These took possession of the cities belonging to them, as they had need and opportunity. Nethinims - A certain order of men, either Gibeonites or others joined with them, devoted to the service of God, and of his house, and of the priests and Levites; who, that they might attend upon their work without distraction, had certain places and possessions given to them; which they are now said to repossess.

4. Ammihud - That there is so great a diversity of names between this catalogue and that of Nehem xi, 4-36, may be ascribed to two causes:

1. to the custom of the Hebrew, who used frequently to give several names to one person: and,
2. to the change of times; for here they are named who came up at the first return but many of those in Nehemiah might be such as returned afterward, and came and dwelt either instead of the persons here named, or with them.

9. And fifty-six - They are reckoned but nine hundred and twenty- eight in Neh. xi, 8, either because there he mentions only those that were by lot determined to dwell at Jerusalem, to whom he here adds those who freely offered themselves to it; or because some of the persons first placed there were dead, or removed from Jerusalem upon some emergent occasion.

11. The ruler - Or, a ruler in the house of God: not the high-priest, who was Ezra, Ezra iii, 8, but a chief ruler under him.

13. Able men - Hebrew. mighty men of valour: which is here noted as an excellent qualification for their place; because the priests might meet with great opposition in the discharge of their office, in the execution of the censures upon all impure persons without exception, and in preserving sacred things from violation by the touch of forbidden hands.

17. Porters - Whose office it was to keep all the gates of the temple, that no unclean person or thing might enter into it.

18. King's gate - In the east-gate of the temple, which was so called, because the kings of Judah used to go to the temple through that gate. Under this gate he comprehends all the rest, which also

were guarded by these porters. Companies - Or, according to the courses. They kept the gates successively, according to that method into which the Levites were distributed, for the more convenient management of their several offices; among which this of the porters was one.

19. Tabernacle - Namely, in time past, when the tabernacle was standing, before the temple was built. Fathers - The Kohathites. Host - When the Israelites were in the wilderness, encamped in a military manner round about the tabernacle, with whom these were then placed. Entry - Of the veil by which they entered into the tabernacle; which he calls the entry because then there were no gates. The meaning is, that all things were now restored to their primitive order; and the several persons took those offices upon them, which their ancestors had before them.

21. Was - In the time of David, as the following verse sheweth. Porter - Chief porter. The door - Of the door which led out of the priests court into the tabernacle, in which the ark was placed. Before the temple was built, they had a mean and moveable tent, which they made use of in the mean time. They that cannot yet have a temple, let them be thankful for a tabernacle, and make the best use of it. Never let God's work be left undone, for want of a place to do it in.

22. Villages - Where their usual residence was, and whence they came to Jerusalem in their courses. Ordain - In the times of the Judges there was much disorder both in the Jewish state and church, and the Levites came to the tabernacle promiscuously, and as their inclinations or occasions brought them. But Samuel observing they were greatly increased, began to think of establishing order in their ministration. And these intentions of his probably were communicated to David, who after his own peaceable settlement in his throne, revived and perfected Samuel's design, and took care to put it in execution.

23. The oversight - Namely, in David's time. Tabernacle - This is added to explain what he means by the house of the Lord, not that tabernacle which David had set up for the ark; but that more solemn tabernacle, which Moses had made by God's express command; which in David's time was at Gibeon; in which God was worshipped until the temple was built. Wards - By turns or courses.

25. To come - From their several villages to the place of worship. Seven days - Every seventh day the courses were changed, and the new comers were to tarry 'till the next sabbath day. With them - To be with them, with the chief porters, who alway's abode in the place of God's worship.

26. Set office - These were constantly upon the place, in the execution of their office, that they might oversee the inferior porters in their work. Treasuries - In which the sacred utensils and other treasures belonging to the temple, were kept.

30. The ointment - This is added to shew, that though the Levites were intrusted with the keeping of this ointment, yet none but the priests could make it.

31. The pans - Was to take care that fine flour might be provided, that when occasion required they might make cakes in pans.

33. These - Others of the Levites; of whose several offices he had spoken before. Are - Or rather, were; which is understood, all along in the foregoing and following verses. Chambers - That they might be ready to come whensoever they were called to the service of God in the tabernacle. Free - From all trouble and employment, that they might wholly attend upon the proper work. That work - Either composing or ordering sacred songs; or actually singing; or teaching others to sing them. Day and night - Continually, and particularly in the morning and evening, the two times appointed for solemn service. Thus was God continually praised, as it is fit he should be, who is continually doing us good.

34. Jerusalem - Upon their return from Babylon they were not suffered to chuse their habitations in the country, as others were, but were obliged to settle themselves at Jerusalem, that they might constantly attend upon God's service there.

35. Maachah - In this and the following verses, he repeats Saul's genealogy, that he might make way for the following history.

## X

The overthrow and death of Saul, ver. 1-7. The triumph of the Philistines, ver. 8-10. The men of Jabesh-gilead take down and bury the bodies of Saul and his sons, ver. 11, 12. The reason of Saul's death, ver. 13, 14.

1. The men of Israel fled, &c. - Thus princes sin and the people suffer for it. No doubt there was enough in them to deserve it. But that which divine justice had chiefly an eye to, was the sin of Saul. Great men should in an especial manner, take heed of provoking God's wrath. For if they kindle that fire, they know not how many may be consumed by it for their sakes.

6. His house - All his children, then present with him, namely, his three sons, for Ishbosheth and Mephiboshieth were not slain.

10. Temple of Dagon - If we give not God the glory of our successes, even Philistines will rise up in judgment with us and condemn us. Shall Dagon have so great a place in their triumphs, and the true God be forgotten in ours?

12. Seven days - Every day 'till evening, after the manner of the Jewish fasts.

13. The word - Against God's express command: which is a great aggravation of any sin. Familiar spirit - Which also was contrary to a manifest command, Levit xix, 31.

14. Inquired not - He did in some sort, but not in a right manner, not humbly and penitently, not diligently and importunately, not patiently and perseveringly. Nor 'till he was brought to the last extremity. And then it was too late.

## XI

David is made king, ver. 1-3. He takes the castle of Zion, ver. 4-9. A catalogue of his mighty men, ver. 10-47.

6. Chief - Before this he was one of David's chief captains: but now he is made captain-general of all the forces of Israel and Judah.

10. Mighty men - Yet David ascribed his success, not to the hosts he had, but to the Lord of hosts: not to the mighty men that were with him, but to the mighty God, whole presence with us is all in all.

11. Slain - By his own hand, five hundred more being slain by others then joining with him, who pursued the victory, both which sums make up the eight hundred, numbered 2 Sam. xxiii, 8. The slaughter of all is justly ascribed to him, because it was the effect of his valour.

18. Would not drink of it - That water which he thought too precious for his own drinking, he poured out to the Lord for a drink-offering. If we have any thing better than other, let God be honoured with it, who is the best and should have the best.

19. Shall I drink the blood, &c. - It put him into the utmost confusion, to think three brave men should hazard their lives, to fetch water for him. In his account, it turns the water into blood. It is to the honour of great men, not to be prodigal of the blood of those they employ.

21. Attained not - He did not equal them.

41. Uriah - The last of that catalogue in 2 Sam. xxiii, 39. But here some others are added to the number, because though they were not of the thirty, yet they were men of great valour and renown amongst David's commanders.

42. Thirty - Thirty captains who were under him as their colonel.

## XII

The companies that came to David at Ziklag, ver. 1-22. The armies that came to him at Hebron, ver. 23-40.

2. Even - Of Saul's own tribe: who were moved hereto by God's spirit, by the conscience of their duty to David; and by their observation of God's departure from Saul, and of his special presence with David.

4. Thirty - Who came attended with thirty valiant Benjamites, and was their commander.

17. The God of our fathers - He calls God, the God of our fathers, both his fathers and theirs; thus he minds them, not to deal ill with him; for they were both descendents from the same patriarchs, and servants of the same God. And thus he encourages himself to believe, that God would right him, if he was abused. For he was the God of his fathers; therefore a blessing was entailed upon him: and a God to all Israel in particular, as well as a Judge to all the earth.

18. The Spirit - Not only saving graces, but other heroical and generous motions are ascribed to God's spirit, which here stirred up in him a more that ordinary greatness of mind and resolution.

20. As - As he returned from the camp of the Philistines to Ziklag.

21. Against - Against the Amalekites who had taken and burnt Ziklag, whom David and his six hundred men were now pursuing.

22. That time - While he was at Ziklag, and in his march to Hebron, and principally at Hebron. Like - Innumerable, like the stars or angels, both which are called God's hosts.

24. Six thousand, &c. - Who came hither in the name of their brethren; for that whole tribe stuck to David.

27. Jehoida - Not the high-priest, for that was Abiathar, 1 Sam. xxiii, 6, but one of eminent place under him.

29. Kept the ward - endeavoured to keep the crown in Saul's family.

31. Manasseh - Which was within Jordan: for of the other half beyond Jordan he speaks, ver. 37. By name - Who were not ashamed publickly to own David by putting their names to some paper presented to them for that purpose.

32. The times - They understood public affairs, the temper of the nation, and the tendencies of the present events. And they shewed their wisdom at this time; for as they had adhered to Saul while he lived, as knowing the time was not yet come for David to take possession of the kingdom: and as they could not join David, while Abner lived, and had the command of the other tribes wherewith they were encompassed, so as soon as he was dead, and they had opportunity to declare themselves, they owned David for their king.

33. Double heart - They were sincerely loyal, and did not dissemble with David, pretending to be for him, while in their hearts they favoured Saul's family. And none had any separate interests, but all were for the public good.

## XIII

David brings up the ark from Kirjath-jearim, ver. 1-8. Uzza being smitten, it is left at the house of Obed-edom, ver. 9-14.

2. David said - After this was proposed by the king and accepted by the people, this great assembly was dismissed, only some of them David reserved to go with him against Jerusalem, which accordingly he did, and succeeded in his enterprize. But before this resolution could be executed, the Philistines came and fought twice with David, as is related 2 Sam. v, 17, 22, &c. and here chap. chap. xiv, 8, &c. And after they were repulsed with great loss and shame, David sets upon the execution of what he had resolved, and in order to it calls another general assembly of the people. Of the Lord - If this translation of the ark be pleasing to God. Are left - After the great desolations and destructions which God for their sins had made among them.

3. For, &c. - The ark was then neglected; and the generality of the people contented themselves with going to Gibeon and offering sacrifices there, not caring, though the ark, the soul of the tabernacle, was in another place. As soon as David had power in his hand, he would use it for the advancement of religion. It ought to be the first care of those that are enriched or preferred, to honour God with their honours, and to serve him and the interests of his kingdom among men, with their wealth and power.

6. That is - The same city was called by both names.

10. Put his hand, &c. - Let the case of Uzza warn us, to take heed of presumption or rashness with regard to holy things; and not to think, that a right intention will justify a wrong action.

11. Perez-uzza - That is, the breach of Uzza. Let David's displeasure on this occasion caution us, to watch over our spirit, lest when God reproves us, instead of submitting to God, we quarrel with him. If God be angry with us, shall we dare to be angry with him?

14. And the Lord blessed,&c. - Let this encourage us to welcome God's ordinance into our houses, believing the ark is a guest no body shall lose by. Nor let it be the less precious to us, for its being to others a rock of offense.

## XIV

David is confirmed in his kingdom, ver. 1, 2. His wives and children, ver. 3-7. His victories over the Philistines, ver. 8-17.

## XV

David prepares to bring up the ark, ver. 1-24. It is brought up, ver. 25-28. Michal despises him, ver. 29.

1. Houses - A palace consisting of many houses or apartments for his several wives and children. A tent - He did not fetch the tabernacle of Moses from Gibeon, because he intended forthwith to build the temple.

5. The sons - Of Amram or Izhar, Kohath's sons, Num. iii, 27, otherwise Elizaphan, ver. 8, and Hebron, ver. 9, and Uzziel, ver. 10, were Kohath's children.

11. The Priests - Abiathar the high-priest, and Zadok the second priest.

18. Second degree - The first rank of sacred musicians being those three famous persons named ver. 17, next to whom were these here named. Porters - who were to keep the doors of the tabernacle and courts, but with all were instructed in musick, that when these were free from attendance upon their proper office, they might not be idle nor unprofitable in God's house.

20. Alamoth - Or, with Alamoth which is thought to be the name of an instrument of musick; or of a certain tune, or note, or part in musick. The certain signification of it is not now known; and the like may be said of Sheminith, ver. 21.

21. To excel - Which word may be added to note the excellency of that instrument, or part of musick; or that there was a greater extension or elevation of the voice than in the former. This way of praising God by musical instruments, had not hitherto been in use. But David instituted it by divine direction, and added it to the other ordinances of that dispensation.

22. For song - He was the moderator of the musick, instructing them when and how to lift up their voices, or change their notes, or make their stops.

23. Door-keepers - They were appointed to keep the door of the tent in which the ark was to be kept, that no unallowed person might press in and touch it; and in like manner they were to attend upon the ark in the way, and to guard it from the press and touch of prophane hands; for which end these two went before the ark, is their other two brethren mentioned in the close of ver. 24, came after it.

26. Helped - Encouraging them in their work with some comfortable sign of his presence with them. In all our religious exercises, we must derive help from heaven. God's ministers that bare the vessels of the Lord, have special need of divine help in their ministrations, that God may be glorified thereby, and the people edified.

27. Linen - With a linen ephod. This circumstance is repeated, because it was an unusual thing for one, who was no Levite, to wear a Levitical garment.

## XVI

David's sacrifices and alms, ver. 1-3. He appoints Levites to minister before the ark, ver. 4-6. His psalm of thanksgiving, ver. 7-36. Ministers and others are appointed to attend the ark continually, ver. 37-43.

4. To thank, and praise - All our rejoicings should express themselves in thanksgivings to him, from whom all our comforts are received.

7. First - Hereby it is implied, that after this he delivered many other psalms into their hands, to be sung by them to the praise of God in his public service. We shall find it in the same words, in Psalm cv, 1-15 and Psalm 9vi, 1-11, all but the three last verses.

35. From the Heathen - This psalm or prayer was made by David for the use of the church, not only in that present time, but in future ages, in which David foresaw by the spirit of prophecy, the Israelites would forsake God, and for their apostacy be dispersed among the Heathens. In the midst of our praises, we must not forget to pray for those servants of God that are in distress. When we are rejoicing in God's favours, we should remember our afflicted brethren, and pray for their deliverance as our own. We are members one of another.

37. He left - He appointed them their work and station there. Indeed no incense was burnt there, nor sacrifices offered, because the altars were not there. But David's prayers were directed as incense, and the lifting up of his hands as an evening sacrifice. So early did spiritual worship take place of ceremonial.

39. Zadok - The chief-priest at Gibeon, where the tabernacle and altar made by Moses still were, where also the ordinary sacrifices were offered, and the stated worship of God was performed, as the extraordinary worship was before the ark upon great occasions, as when God was consulted, which was to be done before the ark and by the high-priest, who was Abiathar.

40. Which he commanded Israel - These must be kept up; because however in their own nature they were inferior to prayer and praise, yet as they were types of the mediation of Christ, the observance of them was of mighty importance.

42. Of God - Appropriated to the worship of God; not such as they used on other occasions. Between common mirth and holy joy, there is a vast difference: and the limits and distances between them must be carefully kept up.

## XVII

God forbids David's building him an house, ver. 1-10. Gives him a gracious promise, ver. 11-15. David's prayer, ver. 16-27.

1. Now - This whole chapter is explained, 2 Sam. vii, 1-29, where the same things are recorded with little variation.

10. Furthermore, &c. - Must he think, that his purpose was in vain, and that he should lose the reward of it? No: it being God's act that prevented the execution of it, he shall be as fully recompensed as if it had been done.

14. Settle him - In the temple, this expression agrees but imperfectly with Solomon, or his successors, but strictly and properly with Christ, to whom alone that promise also of an everlasting establishment in this kingdom belongs. Kingdom - In God's kingdom in a large and general sense. And this, as well as the former phrase, singularly belongs to the Messiah, who was not only to be the king of Israel, but also of all nations. This is an intimation of that great mystery which is more fully revealed in the new testament, namely, that Christ, is the head, or king of all God's church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, and of all nations, and indeed of all creatures, all which is God's kingdom, and by him given to his son our blessed Lord.

16. Who am I, &c. - We have here David's solemn address to God, in answer to his gracious message. How humbly does he here abase himself, and acknowledge his own unworthiness! How highly does he advance the name of God, and admire his condescending favour? With what devout affections does he magnify the God of Israel: with what assurance build upon the promise! What an example is this of believing, fervent prayer! The Lord enable us all thus to seek him!

18. The honour of thy servant - The honour God puts upon his servants, by taking them into covenant and communion with himself, is so great, that they need not, they cannot desire to be more highly honoured.

19. Servant's sake - In 2 Sam. vii, 21, it is, for thy words sake, for the sake of thy promise made to thy servant.

24. A God - He is really to his people that which he hath styled himself, their God, having taken such care of them, and shewed such mercy and truth to them, as fully answered that title.

27. Blessed for ever - David's prayer concludes, as God's promise did, ver. 14, with that which is for ever. God's word looks at things eternal. And so should our desires and hopes.

## XVIII

David conquers the Philistines, the Moabites, the king of Zobah and the Syrians, ver. 1-8. Makes the king of Hamath and the Edomites pay tribute, ver. 9-13. His court and kingdom flourish, ver. 14-17.

## XIX

David's friendly message to king Hanun, ver. 1, 2. Hanun's base usage of his ambassadors, ver. 3-5. The Ammonites prepare for war, ver. 6, 7. David overthrows them and the Syrians, ver. 8- 19.

7. Chariots - Thirty two thousand men, who fought partly from chariots, and partly on foot with chariots, or attending upon the chariots, as the ancient manner of fighting was.

19. His servants - Let those who have in vain stood it out against God, be thus wise for themselves. Let them become his servants; for they are undone, if they remain his enemies.

## XX

Rabbah is taken, ver. 1-3. The Philistine giants are slain, ver. 4-8.

2. To weigh a talent - Or, to be worth a talent, that is, five thousand four hundred and seventy five pounds.

8. They fell,&c. - We need not fear great men against us, while we have the great God for us.

## XXI

David causes Joab to number the people, ver. 1-6. He repents, ver. 7, 8. God gives him his choice of three judgments, and he chuses the pestilence, ver. 9-13. The havock made thereby: Jerusalem spared, ver. 14, 15. David's prayer, ver. 16, 17. His sacrifice and staying of the plague, ver. 18-30.

1. Satan stood - Before the Lord and his tribunal to accuse David and Israel, and to beg God's permission to tempt David. Standing is the accusers posture before men's tribunals; and consequently the holy scripture (which useth to speak of the things of God, after the manner of men, to bring them down to our capacities) elsewhere represent Satan in this posture.

3. Why, &c. - Or, why should this be a cause of trespass, or an occasion of punishment to Israel? God commonly punishes the people for the sins of their rulers, because they are for the most part guilty of their sins in one kind or other; or at least God takes this occasion to punish people for all their sins.

6. Counted not - Partly for the following reason; and principally by God's gracious providence to Levi, because they were devoted to his service; and to Benjamin, because they were the least of all the tribes, having been almost extinct, Judg. xxi, 6, and because God foresaw that they would

be faithful to the house of David in the division of the tribes, and therefore he would not have them diminished. And Joab also presumed to leave these two tribes unnumbered, because he had specious pretenses for it; for Levi, because they were no warriors, and the king's command reached only of those that drew sword. And for Benjamin, because they, being so small a tribe, and bordering upon Jerusalem, might easily be numbered afterward.

7. Displeased - Because this was done without any colour of necessity, and out of mere curiosity, and ostentation.

14. There fell, &c. - He was proud of the number of his people, but God took a course to make them fewer. Justly is that we are proud of so, taken from us, or embittered to us.

16. Sackcloth - In mourning garments, humbling themselves before God for their sins, and deprecating his wrath against the people.

18. Set up an altar, &c. - The commanding of David to build an altar, was a blessed token of reconciliation. For if God had been pleased to kill him, he would not have commanded, because he would not have accepted a sacrifice at his hands.

20. Hid themselves - Because of the glory and majesty in which the angel appeared, which mens weak natures are not able to bear; and from the fear of God's vengeance which now seemed to be coming to their family.

25. Six hundred - We read, 2 Sam. xxiv, 24, he gave fifty shekels of gold: that is, he gave in gold the value of six hundred shekels of silver. 26. By fire - Hebrew. by fire sent from heaven: which was the sign of God's acceptance. The fire that might justly have fastened on the sinner, fastened upon the sacrifice and consumed it. Thus Christ was made sin and a curse for us, and it pleased the Lord to bruise him, that through him God might be to us, not a consuming fire, but a reconciled Father.

28. Sacrificed - When he perceived that his sacrifice was acceptable to God, he proceeded to offer more sacrifices in that place.

30. Afraid - When he saw the angel stand with his drawn sword over Jerusalem, he durst not go away to Gibeon, lest the angel in the mean time should destroy Jerusalem: for the prevention whereof he thought it proper to worship God in that place, which he had consecrated by his special presence and acceptance.

## XXII

David prepares for building the temple, ver. 1-5. Instructs Solomon concerning the work, ver. 6-16. Commands the princes to assist him therein, ver. 17-19.

1. Said - Thro' the instinct and direction of God's spirit, by which as he is said to have had the pattern of the house, porch, altar, &c. chap. xxviii, 11, 12, 19, so doubtless he was instructed as to the place where the house should be built. This - This is the place appointed by God for the building of his temple and altar.

5. Prepared, &c. - And good reason, because it was intended for the honour of the great God, and was to be a type of Christ, in whom all fulness dwells, and in whom are hid all treasures.

8. Shed blood - Not that wars are simply unlawful, but to teach us that the church (whereof the temple was an illustrious type) should be built by Christ, the prince of peace, Isaiah ix, 6, and that it should be gathered and built up, not by might or power but by God's spirit, Zech iv, 6, and by the preaching the Gospel of peace. David therefore was less fit for that service, than one who had not been called to such bloody work. Likewise by setting him aside for this reason, God shewed how precious human life is to him.

14. Trouble - This he alleges as a reason why he could do no more, because of the many wars, whereby much of his treasures were exhausted. Talents - A talent of Gold in the first constitution was three thousand shekels, as may be gathered from Exod. xxxviii, 24, 25, 26, and so this amounts to a vast sum, yet not impossible for David to get, considering how many and great conquests he made, and what vast spoils and presents he got; and that he endeavoured by all honourable ways to get as much as he could, out of zeal for God's house. And whereas some object, that this quantity of gold and silver was sufficient, tho' the whole fabrick of the temple had consisted of massy gold and silver, it is to be considered, that all this treasure was not spent upon the materials of the temple, but a great part of it upon the workmen, who were nigh two hundred thousand, whereof a great number were officers, and what was not employed in the building of the temple, was laid up in the sacred treasures.

16. Be doing - When thou shalt come to the throne. The sense of God's presence must not slacken our endeavours; because he is with us, we must rise and be doing. Then he will be with us even to the end. Work out your salvation, and God will work in you.

## XXIII

David declares Solomon his successor, ver. 1. Numbers the Levites and appoints them their several offices, ver. 2-5. Takes an account of the families of the Levites, ver. 6-23. Reckons them from twenty years old, and appoints them their work, ver. 24-32.

2. Gathered, &c. - To declare God's mind and his own will, that Solomon should be his successor: and to acquaint them with those directions which he had received from God by the spirit.

3. Upwards - Not only 'till fifty, as it was appointed, Num. iv, 2, 3, but even 'till their death: for that was but a temporary law grounded upon a special reason, because the Levites were employed in carrying the tabernacle and sacred vessels from place to place; and therefore God would have them freed from those burdens when they came to feel the infirmities of age: which reason wholly ceasing upon the building of the temple, their work being far easier than it had been, and their service being more a privilege than a burden, their time of service is justly prolonged.

4. Officers - To take care that all the work of the temple about sacrifices should be punctually performed, either by themselves or others: which they were not to do all at once, but by courses, a thousand at a time. Judges - Not in the affairs of the temple; there the priests presided; but in several parts of the kingdom, where they assisted the princes and elders of every tribe, in the administration of justice.

13. Sanctify - That he might keep them from pollution: for these most holy things were polluted when they were touched by any other person. He and his - Not only his eldest sons the high-priests successively, but all his posterity or all the priests; for the works here following were not peculiar to the high-priest, but common to all the priests.

14. Levi - They were accounted only as common Levites, and were not priests: which is mentioned for the honour of Moses, and the demonstration of his eminent piety and self-denial, who willingly left the government to Joshua, and the priesthood to Aaron, and was content to have his posterity reduced to a private and mean condition.

24. Twenty years - As the Levites were anciently numbered from two several times, from the twenty fifth year of their age, and from the thirtieth, Num. iv, 3; viii, 24. In like manner they are here numbered both from their twentieth year, when they were solemnly prepared for, and instructed, and by degrees exercised in some parts of their work; and from their thirtieth year, when they were admitted to the full exercise of their office. And the reason why they were now sooner admitted to service than they had been formerly, is given in the next verses because now their work was more easy, being wholly discharged from that burdensome work of carrying the tabernacle. Besides the people of Israel were multiplied: therefore more hands were necessary, that every Israelite who brought an offering, might find a Levite ready to assist him.

28. Holy things - Holy places, and garments, and vessels, and sacrifices, which were to be washed and cleansed from any filthiness that might cleave to them.

29. All measure - All measures used either in sacred or civil things, the publick standards whereof were kept in the temple; and therefore the care of keeping them inviolable and producing them upon occasion, musts needs belong to the priests, and under them to the Levites, who were to examine other measures and all things by them, as occasion required; that so the priests might be at leisure for their higher and greater employments.

30. Morning and even - The two solemn times of offering sacrifices: which work was attended with publick prayer and thanksgiving.

32. Charge - What the priests should commit to their charge, or command them to do.

## XXIV

The distribution of the priests, ver. 1-19. Of the Levites, ver. 20-31.

1. Divisions - The several branches into which that family was divided.

2. Therefore, &c. - Were the only persons to whom the execution of that office was committed.

3. Distributed - Allotting to each of them several times, wherein they should by turns have the government of holy ministrations.

5. By lot - That the disposal thereof might be of the Lord, and so all contention be prevented, as no man could be charged with partiality, nor could any say, they had wrong done them. In like manner Matthias was chosen to the apostleship by lot with prayer. "And I know not, says Mr. Henry, but it might be still used in faith, in parallel cases, as an instituted ordinance." Of God - Or rather, of the things of God, that is, of all persons ministering in the sanctuary, and of all holy

ministrations done in it, and of all other matters of the Lord, as they are called by way of distinction from, the king's matters, 2 Chron. xix, 11.

6. One, &c. - Or, the chief of one house of the fathers was taken (by lot) for Eleazar (out of his family) and that which was taken after it was taken for Ithamar, out of his family. So the first lot fell to Eleazar, and the second to Ithamar, the third to Eleazar, and the fourth to Ithamar, so successively, 'till all the families of Ithamar had received their lots. And afterwards all the lots came forth to the rest of Eleazar's families, which were double in number to those of Ithamar.

7. Came - Out of the vessel in which all the lots were put together, and out of which they were severally taken.

19. These, &c. - In this order and method they were to come to perform the offices of the temple. To come - To come into the temple every sabbath-day, and to continue there 'till the next sabbath, when they were relieved by others. Aaron - Under the direction of the high-priests, whom he calls Aaron, because he represented his person and executed his office, and their father, because of the authority which by God's appointment he had over them.

31. Over against - Answerable for number and order to those of the priests, so that there should be a course of the Levites for each course of the priests.

## XXV

The person's that were to be employed in singing, ver. 1-7. The order in which they were to attend determined by lot, ver. 8- 31.

1. And captains - All the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites, whom David gathered together, chap. xxiii, 2, for this very end, that with their approbation and consent, all these things might be established; who are here fitly called the captains of the host; for the princes were, under David, the chief captains of the militia of the kingdom; and as the Levites are called an host, and the Lord's host, because of their number and order in holy ministrations; so these priests and Levites were the captains and governors of the rest. Separated - Distributed them into their several ranks: which, tho' chiefly done by David as a prophet, and by Divine direction, yet is imputed in part to the captains of the host, because it was done with their concurrence and approbation. The service - To the service of God under the conduct of these persons. Prophecy - Praise God by singing the psalms of David, and other sacred songs made by themselves, who were prophets, or by other prophets or holy men of God. Workmen - Of the persons employed in this sacred work. This good work it seems Samuel revived, but did not live to bring it to perfection. Let each in his day do what he can for God, tho' he cannot carry it so far as he would. When we are gone, God can raise up others to build on our foundation, and bring forth the top-stone.

2. Of Asaph - Under his direction. Of the king - In such manner and order as David appointed.

3. Six - Jeduthun their father being included in that number: or Shimei, mentioned ver. 17.

5. The king's seer - He is called the king's seer, either because the king took special delight in him; or because he frequently attended the king in his palace, executing his sacred office there, while the rest were employed in the tabernacle. In the words - To sing Divine songs as were inspired

by God to the prophets or holy men of God. The horn - To praise God with the sound of a trumpet or some other musical instrument made of horn, which being a martial kind of music, might be most grateful to David's martial spirit: tho' he was also skilled in other instruments of music which he used in the house of God.

7. Cunning - Who were so skilful that they were able to teach others; and together with their scholars, made up the four thousand mentioned chap. xxiii, 5.

8. Ward - A course of Levites answerable to one of the priests, upon whom the Levites were to wait in their holy ministrations, chap. xxiii, 28. The scholar - Without any respect to their different ages or abilities.

9. To Joseph - For the family of Asaph, of which Joseph was. Here that clause, he, his sons, and his brethren were twelve, is to be understood, as it is expressed in all the following verses, otherwise they do not make up that number of two hundred and eighty-eight mentioned ver. 7.

## XXVI

The Levites that were appointed to be porters, ver. 1-19. Those that were appointed to be treasurers and store-keepers, ver. 20-28. Those that were officers and Judg. in the country, ver. 29-32.

5. Blessed him - With a numerous posterity and other blessings, for his respect and affection to the ark. The increase and building up of families, is owing to the Divine blessing. And a great blessing it is to have many children, when they are like these, eminent in the service of God.

6. Of valour - This clause is divers times mentioned, because their office required both strength and courage: for they were to shut the doors of the temple, one whereof was so great and weighty, that in the second temple it required twenty men to open and shut it. They were also to keep the guard, to keep out all unclean or forbidden persons, to prevent or suppress any tumults or disorders which might happen in the temple or in its courts, to keep the treasures of the temple, ver. 20, 22, 24, 26, to be officers and Judges over Israel, ver. 29, and to manage every matter pertaining to God, and the affairs of the king, ver. 32.

10. Made him the chief - Not in inheriting the estate; (this was forbidden by the law) but in this service, for which he was better qualified than his elder brother.

12. Wards - Hebrew. having wards answerably to their brethren the other Levites, who were divided into twenty-four courses, as the priests also and the porters were.

13. Cast lots - Determining the times and places of their service not by age or dignity, but merely by lot. Every gate - That it might be known to whom the care of each gate was more especially committed.

15. Asuppim - Or, of gatherings, probably so named from the assembly of the elders, who met there to consult about the affairs of the temple.

16. Shallecheth - A gate of the court so called, as some think, because the ashes and filth of the temple were cast out on that side, which was the most convenient for that purpose, because that was a private quarter, the great ways to the temple lying on the other sides. Going up - By which

causeway they went up towards the temple. Ward against ward - As one gate was over against another, the west against the east, and the north against the south, so one ward was over against another.

17. Six - For that being the chief gate of the temple required a better guard.

20. Treasures - There seem to be two different kinds of treasures, the former containing the sacred vessels and other treasures, which by God's command were appropriated to the maintenance of the house; the latter only those things which had been freely given or dedicated to God.

23. The Amramites - The persons following were of these, or the most of these families. Only here is none of the family of the Uzzielites; either because that family was now extinct, whence it is that we read no more of them in the scripture, but only in this place, and Num. iii, 27, or because there was none of them fit to be employed and trusted in these matters.

24. Ruler - The chief over all the treasures, mentioned before or afterward, as his title shews, which is peculiarly given to him and to none of the rest.

27. Maintain - Or repair it.

29. Judges - Judges over the people, in the several cities and towns, to determine questions and controversies which might arise among them. And the reason why the Levites were intrusted with these matters was, because the common law of Israel, by which they had and held all their rights was no other than the law of God, whereof the priests and Levites being the established interpreters, must needs be the most proper Judges of things depending thereon.

30. Of the Lord - In all things which concerned the house or worship of God; to take care that such monies as were given towards building the temple, or towards the sacrifices and other holy ministrations should be gathered and received, and faithfully sent up to Jerusalem; and to see to the execution of all the laws of God among the people. Service of, &c. - They served the king in the execution of his decrees, by which the several rights of the king and people were established. And as the king was the principal person intrusted with the execution of God's laws, so these Levites chiefly were his eyes by which he saw his people's transgressions, and his hands by which he inflicted due censures upon them for their miscarriages.

31. Fortieth year - His last year, in which he made all the orders of families and officers recorded in these chapters. We should be so much the more diligent in doing good, as we see the day approaching. If we live not to enjoy the fruit of our labours, let us not grudge it to them that come after us.

## XXVII

The captains for every month of the year, ver. 1-15. The princes of the several tribes, ver. 16-24. The officers of the court, ver. 25-34.

1. Officers - The standing militia of Israel as it was settled under their several officers. Of courses - In all the business wherein the king had occasion for these persons who were to attend him by turns. Came in, &c. - who being armed and mustered, and to wait upon the king, at Jerusalem or other places, as the king should see fit. By this order near three hundred thousand of his people

were instructed and exercised in the use of their arms, and fitted for the defense of their king and kingdom when it should be needful, and in the mean time sufficient provision was made against any sudden tumults or irruptions of enemies. And this monthly course was contrived that the burden of it might be easy and equally distributed among the people.

16. The ruler - These were the princes of the tribes, the constant rulers of the tribes; who seem to have had a superior power to these twenty four captains, and therefore are named before them, being probably the king's chief counsellors and assistants in the great affairs of his kingdom.

22. Tribes - Of the most of the tribes, not of all: for Gad is omitted, probably because that tribe was joined with the Reubenites under one prince.

23. Because - And therefore to number them all both above and under twenty years old, had been both an infinite trouble and a tempting of God, or a questioning the truth of his promises.

27. Vineyards - Over the workmen and labourers in the vineyards; as the next officer is over the fruit of the vineyards. In like manner, one man was over the labourers in the fields, ver. 26, and another over the fruits of the fields put into stores.

31. All these - It is observable, here are no officers for state, none for sport, no master of the ceremonies, or of the bounds, but all for substance, agreeable to the simplicity and plainness of those times. David was a great soldier, a great scholar, and a great prince; and yet a great husband of his estate. Those magistrates who would have their subjects industrious, must themselves be examples of application to business.

32. A scribe - Either one learned in the laws of God, which were also the laws of the land, or, the king's secretary. King's sons - As their tutor or governour.

33. Counsellor - The person whose counsel in matters of state the king most prized and followed. Companion - Or his friend, 2 Sam. xv, 37, the person whom he trusted with his secrets, and whose conversation was most pleasant and acceptable to him. Observe, A cunning man was his counsellor: but an honest man was his friend.

34. After Ahithophel - After his death, these were his chief counsellors.

## XXVIII

David declares to the general assembly, that God had appointed Solomon to succeed him and to build the temple, ver. 1- 7. Exhorts the people and Solomon, to cleave to God, ver. 8-10. Delivers to him the model and materials for the temple, ver. 11- 19. Encourages him to begin and finish the work, ver. 20, 21.

1. And David assembled, &c. - A great deal of business David had done in his day. And the nearer he comes to his end, the more busy he is, still endeavouring to do his work with all his might. He is now recovered from the weakness mentioned 1 Kings i, 1. He therefore improves his recovery, as giving him an opportunity of doing God and his country a little more service.

2. Stood - Out of reverence to God and respect to this great and honourable assembly. Brethren - So he calls the princes and chief rulers, both because they had a share with him, though under him in the government; and in compliance with the Divine command, that the king should not be

lifted up above his brethren; Deut. xvii, 20. Of rest - A place where it might be fixed, and no more removed from place to place, as it had been. Foot-stool - An house for the ark is here styled an house for the foot-stool of our God. Heaven is his throne: the earth and the most magnificent temples thereon are but his foot-stool. So much difference is there between the manifestations of his glory, in the upper and in the lower world!

6. My house, &c. - So was he a figure of him that was to come, who is both the founder and the foundation of the gospel-temple.

7. At this day - As he hath begun. This promise is absolute with regard to the Messiah, but conditional, with regard to Solomon. If we are constant in our duty, then and not otherwise, we may expect the continuance of his favour.

8. Of our God - I exhort and charge you every one, calling God who is here present, and this congregation wherein all Israel are present by their representatives, or witness against you, if you do not follow my counsel. Keep and seek - Keep those commands which you know, and seek for, or search into what you are yet ignorant of, that you may distinctly understand the whole will of God, and seriously give yourselves to the practice of it. God's commandments cannot be kept without great care.

9. Know - So as to love and serve him. Words of knowledge in scripture-use commonly imply affection and practice. Or, acknowledge him, as thy God, by loving and obeying him. Searcheth - If thou dost only put on a profession of religion to please me, or if thy obedience to God be unsincere, thou mayest indeed deceive me, but thou canst not deceive him, for he searcheth the motions of thy heart. Cast thee off - Notwithstanding all his promises to me and to my seed, and that great honour and favour which he hath shewed thee.

10. The sanctuary - For the ark to dwell in. Be strong - Take courage to break through all difficulties. Without this, we can do no work of God as we ought.

11. The porch - Of the temple. The houses - The houses of the temple, namely, the holy place, and the holy of holies. Parlors - Those rooms which were made against the wall of the house round about, 1 Kings vi, 5. The place - In what particular part of the holy of holies it was to be placed.

12. By the spirit - All the particulars of the tabernacle built by Moses were suggested to him by God's spirit, and it is not credible that God would use less care and exactness in the building of this far more glorious and durable work. All this, it seems, was given him in writing, probably by the ministry of an angel. The temple was to be a sacred thing, a type of Christ, of his church, and of heaven. Therefore it was not to be contrived by man's invention, but to be framed by divine institution. So Christ, the true temple, the church, the gospel-temple, and heaven, the everlasting temple, are all framed according to the divine counsels, and the plan laid before the world began. It is supposed, the tabernacle of Moses, with all its utensils, being wanted no more, was laid up here.

15. According, &c. - Whether they were fixed in one place, whereof there were ten in the holy place, or to be carried from place to place.

16. The tables - There were divers tables to be used about the shew-bread; but one of them seems to have been of more eminency than the rest, and therefore it is commonly called the table of the shew-bread in the singular number.

18. Refined gold - Purer than any of the rest. For that was typical of the intercession of Christ, than which nothing can be more pure and perfect. The cherubim - Which Solomon was to make, (for those which were fastened to the mercy-seat were made by Moses long before) which he fitly

compares to a chariot, because within them God is said to sit and to dwell. And because a chariot is made to carry a person from place to place, this expression may be used to intimate that God was not so fixed to them by the building of this temple, but that he would remove from them if they forsook him. Covered - Not above it, for that was done by Moses's cherubim, but before it, to keep it from the eyes of the high-priest, when he entered into the most holy place.

19. In writing - God revealed this to some man of God, who put it into writing, and by him to David. Or, God did, as it were, by his own hand, (where-with he wrote the Ten Commandments) write these things upon the table of his mind.

20. My God - Whom I have chosen and served, who has all along been with me and prospered me, I recommend thee to him; he will be with thee, to strengthen, direct and prosper thee. The God that owned our fathers, and carried them thro' the services of their day, will, in like manner, if we are faithful to him, go along with us in our day, and will never fail us. God never leaves any, unless they first leave him.

## XXIX

David exhorts them to contribute toward building and furnishing the temple, ver. 1-5. They do contribute accordingly, ver. 6-9. He offers up solemn prayers, praises and sacrifices to God, ver. 10-21. Solomon is enthroned, ver. 22-25. David finishes his course, ver. 26-30.

2. My might - Work for God must be done with all our might, or we shall bring nothing to pass in it.

4. Of Ophir - The best and purest gold. The walls - The walls of the temple with God, and of the rooms adjoining to it, with silver beaten out into plates.

5. To consecrate - To offer an offering, as I have done. Hebrew. To fill his hand unto the Lord. They that engage themselves in the service of God, will have their hands full: there is work enough for the whole man in that service.

9. Rejoiced - Because this was both an effect of God's grace in them, an eminent token of God's favour to them, and a pledge that this long-desired work, would receive a certain and speedy accomplishment. Great joy - To see the work, which his heart was so much set upon, likely to go on. It is a great reviving to good men when they are leaving the world, to see those they leave behind zealous for the work of God.

10. Blessed, &c. - David was now full of days, and near his end, and it well becomes the aged children of God, to have their hearts much enlarged in praise and thanksgiving. The nearer we come to the land of everlasting praise, the more we should speak the language, and do the work of that world.

14. To offer - That thou shouldest give us both riches to make such an offering, and a willing heart to offer them, both which are the gifts and the fruits of thy good grace and mercy to us. Of thine - We return only what we have received, and therefore only pay a debt to thee. The more we do for God, the more we are indebted to him; for the honour of being employed in his service, and for grace enabling us in any measure to serve him.

15. Strangers - For the land which we possess is thine, not ours; we are not the proprietors but only thy tenants: and as our fathers once were mere strangers in it, even before men, so we at this day are no better before thee, having no absolute right in it, but only to travel through it, and sojourn in it for the short time that we live in the world. None abiding - We only give thee what we must shortly leave, and what we cannot keep to ourselves: and therefore it is a great favour that thou wilt accept such offerings. David's days had as much of substance in them as most men: for he was upon the whole a good man, an useful man, and now an old man. And yet he puts himself in the front of those who must acknowledge, that their days on the earth are as a shadow: which speaks of our life as a vain life, a dark life, a transient life, and a life that will have its period, either in perfect light or perfect darkness.

16. All thine own - In like manner we ought to acknowledge God in all spiritual things: referring every good thought, good desire, and good work to his grace.

18. Of Abraham, &c. - A God in covenant with them, and with us for their sakes. Keep forever - Since it is from thy grace that thy people have such willing minds, continue that grace to them, that they may persist in the same generous disposition towards thee and thy worship. Prepare - Or, rather, confirm, thou who hast begun a good work, confirm and carry it on by thy grace.

20. Worshipped - The Lord with religious, and the king with civil worship.

22. The second time - The first time, was when he was made king during Adonijah's conspiracy. And Zadok - It must be remembered that the high-priest had his viceregent who might officiate in his stead. So that this action of theirs, the anointing Zadok, did not, actually constitute him high-priest, but only settled the reversion of it upon him and his line after Abiathar's death; even as David's making Solomon king, and their anointing Solomon to be the chief governor here, did not put him into actual possession of the kingdom, but only gave him a right to it after the present king's death: hence, notwithstanding this anointing, Abiathar continued to exercise his office 'till Solomon thrust him out, 1 Kings ii, 27.

24. Of the Lord - On the throne of Israel, which is called the throne of the Lord, because the Lord himself was in a peculiar manner the king and governor of Israel. He had the founding, he had the filling of their throne, by immediate direction.

26. Thus, &c. - This sacred writer having mentioned the anointing of Solomon and upon that occasion proceeded to give a farther account of Solomon's actual settlement in his kingdom, returns to his main business, to give an account of the close of David's reign and life. He here brings him to the end of his day, leaves him asleep, and draws the curtains about him.

28. Riches and honour - That is, he had enough of this world, and of the riches of and honour of it; and he knew when he had enough. He was satisfied with it, and very willing to go to a better place.

29. The book - In the chronicles of the kingdom, which were written by Nathan and Gad, who were not only prophets, but historiographers out of which either they or some other prophets took by the direction of God's spirit such passages, as were most important and useful for the church in succeeding ages.

30. The times - The changes which befel him; both his troubles, and his successes, the word time or times being often put for things done or happening in them. The countries - Bordering upon the land of Canaan.

# NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK OF CHRONICLES

THIS book begins with the reign of Solomon, continues the history of the kings of Judah to the captivity, and concludes with the fall of that illustrious monarchy and the destruction of the temple. That monarchy, as it was prior in time, so it was in dignity to the four which Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of. The Babylonian began in Nebuchadnezzar himself, and lasted about seventy years: the Persian monarchy, in several families, about an hundred and thirty: the Grecian, in its several branches, about three hundred: and three hundred more went far with the Roman. Whereas the monarchy of Judah continued considerable in a lineal descent, between four and five hundred years. We had the story of the house of David before intermixt with that of the kings of Israel: but here we have its entire, much is repeated here which we had before: yet many passages are enlarged on, and divers added which we had not before, especially relating to religion: the reign of Solomon we have, chap. 1-9. That of Rehoboam, chap. 10-12. The short reign of Ahijah, chap. 13. The long rein of Asa, chap. 14-16. The reign of Jehoshaphat, chap. 17-20. Of Jehoram and Ahaziah, chap. 21, 22. Of Joash and Amaziah, chap. 23-25. Of Uzziah, chap. 26. Of Jotham, chap. 27. Of Ahaz, chap. 28. Of Hezekiah, chap. 29-32. Of Manasseh and Amon, chap. 33. Of Josiah, chap. 34, 35. Of his sons, chap. 36.

## I

Solomon's sacrifices, ver. 1-6. His prayer and God's answer, ver. 7-12.
The strength, wealth, and trade of Israel, ver. 13-17.

2. Spake - Concerning his intention of going to Gibeon, and that they should attend him thither.

4. The ark - He separated the ark from the tabernacle, and brought it to Jerusalem, where he intended to build a more noble and lasting habitation for it.

5. Sought - Sought the Lord and his favour by hearty prayers and sacrifices in the place which God had appointed.

8. To reign, &c. - Give me the spirit of my father David, that Israel may not suffer by the change. The eminency of those that went before us, and the obligation that lies upon us, to keep and carry on the good work they were engaged in, should quicken our prayers for wisdom and grace, that we may do the work of God in our day, as faithful as they did in theirs.

12. Neither &c. - Those that make this world their end, come short of the other, and frequently of this too. But those who make the other world their end, shall not only obtain that, but shalt have as much as is convenient of this world in their way.

## II

Solomon appoints men to build the temple and his own house, ver. 1-2. His message to Huram, ver. 3-10. Huram's obliging answer, ver. 11-16.

1. His kingdom - A royal palace for himself and his successors.

5. Great - For though the temple strictly so called, was but small, yet the buildings belonging to it, were large and numerous.

6. Contain - When I speak of building an house for our great God, let none think I mean to comprehend God within it, for he is infinite. To sacrifice - To worship him there where he is graciously present.

12. Made heaven and earth - It seems Huram was not only a friend to the Jewish nation, but a proselyte to their religion, and that he worshipped Jehovah, the God of Israel, (who was now known by that name to the neighbour-nations) as the God that made heaven and earth, and the fountain of power as well as of being.

14. Of Daniel, &c. - A good omen of uniting Jew and Gentile in the gospel-temple.

17. The strangers - For David had not only numbered his own people, but afterward the strangers, that Solomon might have a true account of them, and employ them about his buildings. Yet Solomon numbered them again, because death might have made a considerable alteration among them since David's numbering.

18. Hewers in the mountains - He would not employ the free-born Israelites in this drudgery, but the strangers that were proselytes, who having no lands, applied themselves to trades, and got their living by their industry or ingenuity.

## III

The place and time of his building the temple, ver. 1, 2. The dimension and ornaments of it, ver. 3-9. The cherubim in the most holy place, ver. 10-13. The veil, ver. 14. The two pillars, ver. 15- 17.

1. Moriah - It was the belief of the ancient Jews, that the temple was built on that very place, where Abraham offered up Issac.

3. Instructed - By David, and by the Spirit of God. The measure - According to the measure which was first fixed.

4. The height - This being a kind of turret to the building.

5. Greater house - The holy place, which was thrice as large as the holy of holies.

9. Nails - Each of the nails, screws, or pins, by which the golden plates were fastened to the walls, weighed, or rather was worth, fifty shekels, workmanship and all. Upper chambers - Rather, the roof.

10. Image work - Or, of moveable work, not fixed to the mercy- seat, as the Mosaical cherubim, but in a moving posture. It seems, they were designed to represent the angels, who attend the Divine Majesty.

13. Inward - Hebrew. towards the house, that is, the most holy house.

14. The veil - The inner veil before the most holy place. This denoted the darkness of that dispensation and the distance at which the worshippers were kept. But at the death of Christ this veil was rent; for thro' him we are brought nigh, and have boldness, or liberty, not only to look, but to enter into the holiest.

17. Jachin - That is, He shall establish. Boaz - That is, In it is strength.

## IV

The brazen altar, sea and lavers, ver. 1-5. The golden candlesticks and tables, ver. 7, 8. The doors overlaid with brass, the vessels of the altar, and other brass work, ver. 9-18. The golden altar of incense with its appurtenances, ver. 19-22.

7. Their form - The old form which God prescribed to Moses.

8. Ten tables - Whereon the shew-bread was set, ver. 19. Perhaps each of these had twelve loaves on it. As the house was enlarged, so was the provision.

16. His father - He is so called because Solomon usually called him by that name out of that great respect which he bare to him for his excellent art and service which he did for him: it being usual to call great artists and inventors of things by this name.

20. The manner - According to the prescription of God to Moses.

22. Of gold - In part; they were made of wood, but covered with golden plates.

## V

Solomon brings the dedicated treasures into the house, and the ark into the sanctuary, ver. 1-10. While the priests and Levites sing praise, the glory of God fills the house, ver. 11-14.

1. The gold - The remainder of those vast sums mentioned, 1 Chron. xxii, 14.

5. The ark - The ark was a type of Christ, and a token of the presence of God. That gracious promise, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, does in effect bring the ark into our religious assemblies, if we claim it by faith and prayer. And this we should be earnest for: the temple itself, if Christ leave it, is a desolate place. Those &c. - As many of them as were fit for use, it is probable, were still used. The rest were carefully laid up, as monuments of antiquity.

9. To this day - When this history was first written; not when it was reviewed by Ezra: for after the return from Babylon, neither staves nor ark were any more seen.

11. By course - According to David's appointment, 1 Chron. xxiv, 1-31, xxv, 1-22, which was only for the ordinary service, but in extraordinary solemnities, such as this, they all came together.

14. Glory of the Lord - And this beautified it more than all the gold with which it was overlaid, or the precious stones with which it was garnished. Yet even that was no glory, in comparison of the glory of the gospel-dispensation.

## VI

Solomon declares his intent in building the house, ver. 1-11. His prayer of dedication, ver. 12-42.

1. Thick darkness - He has indeed made darkness his pavilion. But let this house be the residence of that darkness. It is in the upper world that he dwells in light, such as no eye can approach.

9. But thy son, &c. - Thus one sows, and another reaps. And let not the wisest of men, think it any disparagement to pursue the good designs which those that went before them had laid.

14. O Lord, &c. - By this prayer the temple of Solomon is made a figure of Christ, the great Mediator thro' whom we are to offer up all our prayers, and to expect all God's favours, and to whom we are to have an eye in everything wherein we have to do with God.

21. And when they shall, &c. - He asks not, that God would help them without their praying for themselves, but that God would help them, in answer to their prayers. Even Christ's intercession does not supersede, but encourage our supplications.

41. Arise - O thou that sittest in the heavens, arise from the throne of thy glory, and come down into this place, which thou hast appointed for thy constant habitation, from which thou wilt not remove, as formerly thou hast done, from place to place. And the ark - Thou in the ark. Thy strength - Which is the sign and instrument of thy great power put forth from time to time on the behalf of thy people. Salvation - Let them be encompassed on every side with thy protection and benediction.

42. Thine anointed - Of me, who by thy command was anointed the king and ruler of thy people: do not deny my requests, nor send me from the throne of thy grace with a dejected countenance. The mercies - Those which thou hast promised to David and to his house for ever. And thus may we plead, with an eye to Christ, who is called David, Hosea iii, 5. Lord, remember his merits, and accept of us, on the account of them. Remember the promises of the everlasting covenant, which are called the sure mercies of David, Isaiah lv, 3. This must be all our desire, all our hope, all our prayer, and all our plea; for it is all our salvation.

## VII

God answers by fire, the people worship, ver. 1-3. Solomon's sacrifices, ver. 4-7. After keeping the feast he sends the people away, ver. 8-11. God appears to him in a vision, ver. 12-22.

1. The fire &c. - In token of God's acceptance of his prayer. The surest evidence of God's acceptance of our prayers is the descent of his holy fire upon us. As a farther token that God accepted Solomon's prayer, the glory of the Lord filled the house; the heart that is filled with an holy awe and reverence of the divine glory, to which God manifests his greatness, and (which is no less his glory) his goodness, is thereby owned as a living temple.

3. With their faces - Thus expressing their awful dread of the Divine Majesty, their chearful submission to the Divine authority, and the sense they had of their utter unworthiness to enter into his presence. Upon - The cloud first came down upon the house, and then entered into the house, and was seen both within it by the priests, and without it by the people.

6. David praised - For David composed the psalms or hymns, and appointed them to be sung by the Levites, and instrumental music to be joined to their voices.

16. This house - There will I make myself known, and there will I be called upon.

## VIII

Solomon's buildings, ver. 1-6. His workmen and officers, ver. 7-10. He settles his wife, ver. 11. Fixes the method of the temple service, ver. 12-16. His trade, ver. 17, 18.

11. The house - He built this house for her; because the ark was now in the house of David, which therefore ought to be kept pure and free from the very danger and appearance of pollution.

14. Man of God - A prophet inspired by God in these matters, whose commands therefore are the commands of God.

16. Prepared - All the materials were procured, and in all points fitted and compleated before-hand.

## IX

The queen of Sheba visits Solomon, ver. 1-12. The riches and splendour of his court, ver. 13-28. The conclusion of his reign, ver. 29-31.

8. For the Lord - In the Lord's name and stead, in a special manner, because he sat in God's own throne, and ruled over God's peculiar people, and did in an eminent manner maintain the

honour of God in his land, and in the eyes of all the world. Those mercies are doubly sweet, in which we can taste the kindness and good will of God as our God.

12. Besides - Besides what he gave her of his royal bounty, as is expressed, 1 Kings x, 13, which was in compensation for her presents.

23. And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon -All in those parts of the world.

29. Iddo - This, and the other prophets mentioned, were also historians, and wrote annals of their times; out of which these sacred books were taken, either by these, or other prophets.

31. And Solomon slept - We have here Solomon in his throne, and Solomon in his grave; for the throne could not secure him from the grave. Here is he stripped of his pomp, and leaving all his wealth and power, not to one whom he knew not whether he would be a wise man or a fool; but one he knew would be a fool! This was not only vanity, but vexation of spirit.

## X

The people request Rehoboam to ease their grievances, ver. 1-5. Rehoboam rejecting the old mens counsel, by the advice of the young men answers them roughly, ver. 6-15. Ten tribes revolt, ver. 16-19.

4. Grievous - It is probable, when Solomon had declined from God, that God left him to himself to act thus impolitically.

7. If thou be kind, &c. - Moderate counsels are generally best. Gentleness will do what violence will not do. Good words cost nothing but a little self-denial, and yet they purchase great things.

16. See to thine own house - When public affairs are in a ferment, violent proceedings do but make ill worse. Many have been driven to the mischief they did not intend, by being too severely dealt with.

## XI

Rehoboam is forbidden to fight against Israel, ver. 1-4. He secures the two tribes, ver. 5-12. The priests and Levites resort to him, ver. 13-17. His wives and children, ver. 18-23.

3. Son of Solomon - Intimating, that this was determined for the sin of Solomon, and therefore could not be reversed.

5. Built - Repaired, enlarged, and fortified them. They were built before.

14. Cast them off - They would not suffer them to instruct the Israelites in the worship of God, nor to go up to Jerusalem to worship in their courses: and these priests would not join with them

in the worship of the calves, as they were commanded to do; and therefore they, willingly forsook all their patrimonies and possessions for God's sake. No secular advantages whatsoever should detain us there, where we are in danger of making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

15. High places - Or, for the high places, both for the devils (the Baals, or false gods, which divers of his people worshipped, whom he encouraged to do so, giving them liberty to do anything but to serve God at Jerusalem) and for the calves. So he erected two sorts of high places, some for Baal, and some for the true God, whom be pretended to worship, in and by the calves.

16. Set their heart - Such as loved and feared God in truth.

17. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah - Not only by the addition of so many persons to it: but by their piety and prayers they procured a blessing upon the kingdom which was a sanctuary to them. They made him strong three years; for so long he served God; but when he forsook God, none could strengthen him. We retain our strength as long as we cleave to God and our duty, and no longer. And Solomon - This honourable mention of Solomon, as a pattern of piety, is a considerable evidence of his true repentance before his death.

22. Ruler - He declared him his successor, and gave him the dominion over, his brethren.

23. Dispersed - Lest his other sons should after his death unite together against Abijah, he wisely dispersed them into distant places.

## XII

Rehoboam forsaking God is oppressed by Shishak, ver. 1-4. He humbles himself, and is preserved in his kingdom, but spoiled of his treasures, ver. 6-12. His character and death, ver. 13-16.

1. And all Israel - So called, because they forsook God, as Israel had done.

2. Fifth year - Presently after the apostacy of the king and people, which was in the fourth year.

3. Lubims - A people of Africk bordering upon Egypt. Sukkiims - A people living in tents, as the word signifies; and such there were not far from Egypt, both in Africk and in Arabia. Ethiopians - Either those beyond Egypt, or the Arabians.

7. Some deliverance - I will give some stop to the course of my wrath, which was ready to be poured forth upon them to their utter destruction. Those who acknowledge God is righteous in afflicting them, shall find him gracious.

8. May know - That they may experimentally know the difference between my yoke and the yoke of a foreign and idolatrous prince.

12. Went well - The began to recruity themselves, and regain some degree of their former prosperity.

14. Did evil - Or, settled not, although he humbled himself, for a season, yet he quickly relapsed into sin, because his heart was not right with God.

## XIII

Abijah sets the battle in array against Jeroboam, ver. 1-3. He declares the justice of his cause, ver. 4-12. Trusts in God and gains the victory, ver. 13-20. His wives and children, ver. 21. 22.

5. Of salt - By a perpetual covenant.

8. Golden calves - There is that among you which may damp your confidence: you worship those images which God abhors.

9. Consecrate - To make himself a priest.

10. The Lord - Hebrew. Jehovah, the only true God. We - Maintain his worship which you have rejected.

11. Pure table - Made of pure gold, Exod. xxv, 23, 24, he saith table and candlestick, though there were ten of each, because ordinarily there was but one of each used at a time for those uses. We keep - Perhaps he flattered himself, that his keeping up the external worship of God would make satisfaction for the errors of his life.

12. Trumpets - Upon the sounding whereof God hath solemnly promised to assist his people, Num. x, 9. The Lord - You have not only us for your enemies, but God, even the God whom your fathers served. It is folly to fight against the God of almighty power: but it is treachery and base ingratitude, to fight against your father's God.

13. Jeroboam - While Abijah was discoursing, Jeroboam takes the advantage of it to lay an ambush. It does not appear that he made any answer to all that Abijah said. The longest sword he thinks will determine the matter, not the better cause.

15. Gave a shout - It is unspeakable comfort, that no stratagem or ambush can cut off our communication with heaven. To the cry of prayer they added the shout of faith, and so became more than conquerors.

20. The Lord struck him - He escaped the sword of Abijah: but God struck him: there is no escaping his sword.

21. Married - Not after this victory, for he died presently after it, but in the whole time of his life.

## XIV

The piety of Asa, ver. 1-5. His policy, ver. 6-8. His victory over the Ethiopians, ver. 9-15.

1. Quiet - There was no open war, but there were private hostilities between his and Baasha's subjects.

6. The land had rest - Those have rest indeed, to whom God gives rest; peace indeed, to whom Christ gives peace. We find by experience, it is good to seek the Lord. While we pursue the world, we meet with nothing but vexation.

7. Before us - In our power.

9. Ethiopian - Or, the Arabian, as the Hebrew word Cush is commonly used: these being much nearer to Asa than the Ethiopians.

11. Let not man prevail - If he prevails against us, he prevails, as it were, against thee; because thou art our God. And we rest on thee, and go forth in thy name, which thou hast encouraged us to do.

12. Smote - With terror, and an unaccountable consternation.

14. Smote the cities - because they had joined, with Zerah in this war.

## XV

God's message to Asa, ver. 1-7. Idols removed and the spoil dedicated to God, ver. 8-11. Judah makes a covenant with God, ver. 12-15. Asa removes his mother, destroys her idol, and brings the dedicated things into the temple, ver. 16-18. He has great peace, ver. 19.

1. Spirit of God - Both to instruct him what to say, and to enable him to say it plainly and boldly.

3. Now Israel - They have long lived without the found knowledge and worship of the true God. Israel is here understood of the whole nation of Israel in former times, and especially in the times of the Judges: for then many times they were in a great measure, without God and his law, and teaching priests, as plainly appears from the book of the Judges; they were brought to all the exigencies and calamities following; and they sometimes turned to the Lord, and he was found of them.

5. In those times - When Israel lived in the gross neglect of God and his law. No peace - Men could not go abroad about their private occasions without great danger; as it was in the days of Shamgar, Judg. v, 6.

6. And nation, &c. - One part of the people of Israel destroyed the other by civil wars. As all Israel are called a nation, so the several tribes of them are sometimes called nations.

7. Be strong - Go on resolutely to maintain God's worship and to root out idolatry, as you have begun to do; for this is the only method of preserving yourselves from such calamities as your predecessors have felt.

8. Of Oded - Of Azariah, ver. 1, who was also called by his father's name Oded.

12. Into covenant - The matter of this covenant was nothing but what they were before obliged to. And tho' no promise could lay any higher obligation upon them, than they were already under, yet it would help to increase their sense of the obligation, and to arm them against temptations. And by joining all together in this, they strengthened the hands of each other

15. Rejoiced at the oath - The times of renewing our covenant with God, should be times of rejoicing. It is an honour and happiness to be in bonds with God. And the closer, the better.

## XVI

Asa hires the Syrians to invade Israel, ver. 1-6. Puts the prophet who reproved him for it in prison, ver. 7-10. His sickness, death and burial, ver, 11-14.

1. Of the reign - Or, of the kingdom of Asa, that is, of the kingdom of Judah, which was now Asa's kingdom; or from the time of the division of the two kingdoms. Rehoboam reigned seventeen years, Abijah three years, Asa had now reigned fifteen years, all which put together, make up the thirty five years mentioned chap. xv, 19, and in the next year Baasha wars against him; and the ground of the war was the defection of many of his subjects to Asa, chap. xv, 9.

7. Escaped - And so reserved to be a scourge to thy kingdom and posterity: whereas if he had joined with Baasha against thee, thou shouldst have overthrown them both, and prevented all that mischief which that monarch will do to thy family.

8. Lubims - Either, the Lybians in Africa; or another people, possibly descended from them, but now seated in some part of Arabia.

9. Done foolishly - It is a foolish thing to lean on a broken reed, when we have the rock of ages to rely upon. Perfect - Upright and sincere, as thine is not. He was sincere in the general course of his life, but some particulars, whereof this is one, his heart did not perfectly cleave to God.

12. Sought not - He did not humble himself before God, but put his confidence in the skill and faithfulness of his physicians. His making use of physicians was his duty, but his trusting in them, and expecting that from them, which was to be had from God only, was his sin and folly. The help of every creature must be used, with an eye to the creator, and in dependence on him, who makes every creature that to us which it is, without whom the most skilful and faithful are physicians of no value.

14. Burning - Of precious spices; thereby testifying their respect to him notwithstanding his miscarriages.

## XVII

Jehoshaphat is established in his kingdom, ver. 1-3. His piety, ver. 4-6. He sends Levites to teach Judah, ver. 7-9. His influence over his neighbours, ver. 10, 11. His greatness, captains and armies, ver. 12-19.

3. Sought not, &c. - It is true, he recovered from that fall. "Yet perhaps, says Mr. Henry, he never, while he lived, fully retrieved the spiritual strength he lost by it."

5. Brought presents - As subjects in those times used to do to their kings, as a token of their respect and subjection to them.

6. Lifted up - Above all discouragements, and fears. He was valiant and resolute for God and his ways. Groves - Those wherein idols were worshipped, and though Asa had done this before,

yet either he did not do it thoroughly; or the Jews (who were many of them mad upon their idols) had secretly made new ones, in the latter part of his reign, when he grew more infirm in body, and more remiss in God's cause.

7. To teach - To inform the people of their duty, and of the king's pleasure, as Judges teach or instruct the people in the laws of the land, when they deliver their charges upon the bench; so did these princes in the king's name admonish and require the people to observe and obey the laws of God, which were the municipal laws of that land: the particular explication and enforcement whereof, they left to the Levites and priests here following, who were sent for this end, and accordingly taught the people, ver. 9.

9. And they taught, &c. - And these itinerant Judges and itinerant preachers together, Mr. Henry observes were instrumental to diffuse a blessed light throughout the cities of Judah.

10. Fear fell - Justly concluding from his singular piety that God would eminently appear for him, for even the Heathens could not but observe, that the kings of Judah were either prosperous or unhappy, according as they served God or forsook him.

13. Business - To repair and fortify them, and furnish them with provisions: and to purge out all their relicks of idolatry and injustice.

19. Waited - These above-mentioned were the trained bands or auxiliaries: whose chief officers waited on the king to receive his commands, and to raise, and bring in all, or part of their forces, to the service of the king as need required. A vast number for so small a compass of ground, to furnish out and maintain. But we may consider, that God had promised to make the seed of Abraham like the sand of the sea for number; that there had now been a long peace; that many were come to them from the kingdom of Israel and that Jehoshaphat was under a special blessing of God. They were doubtless dispersed all the country over, every one residing on his own land: only they were ready at call, whenever there was occasion.

## XVIII

Jehoshaphat joins affinity with Ahab, and consents to go with him to Ramoth-gilead, ver. 1-3. The false prophets promise them success, ver. 4-11. Micaiah foretells the death of Ahab, ver. 6-27. Jehoshaphat hardly escapes, ver. 28-32. Ahab slain, ver. 33, 34.

1. With Ahab - For Joram's eldest son married Athaliah, Ahab's daughter.

4. Inquire, &c. - This we should do, whatever we undertake, by particular, believing prayer, by an unbiased consulting of the scriptures and our own consciences, and by a close regard to the hints of providence.

22. Lying spirit, &c. - See the power of Satan! One lying spirit can make four hundred lying prophets. And thus he frequently becomes a murderer by being a liar, and destroys men by deceiving them.

26. This fellow, &c. - How frequently has this been the lot of faithful ministers, to be hated and ill treated, merely for being true to God: and just and kind to the souls of men! But that day will

declare who is in the right, and who is in the wrong, when Christ appears to the unspeakable consolation of the persecuted, and the everlasting confusion of their persecutors.

31. Cried out - He cried out, either to his friends to help, or to his enemies, to let them know, he was not the king of Israel: or to God, and not in vain; for he moved the captains to depart from him. Many are moved in a manner unaccountable both to themselves and others; but an invisible power moves them.

34. He died - What can hurt those whom God will protect? And what can shelter those whom God will destroy? Jehoshaphat is saved in his robes; Ahab is killed in his armour!

## XIX

Jehoshaphat is reproved by a prophet, ver. 1-3. He reforms the kingdom, ver. 4. Gives instructions to the itinerant Judges, ver. 5-7. And to the supreme court at Jerusalem, ver. 8-11.

2. Therefore - Therefore God will chastise thee for this miscarriage. Which he did partly by stirring up the Moabites, and others to invade him, chap. xx, 1, partly by permitting his eldest son Jehoram to kill all his brethren, chap. xxi, 4, and principally by bringing that almost general destruction upon his grand- children by Jehu, 2 Kings ix, 27; x, 13, 14, which was the fruit of his alliance with Ahab.

3. Good things - Good marks proceeding from an honest heart; which God more regards than this particular error: and therefore though he will chasten thee, yet he will not utterly destroy thee.

4. Through - Through the whole kingdom, whereof these were the two bounds. And brought - Such of them as had revolted from God to idols, he reclaimed by his counsel and example, and by the instructions of the Levites and priests, whom he carried with him. Many, probably, had revolted to idolatry, when they saw their king so intimate with idolaters. Therefore he thought himself doubly obliged to do all he could to reduce them. If we truly repent of sin, we shall do our utmost to repair the damage we have done to religion, or the souls of others.

6. The Lord - You represent God's person to whom judgment belongeth, you have your commission from God, and not from man only; and your administration of justice is not only for man's good, but also for God's honour and service. With you - Both to observe your carriage, and to defend you against all those enemies whom the impartial exercise of justice may provoke.

7. Wherefore - And therefore you who are in God's stead, and do his work, and must give an account to him, must imitate God herein.

8. The fathers - Persons of other tribes eminent for their dignity, ability and integrity. But whether these persons made up one court, called the Sanhedrim, by which all causes ecclesiastical and civil were decided; or there were two distinct courts, the one ecclesiastical, consisting of the priests and Levites; the other civil, consisting of the chief of the fathers of Israel, it is not easy to determine. The Lord - For matters concerning the laws and worship, of God. Controversies - For matters of difference between man and man. When - When Jehoshaphat and his company were returned to Jerusalem, he made this order concerning establishing Judges there.

10. Blood - This refers to Deut. xvii, 8, between the blood of the person slain, and the blood of the man-slayer. All the cities of refuge, except Hebron, now belonged to the kingdom of Israel, so that the man-slayer now usually fled to the courts of the temple, or the horns of the altar. And therefore the trial of these, was reserved for the court at Jerusalem. Law, &c. - When any debates shall arise about the meaning of any of God's laws. Warn - Ye shall not only give a righteous sentence for what is past, but ye shall admonish the offender, and others, to take better heed for the future.

11. Over you - Shall be your president. Matters of the Lord - In Spiritual, or ecclesiastical matters. Ruler - The prince, or chief ruler, under the king, of the tribe of Judah. The king's matters - For civil causes, or controversies either between the king and his people; or between subject and subject, which may be called the king's matters, because it was a principal part of his office to see them justly decided. The Levites - Shall be at your command to see your just sentences executed; which work was fitly committed to the Levites, as persons who might add their instructions to the corrections, and might work the guilty to an acknowledgement of their fault and a submission to their punishment. The Lord - Shall protect and bless good Judges.

## XX

The land being invaded, Jehoshaphat and all the people seek God by fasting and prayer, ver. 1-13. They thankfully receive the promise of victory given by a prophet, ver. 14-19. Their enemies are overthrown, ver. 20-25. Their thanksgiving, ver. 25-30. The conclusion of his reign, ver. 31-37.

2. The sea - The dead sea, beyond which mount Seir lay. Syria - Largely so called, and so it includes the Moabites and Ammonites. And it may be thus expressed, to intimate that they came by the instigation of the Syrians, to revenge themselves of Jehoshaphat for joining with Ahab against them.

5. The house - Largely so called, in the court of the people, upon that brazen scaffold which Solomon had erected. New court - Before the priests court: which is called the new court, because it had lately been renewed when the altar was renewed.

7. Abraham - To whom thou hast engaged thyself by covenant to be his friend, and the friend of his seed for ever. 9. The sword - Or rather, the sword of judgement or of vengeance, that is, war, whereby thou punisheth thy people for their sins.

12. Wilt thou not judge - Wilt thou not give sentence against them, and execute it upon them? The justice of God is the refuge of those that are wronged. No might - Though he had great armies, yet he seems to have been surprized by these men, before his forces were in readiness to oppose them.

13. Little ones - Whom they used to present before the Lord in times of great distress, to stir up themselves to more fervent prayers, their eyes being upon their harmless and tender children, and to move God to compassion, because God hath declared, that he will be prevailed with, by such methods as these.

15. But God's - God will fight for you, and he alone will do the work, you need not strike a stroke.

16. Go down - From Jerusalem, where he and his army now were; which stood upon high ground.

19. Stood up - By Jehoshaphat's appointment. On high - With heart and voice lifted up: whereby they shewed their full assurance of the victory.

20. Believe - God's promise delivered to us by this prophet, and consequently all other predictions of the prophet.

21. Consulted - Jehoshaphat called a counsel of war, and it was resolved, to appoint singers to go out before the army, who had nothing to do, but to praise God, to praise his holiness, which is his beauty, to praise him as they did in the temple, that beauty of holiness. By this strange advance to the field of battle, Jehoshaphat shewed his firm reliance on the word of God, which enabled him to triumph before the battle, to animate his own men and confound the enemy.

22. To sing - So acceptable are the fervent prayers of God's people to God, and so terrible to their enemies. Ambushments - Or, liers in wait, either

1. the holy angels, who appeared in the shape of men, and possibly put on the appearances and visages of the Moabites or Ammonites, and in that shape slew the rest, who supposing this slaughter to be done by a part of their own army, fell upon them, and so broke forth into mutual slaughters. Or,
2. God raised jealousies and animosities among themselves, which broke forth, first into secret ambushments, which one party laid for another, and then into open hostilities to their utter destruction. So vain are all mens attempts against God, who needs none to destroy his enemies but themselves, and their own mistakes, and passions, which he can, when he pleaseth, arm against them.

24. The watch tower - Which stood upon the cliff of Ziz, mentioned ver. 16, and looked toward the wilderness, where their enemies lay encamped, whose numbers, and order, and condition, they could descry from thence.

25. Jewels - Which they brought with them to corrupt any of Jehoshaphat's officers as they saw occasion: to procure necessaries for their vast army from time to time: and because they came as to triumph rather than to fight, being confident of the victory because of their numbers, and especially because they thought to surprize Jehoshaphat ere he could make any considerable preparations against them; God also permitting them to be puffed up to their own destruction.

26. Berachah - Hebrew. of blessing; so called from their solemn blessings and praises given to God in it upon this occasion.

28. To the house - To renew their praises in the court of the temple, the proper and usual place for it. Praising God must not be the work of a day only, but our praises when we have received mercy, must be often repeated, as our prayers were, when we where in pursuit of it. Every day we must bless God: as long as we live, and while we have any being, we must praise him, spending our time in that work, in which we hope to spend our eternity.

33. Not taken - Not universally; the fault was not in Jehoshaphat, but in the people, who, though they did worship the true God, yet would not be confined to the temple, but for their own conveniency, or from their affection to their ancient custom chose to worship him in the high-places.

35. After this - This is mentioned as an aggravation of his sin, after so great an obligation laid upon him by God; and after he had been so singularly reproved by a prophet yet he relapsed into

the same sin which proceeded partly from that near relation which was contracted between the two families, and partly from the easiness of Jehoshaphat's temper, which could not resist the solicitations of others, in such things as might seem indifferent. For he did not join with him in war, as he did with Ahab, but in a peaceable way only, in a matter of trade and commerce. And yet God reproves and punisheth him for it, ver. 37, to shew his great dislike of all familiar conversation of his servants and people with professed enemies of God and of religion, as Ahaziah was. Very wickedly - Or who did industriously, and maliciously, and constantly work wickedness, as the Hebrew phrase implies, giving himself up to idolatry and all wickedness.

## XXI

Jehoram succeeds, ver. 1-3. His wickedness, ver. 4-7. Edom and Libnah revolt and Jehoram is still more wicked, ver. 8-11. The prophecy of Elijah against him, ver. 12-15. The success of his enemies, ver. 16, 17. His sickness and death, ver. 18-20.

2. Azariah - Two sons called by the same name, though doubtless distinguished by some additional title: which is not mentioned here, because it did not concern succeeding ages to know it. Of Israel - So he is called either,

1. Because he was so by right: or
2. Because he was king not only of Judah and Benjamin, but of a great number of Israelites, who had come and settled in his kingdom.

4. Strengthened himself - He hardened his heart, as that word sometimes signifies. Princes - The chief of those Israelites, who out of love to God and the true religion, had forsaken their estates in the kingdom of Israel, and were now incorporated with the kingdom of Judah: because he thought these would be most zealous for that religion which he was resolved to oppose.

10. Libnah - Libnah seems to have set up for a free state. And the reason is here given, both why God permitted it, and why they did it, because Jehoram was become an idolater. While he adhered to God, they adhered to him; but when he cast God off, they cast him off. Whether this would justify them in their revolt or no, it justified God's providence which suffered it.

11. High places - Not to the Lord, but to Baals or false gods. And caused - Not only by his counsel and example, but by force, by threats, and penalties.

12. From Elijah - By this it appears, that Jehoram came to the throne before Elijah's translation. It is true, we find Elisha attending Jehoshaphat; but that might be, while Elijah was yet on earth: for we read of Jehoram's coming to the crown, before we read of Elijah's translation, 1 Kings xxii, 50. We may suppose, the time of his departure was at hand, so that he could not go in person to Jehoram. But he left this writing, probably with Elisha, to be sent the first opportunity. The message is sent in the name of the Lord God of David his father, upbraiding him with his relation to David, as that which was no more his honour, but an aggravation of his degeneracy.

15. People - Because the generality of them sinned, in complying with his wicked and idolatrous commands. Wives - Whose lives shall go for the lives of thy brethren, ver. 4.

16. Philistines - A people fully subdued and dispirited: but God now raises their spirits and courage to do his work. Ethiopians - A people in Arabia, so called, either for their likeness in complexion to the Ethiopians, or because the one of these people were a colony of the other.

17. His wives - Whom also they slew, chap. xxii, 1, except Ahaziah and Athaliah; who possibly were hidden in some secret place. Left him - Blood for blood. He had slain all his brethren; they slay all his sons, but one. And he had not escaped, had be not been of the house of David; which must not be extirpated, like that of Ahab: because a blessing was in it; no less a blessing than that of the Messiah.

20. Desired - This is an emphatical expression, because it is usual with men to desire the deaths of some persons, whom afterward they lament, and heartily wish they were alive again. But for this ungodly and unhappy prince, his people did not only in his life time wish his death, but afterwards did not repent of those desires.

## XXII

Ahaziah's wicked reign, ver. 1-4. Being confederate with Joram, he is slain by Jehu, ver. 5-9. Athaliah destroys the seed royal, and usurps the kingdom, ver. 10-12.

2. Forty two years - Some acknowledge an error in the transcribers of the present Hebrew copies, in which language the numeral letters for 22 and

42 are so like, that they might easily be mistaken. For that it was read 22 here, as it is in the book of Kings, in other Hebrew copies, they gather from hence, that it is at this day so read in divers ancient Greek copies, as also in those two ancient translations, the Syriack and the Arabick, and particularly in that most ancient copy of the Syriack which was used by the church of Antioch in the primitive times, and to this day is kept in the church of Antioch. The daughter - Of Ahab, Omri's Son. Grand-children are often called sons and daughters.

4. His father - Who, while he lived, seduced his son himself, and made other evil counsellors unnecessary.

9. Ahaziah - Who, tho' wounded, had made an escape, 2 Kings ix, 27.

## XXIII

Jehoiada prepares the people and crowns the king, ver. 1- 11. Athaliah is slain, ver. 12-15. The kingdom is reformed, ver. 16-21.

5. Foundation - At the east gate, so called because it stood lower than the rest of the doors at the foot of the steps, by which they went up from the king's house to the temple.

11. His sons - And Zechariah among the rest, whom afterwards he ungratefully slew, chap. xxiv, 21.

13. Rejoiced - To see a rod sprung out of the stem of Jesse! To see what they despaired of ever seeing, a king of the house of David.

16. Him - The Lord, as is expressed, 2 Kings xi, 17.

18. Appointed - Or, as it is in the Hebrew, put the offices of the house of the Lord into the hand, that is, he restored the priests and Levites to the exercise of their office.

21. Rejoiced, &c. - The generality of the people rejoiced, the rest were quiet and made no opposition. When the Son of David is enthroned in the soul, all therein is quiet, and springs of joy are opened.

## XXIV

Joash takes care to repair the temple, ver. 1-14. After Jehoiada's death, he sets up the worship of Baal again, tho' warned, ver. 15-19. He puts Zechariah to death, ver. 20-22. Is invaded by the Syrians, ver. 23, 24. Struck with sore diseases and slain, ver. 25-27

6. The chief - It is observable, that he is not called the chief priest, or high-priest, but only the chief, or the head, which he might be in many other respects, either by reason of his near relation to the royal family: or because he was the chief of one of the twenty- four families.

7. The sons - Ahaziah, and his brethren before they were carried away captive, chap. xxi, 17, who did this by her instigation, as this phrase implies. Broke up - Both broke up the treasuries, and defaced the house itself.

14. Vessels - Because Athaliah and her sons had taken the old ones away, ver. 7.

15. An hundred and thirty years old - By which it appears, that he was born in Solomon's time, and had lived six entire reigns before this. They buried him among the kings, with this honourable encomium, (perhaps inscribed upon his grave-stone) that he had done good in Israel. But the little religion that Joash had, was all buried in his grave. See how great a judgment to any prince or people, the death of holy, useful men is!

16. Israel - In Judah, which was an eminent part of Israel, and the only part of it which owned God, or was owned by God as his Israel, to whom therefore he often appropriates this name.

17. Made obeisance - In that posture presenting their requests to him, that they might not be confined to troublesome journeys to Jerusalem, but might have the liberty, which their fore-fathers enjoyed, os worshipping God in the high-places. This liberty once obtained, they knew they could worship idols without disturbance: which was the thing at which they aimed. And for the prevention of such abuses, God obliged all to worship him in one place.

18. Left, &c. - The king and princes that awhile ago so zealously repaired the temple, now forsook the temple! So inconstant a thing is man! So little confidence is to be put in him!

20. Who stood - The people were assembled in the court of the temple, which they had not quite forsook, when Zechariah stood up in some of the desks that were in the court of the priests, and plainly told them their sin, and the consequences of it.

21. Stoned him - They stoned him immediately, without even colour of law; as horrid a piece of wickedness, as any we read of in all the history of the kings. That ever such a villainy should be committed, by men, by Israelites, in contempt and violation of everything that is just, honourable, and sacred! The Jews say, there were seven transgressions in one: They killed a priest, a prophet, a judge; they shed innocent blood; polluted the court of the temple, the Sabbath, and the day of expiation: for on that day, their tradition says, this happened.

22. Require it - Make inquisition for innocent blood. But the words may be rendered, The Lord will look upon it, and require it, will require satisfaction from you for it.

23. The year - So soon did God hear the cry of his holy prophet's blood, and revenge it. The princes - That it might appear they were sent and directed by God to single out to destruction the first beginners of this general apostacy.

25. Son - By which it seems, he slew not only Zechariah, but his brothers also. Perhaps they that slew him intended to take vengeance for that innocent blood. However that was it, which God intended, in permitting them to do it.

27. Burdens - The great judgments of God upon him, both by the Syrians, ver. xxiv, 23, and by great diseases, ver. 25.

## XXV

Amaziah revenges his father's death, ver. 1-4. Obeys the command of God and dismisses the Israelites, 5-10. Conquers the Edomites, ver. 11-13. Turns idolater and despises reproof, ver. 14-16. Challenges the king of Israel and suffers for it, ver. 17-24. Ends his days ingloriously, ver. 25-28.

2. But not, &c. - He was not an enemy to religion, but a cool and indifferent friend. He was not a man of serious piety; for his heart was not whole with God.

7. Let not, &c. - It is comfortable to employ those, who we have reason to hope, have an interest in heaven, but dangerous associating with those from whom the Lord is departed.

8. Do it - It is an ironical concession like that, go, and prosper.

10. Anger kindled - Because they were both disgraced by this rejection, and disappointed of that spoil which they hoped to gain, whereas now they are sent away empty; for the hundred talents probably were given to their officers only to raise men for this service.

13. Cities of Judah - Thus God chastised those cities of Judah for their idolatries which were found most in the parts next to Israel. The men of Israel had corrupted them, and now are a plague to them.

16. Art thou, &c. - Who art thou that presumest to direct my affairs, without my commission? The secure sinner perhaps values himself on having silenced his reprovers and monitors. But what comes of it? It is a plain indication he is marked out for ruin. They that are deaf to reproof, are ripening apace for destruction.

17. Advice - About the injury which the Israelites had done to his people, and how he should repair it. He took advice. But with whom? Not with the prophet, but with his flattering statesmen. It is good to take advice: but it should be of them who are fit to advise us.

20. Of God - Who gave him up to his own error and passion, in order to his ruin.

24. Obed-edom - With Obed-edom's posterity, to whom the custody of the sacred treasures was committed.

## XXVI

Uzziah reigns well, ver. 1-5. Prospers in his wars, building, and the affairs of his kingdom, ver. 6-15. Invading the priest's office, is struck with a leprosy, ver. 16-20. Is confined to his death, ver. 21-23.

10. Towers - To guard his cattle from the inroads which the Arabians were accustomed to make: and to give notice of the approach of any enemy.

16. Into Jerusalem - Into the holy place, where the altar of incense stood, and into which none but the priests might enter, much less offer incense.

18. Withstood - Hebrew. stood up against Uzziah, not by force, or laying hands upon him to restrain him, for in the next verse you still find the censer in his hand; but only by admonition and reproof, which follows. Neither, &c. - Expect that God will punish thee, or put some brand of infamy upon thee for this presumption. But this they express modestly, because they considered that he to whom they spake, though an offender, was their sovereign.

19. His forehead - So that he could not hide his shame: though it is probable it was also in the rest of his body. From beside - By a stroke from an invisible hand coming from the altar; that he might be assured this was the effect of God's displeasure.

20. Thrust - Not by force, which needed not, for he voluntarily hasted away, as it follows; but by vehement persuasions and denunciations of God's farther judgments upon him, if he did not depart.

21. His death - God would have this leprosy to be incurable, as a lasting monument of his anger against such presumptuous invaders of the priest's office. Dwelt, &c. - As he was obliged to do by law, which he durst not now resist, being under the hand of God, and under the fear of worse plagues, if he did not so. For - He dwelt in a several house, because he might not come into the temple or courts, nor consequently into any publick assembly. So the punishment answered the sin, as face does to face in a glass. He thrust himself into the temple of God, whether the priests only had admission: and for that was thrust out of the very courts of the temple, into which the meanest of, his subjects might enter. He invaded the dignity of the priesthood, to which he had no right, and is for that deprived of the royal dignity, to which he had an undoubted right.

## XXVII

Jotham reigns well and prospers, ver. 1-6. The conclusion of his reign, ver. 7-9.

2. He did - He did according to all that his father Uzziah did; except in his miscarriages. We must not imitate those we have the greatest esteem for, any farther than we do well; but their failings must be warnings to us, to walk more circumspectly.

3. Built - Repaired it: for it was built before, chap. xi, 5.

## XXVIII

Ahaz reigns ill, ver. 1-4. Is smitten by the Syrians and Israelites, ver. 5-8. who send back the captives they had taken, ver. 9-15. Ahaz sends for help to the king of Asyria, but in vain, ver. 16-21. Yet he continues in idolatry, ver. 22-25. and dies, ver. 26, 27.

5. His God - God was his God, tho' not by special relation, (which Ahaz had renounced) yet by his sovereign dominion over him: for God did not forfeit his right by Ahaz's denying it.

6. Forsaken - Ahaz walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and God chose the king of Israel for his scourge: it is just with God, to make them a plague to us, whom we have made our patterns, or partners in sin.

9. A rage - An unbounded rage, which cries to God for vengeance, against such bloody men.

10. To keep under - It ill becomes sinners to be cruel. Shew mercy to them, for you are undone, unless God shew you mercy.

14. Left the captives - And herein they shewed a more truly heroic bravery, than they did in taking them. It is true honour for a man to yield to reason and religion even in spite of interest.

15. Were expressed - Who were appointed to take care about the management of this business.

16. Kings - Princes, who may be called kings in a more general signification of the word.

19. Low - As high as they were before in wealth and power. They that will not humble themselves under the word of God will be humbled by his judgments. Naked - Taking away their ornament and their defense and strength, namely their treasures, which he sent to the Assyrian to no purpose; their frontier towns, and other strong holds, which by his folly and wickedness were lost; their religion, and the Divine protection, which was their great and only firm security.

20. Distressed - Or, straitened him, by robbing him of his treasures. Strengthened not - A most emphatical expression: for tho' he weakened his present enemy the Syrian, yet all things considered, he did not strengthen Ahaz and his kingdom, but weaken them; for by removing the Syrian, who, tho' a troublesome neighbour, was a kind of bulwark to him, he smoothed the way for himself, a far more dangerous enemy, as appears in the very next king's reign.

22. That Ahaz - That monster and reproach of mankind, that unteachable and incorrigible prince, whom even grievous afflictions made worse, which commonly make men better. This is he, whose name deserves to be remembered and detested for ever.

## XXIX

Hezekiah's exhortation to the priests and Levites, ver. 1-11. The care of the Levites to cleanse the temple and put things into order, ver. 12-19. A solemn revival of God's ordinances, ver. 20- 36.

4. And he brought in,&c. - He found Judah low and naked, yet did not make it his first business to revive the civil interests of his kingdom, but to restore religion to a good posture. Those that begin with God, begin at the right end of their work; and it will prosper accordingly.

5. Filthiness - That filthy altar, which Ahaz had put in the place of God's altar, 2 Kings xvi, 11, and the idols, or other abominable things which were there.

6. Turned, &c. - They have wilfully and obstinately forsaken God and his worship; that posture being a signification of contempt.

7. They - He saith not, my father, because it became him as a son, to be as tender as might be of his father's name: and because his father would not have done all this, if their fathers had not neglected their duty.

8. Hissing - To such calamities as all that see and hear of, shall be astonished at, and hiss at those, who by their own sin and folly have brought such miseries upon themselves. When we are under the rebukes of God's providence, it is good for us to inquire, Whether we have not neglected God's ordinances, and whether that be not the controversy he has with us?

9. Captivity - Tho' they were presently released, chap. xxviii, 5, 14, 15.

11. Sons - So he calls them, though many of them were elder than himself, because he was by his tender love and affection, as he was by his office obliged to be, a nursing father to them. Negligent - In sanctifying yourselves and the temple, ver. 5, and in quickening and preparing yourselves and the people for God's service.

15. To cleanse - From the dirt it had contracted, while it was so long shut up; from dust, cobwebs, and the rust of the vessels. Much more from the idols, and idolatrous altars which had been set up therein.

17. The first day - A happy beginning of the new year! Thus should every year begin with the reformation of what is amiss, and the purging away of all the defilements contracted the foregoing year.

19. Sanctified - Tho' the vessels of the sanctuary may be profaned for a while, God will find a time and a way to sanctify them. Neither his ordinances nor his obedient people, shall be suffered to fail forever.

21. Seven - The number seven is customary in sacred matters, and is here used in regard of the vast numbers and various kinds of sins, the guilt whereof yet lay upon the kingdom, which was now to be expiated. Indeed, in case of one particular sin of ignorance done by the people, there was but one bullock to be offered, but here the sins were many and presumptuous. Kingdom - To make

atonement for the sins of the king and the royal family, and the court. Sanctuary - For all the idolatry and uncleanness wherewith the temple had been polluted. They thought it not enough to lament and forsake their sins, but they brought a sin-offering. Even our repentance and reformation will not obtain pardon, but thro' Christ, who was made sin, that is, a sin-offering for us.

23. They laid - The king and the elders of the congregation in the name of the whole congregation.

27. The song - The psalms composed by David and Asaph. Even sorrow for sin must not put us out of tune for praising God. By faith we must even then rejoice in the Lord our righteousness, and our prayers and praises must attend with his offering, to be accepted only in the virtue of it.

31. Consecrated - Now that you have reconciled yourselves and the house to God, and that he is willing and ready to accept your sacrifices. Burnt-offerings - Wherein there was more generosity than in the other sacrifices, because they were wholly burnt and offered to God.

33. Consecrated things - All the offerings consecrated to God, besides the burnt-offerings already mentioned.

34. Too few - Such as were sanctified and fit for their work, as the following words shew: for otherwise the number of the priests was more than sufficient for this employment. Burnt-offerings - And much less all the other sacrifices, which were more numerous; the slaying whereof was the priests proper work. The Levites - Necessity excusing their deviation from the rule.

36. Rejoiced - It was, as a very great, so a sudden change, that the people, who but the other day were so ready to comply with wicked Ahaz in his idolatrous presumptions, were now so free and forward in God's service: whereby it plainly appeared to be the work of God, changing their hearts by his Holy Spirit.

## XXX

The king and people resolve to keep the passover, ver. 1-5. He invites Judah and Israel to it, ver. 6-12. The joyful celebration of it, ver. 13-27.

1. Israel - All the persons of the ten tribes, who were settled in his kingdom. Ephraim, &c. - To all the remainder of the ten tribes, ver. 5, here expressed by the names of Ephraim and Manasseh, as elsewhere by the name of Ephraim only. But he names these two tribes, because they were nearest to his kingdom, and a great number of them had long since, and from time to time joined themselves to the kingdom of Judah, chap. xv, 8, 9. At Jerusalem - Admonishing them of their duty to God, and persuading them to comply with it.

2. Second month - Which was against the common rule, but the doing of this in its proper time, namely, the fourteenth day of the first month was impossible, because the temple was not cleansed, nor they prepared. As there was a proviso in the law, that particular persons who were unclean in the first month, might keep the passover the fourteenth day of the second month, he doubted not but that might be extended by the whole congregation.

3. They kept - Not in the same manner as they had done the former, V. 3. Sufficiently - In such manner as was fit, nor in such numbers as but in the solemn worship of God, by sacrifices, and

prayers, and praise, were necessary for the slaying and offering of so many thousands of and publick instruction of that great congregation in the good knowledge paschal-offerings, as appears, because they were not sufficient for of the Lord; which was most necessary for the people after so long and those offerings, which were comparatively few, chap. xxix, 32, 33, 34. dismal a night of ignorance, superstition and idolatry.

10. They - The generality of the ten tribes; who by long want of meat had now lost their appetite to God's ordinances, for which they paid dear. For about six years after their refusal of this offer of grace they were all carried away captive, 2 Kings xviii, 1, 10.

12. The hand of God - God by the power of his grace inclined their hearts to an unanimous compliance with God's and the king's will. And this is mentioned as the reason of this wonderful change wrought in these men, who had lately been given up to idolatry.

15. Ashamed - Their negligence and remissness being upbraided by the general forwardness of the people. The zeal which we observe in others, should make us ashamed of our own coldness, and quicken us not only to do our duty, but to do it with our might.

19. The sanctuary - With that purification which was required of them that came in God's sanctuary. So he calls it to distinguish from that internal purity which they are here acknowledged to have. The great thing required in our attendance on God's ordinances is, that we prepare our heart to seek him; that the inward man be engaged, that we make heart work of it. All is nothing without this.

20. Healed - That is, pardoned this their sin, and accepting them and their services, as if they had been clean.

22. Spoke comfortably - Encouraged them to a chearful and diligent attendance upon their holy ministrations. Princes and magistrates by encouraging faithful and labourious preachers, greatly promote the kingdom of God. That taught - Who by their office were to instruct and build up the people in the knowledge and fear of God: which is mentioned as the cause of his respect and kindness to them.

24. Did give - First to God, to whom the parts appointed were offered in a way of thanksgiving; and then to the people, who feasted upon the relicks, as the offerer used to do in peace- offerings: and Hezekiah, who was the offerer, gave away his right in the remains of the sacrifices to the people. Which generosity is the more considerable, because it was in the beginning of his reign, when he found the exchequer empty; and when he had been at great expense about cleansing and refitting the temple, and making preparations for this great feast.

27. The Levites - Those of the Levites who were priests also; for to them only this work belonged.

## XXXI

The remains of idolatry are destroyed, ver. 1. Hezekiah provides work and maintenance for the priests and Levites, ver. 2- 4. The people bring in their dues abundantly, ver. 5-10. Officers are appointed to dispose of them, ver. 11-19. Hezekiah's sincerity, ver. 20, 21.

1. Manasseh - By the special impulse and direction of God's spirit. And he knew Hoshea contented himself with the worship of the calves, and did not practice that great idolatry which his predecessors had used, and therefore would patiently suffer the breaking of the images of Baal, and the things belonging to them.

2. The tents - Within the gates of the house of the Lord: which is here called tents, because the host of the Lord, the priests and Levites, encamped there. And perhaps to intimate, that it was shortly to be removed.

3. Of his substance - Which had hitherto been taken out of the treasures of the temple, but that he might ease the people in their present poverty, which his predecessor had brought upon them, and engage them to a more chearful attendance upon God's service, he took the burden upon himself.

4. Encouraged - Freed them from worldly cares and distractions, and enabled to give up themselves entirely to the serious study of God's law, and to the instruction, and direction, and quickening of the people.

5. Came abroad - As Soon as the king extended that command to all the parts of his kingdom, which, ver. 4, was confined to them that dwelt in Jerusalem. Honey - Or, dates, as the Hebrew writers generally, understand this word, which were given to them, because of the sweetness of their taste in some sort resembling honey. For the law requires no tithes, but of the fruits of trees, or of the earth, or of beasts.

6. By heaps - What the priests and the Levites had occasion for, they made use of, and the overplus was laid in heaps.

7. Third month - Of the sacred year, in which their harvest began. Seventh - In which their harvest ended and the feast of tabernacles was kept.

8. Blessed the Lord - Both for giving such plentiful provisions to his land and for giving his people such liberal hearts. And they praised the people for their forwardness and faithfulness in it.

9. Questioned - How it came to pass that no more of their provision was spent and that there yet remained such great heaps of it.

14. Most holy things - The remainders of the freewill-offering, the sin-offering, and trespass-offering, and the shew-bread; to see that all had a competent maintenance for themselves and their families.

15. And next, &c. - These were intrusted with receiving and distributing the several portions belonging to the priests who abode in their several cities, whilst their brethren came up to Jerusalem.

18. For, &c. - This is alleged as a reason why their wives and children were provided for out of the holy things, because they sequestered themselves from worldly affairs, by which they might otherwise have provided for their families.

## XXXII

Sennacherib invading Judah, Hezekiah fortifies himself, ver. 1-8. The insolent letters and messages sent by Sennacherib, ver. 9-19. The destruction of his army, ver. 20-23. Hezekiah's sickness, riches, and death, ver. 24-33.

1. After, &c. - An emphatical preface, signifying, that notwithstanding all his zeal for God, God saw fit to exercise him with a sore trial. And God ordered it at this time, that he might have an opportunity of shewing himself strong, on the behalf of his returning people. It is possible, we may be in the way of our duty, and yet meet with trouble and danger. God permits this, for the trial of our confidence in him, and the manifestation of his care over us.

3. To stop - And withal to draw the waters by secret pipes underground to Jerusalem.

21. The Lord sent an angel - The Jewish comment says the word of the Lord sent Gabriel to do this execution, and that it done with lightning, and in the passover night, the same night wherein the first-born in Egypt were slain.

25. Lifted up - For that prodigious victory over the Assyrians, for his miraculous restoration from sickness, and for the honour since done him by an embassy from the great king of Babylon. All which probably raised in him too great an opinion of himself, as if these things were done for his piety and virtues.

29. Provided - He repaired, fortified, and beautified them for the honour and safety of his kingdom.

30. Stopped, &c. - A rivulet near Jerusalem consisting of two streams, the upper which was brought into one pool, called the upper pool, Isaiah vii, 3, and the lower which was brought into another, called the lower pool, Isaiah xxii, 9. The former he diverted and brought by pipes into Jerusalem, which was a work of great art and labour.

31. Wonder that was done - Either the destruction of the Assyrians, or the going back of the sun. These miracles were wrought to alarm and awaken a stupid, careless world, and to turn them from dumb and lame idols to the living God. God left him - To himself, and suffered Satan to try him; that he might know he had infirmities and sins as well as virtues. O what need have great men, and good men, and useful men, to study their own follies and infirmities, and to beg earnestly of God, that he would hide pride from them!

33. Did him honour - It is a debt we owe to those who have been eminently useful, to do them honour at their death, when they are out of the reach of flattery, and we have seen the end of their conversation.

## XXXIII

The wicked reign of Manasseh, ver. 1-10. His captivity, prayer, and reformation, ver. 11-17. The conclusion of his reign, ver. 18-20. The wicked reign and death of Amon, ver. 21-25.

11. To Babylon - The king of Babylon is here called the king of Assyria, because he had added Assyria to his empire, who having been informed by his ambassadors of the great riches which were in Hezekiah's treasures at Jerusalem, and being assured of Manasseh's degeneracy from the piety of his father, and from that God whose power alone made Hezekiah formidable, he thought this a fit season to invade Manasseh's kingdom. The Jews say, in the twenty second year of his reign.

12. Besought - It becomes sinners to humble themselves before that God, whom they have offended. It becomes sufferers to humble themselves before him that corrects them, and to accept of the punishment of their iniquity.

17. Still - Manasseh could not carry the reformation so far as he had carried the corruption. It is an easy thing to debauch men's manners; but not so easy to reform them again.

18. Of Israel - Of Judah, often called Israel, he speaks not of the book of Kings, for these things are not mentioned there, but of their publick records, whence the most important things were taken by the prophets, and put into those canonical books.

19. Hosai - A writer so called.

## XXXIV

The general character of Josiah, ver. 1, 2. He roots out idolatry, ver. 3-7. Repairs the temple, ver. 8-13. Rends his clothes on hearing the book of the law, and sends to inquire of God, ver. 14-22. Huldah foretells the destruction of Jerusalem, ver. 23-28. Josiah and the people renew their covenant with God, ver. 29-33.

3. Young - ln the sixteenth year of his age; when he was entering into the age of temptation, and had the administration of his kingdom wholly in his own power, and none to restrain him; even then he begins to be religious in good earnest.

6. Naphtali - Which was in the utmost borders of the kingdom of Israel. For it must be remembered, that the ten tribes were now gone into captivity; and those who were come in their stead were weak and few, and not able to withstand the power of Josiah.

8. The house - The house of God, called the house by way of eminency.

11. Houses - The chambers joining to the temple.

12. Musick - All these here named, were skilful in instruments of musick. Which may be here mentioned, to intimate, that as they were skilful, so they were exercised in both employments, and did successively oversee the work, and praise God with their voices and instruments.

19. Rent his clothes - Were the things contained in scripture new to us, as they were here to Josiah, surely they would make deeper impressions upon us than they commonly do. But they are not the less weighty, and therefore should not be the less regarded, because they are well known.

32. To stand to it - He caused them to engage by an oath or covenant, that they would observe the laws of God, as his predecessors had formerly done, and which indeed they were before obliged to do.

33. Even to serve - The repetition shews, that this was the only thing his heart was set upon. He aimed at nothing in all he did, but to engage them to God and their duty.

## XXXV

Josiah keeps a solemn passover, ver. 1-19. He goes against Pharaoh-necho, and is slain, ver, 20-24. He is bitterly lamented, ver. 25-27.

3. The house - In the holy of holies. Whence, it may seem, it had been removed, by some of the wicked kings of Judah, possibly by Josiah's father Amon. A burden - Or, that it might not be a burden, so these words are to be joined with the former, as the reason why Solomon built this house, that the ark might have a constant and fixed habitation, and not need to be carried from place to place upon their shoulders, as it had been done while it was in the tabernacle. Ministers must look upon themselves as servants both to Christ, and to the people, for his sake. They must take care and take pains, and lay themselves out to the utmost, both for the honour and glory of God, and for the benefit of his people, not as having dominion over their faith, but as helpers of their holiness and joy.

5. Stand - Or, minister, (as that word is frequently used) in the court of the priests. According - According to the several families both of the people, whom he calls their brethren, lest they should despise them, or grudge to serve them, and of the Levites. For the passover was to be eaten by the several families according to their numbers, and therefore he commands these persons, that when the paschal lambs were brought to them to be killed, they might so order the matter, that they might be distributed to the several families whether of the Levitical or other tribes.

8. Princes - Not the political, but ecclesiastical princes, or the chief of the priests and Levites, whose names here follow. Levites - For the use of any of the families of them, as need should be. For they supposed the thirty thousand which the king had given were not sufficient for all the families.

12. Removed - Some of the lesser cattle; for these also might be offered as burnt-offerings, Lev. i, 10, and hence it may seem that all these small cattle were not given for paschal-lambs, but were to be offered as burnt-offerings for the people. And these they put apart lest they should be confounded with them which were for another use; and, that they might not be hindered from that which was their present work, that they might give, the paschal-lambs or kids. To offer - These words may belong to the last words, and to the paschal-lambs, which they were first to offer to the Lord, by killing them and sprinkling the blood, and then to give to the people; though the giving be here mentioned before the offering, such transpositions being usual in scripture. Oxen - As they did with the lesser cattle; they removed those oxen which were to be offered as burnt-offerings, from those which were to be offered as peace-offerings.

18. Like to that - The whole solemnity was performed exactly according to the law, whereas in Hezekiah's passover there were several irregularities: likewise Josiah furnished the whole congregation with beasts for sacrifice at his own charge, which no king ever did before him.

20. After all - When he and his people hoped that God was reconciled, and the foundation of a lasting happiness laid, their hopes were quickly blasted. So much are men often mistaken in their judgments about the designs of God's providence.

21. The house - Against the house of the king of Assyria, between whom and me there is war. It is at thy peril, if thou engage against one who has both a better army, and a better cause and God on his side.

22. Hearkened not - How can we think to prosper in our ways, if we do not acknowledge God in them!

25. To this day - In all their succeeding Lamentations for their publick calamities, they remembered Josiah's death as their first and fatal blow, which opened the flood-gates to all their following miseries.

## XXXVI

The wicked reign of Jehoahaz, ver. 1-4. Jehoiakim, ver. 5-8. Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, ver. 9-13. The wickedness of the people, ver. 14-16. Jerusalem destroyed, Judah laid waste, the people slain or led away captive, according to God's word, ver. 17-21. The proclamation of Cyrus, ver. 22, 23.

8. Found in him - That crime of rebellion against the king of Babylon, which for a time he kept in his own breast, but when he saw fit, discovered it, and was convicted of it.

10. Expired - Hebrew. at the return of the year: at the beginning of the next year, according to the sacred account of the Hebrew, at the spring of the year, the time when kings go forth to battle, as is elsewhere said, when Nebuchadnezzar, among others, went forth to settle and enlarge his conquests. His brother - Largely so called, for this was his uncle, or his father's brother, being the son of Josiah.

13. By God - Who had required him to swear fealty and constant obedience to him by the true God, whom he called upon to be a witness against him if he broke his oath. So his rebellion was aggravated with perjury, and horrid contempt of God.

15. Rising - Sending them early and diligently, as a careful house- holder, who rises betimes about his business. God sent them many prophets and messages, some at the very beginning of their apostacy, and others afterward, 'till the very day of their captivity.

16. No remedy - Because the people would not repent, and God would not pardon them.

17. Chaldees - Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldees, when God took him into covenant with himself. And now his degenerate seed are carried into that country again, to signify that they had forfeited all that kindness wherewith they had been loved for their father's sake, and the benefit of the covenant into which he was called.

21. Sabbaths - Had rested from the labour of the husbandman in plowing and harrowing it; the people that should have managed it being destroyed. Many a time had they ploughed and sowed their land in the seventh year, when it should have rested: and now it lay unploughed and unsown for ten times seven years. Yet even this might encourage them to hope, that they should in due time return to it again. Had others come and taken possession of it, they might have despaired of ever recovering it. But while it lay desolate, it, as it were, waited for them, and refused to acknowledge any other owners.

# NOTES ON THE BOOK OF EZRA

THE history of this book is the accomplishment of Jeremiah's prophecy, concerning the return of the Jews out of Babylon, at the end of seventy years, and a type of the accomplishment of the prophecies in the Revelation, touching the deliverance of the Gospel Church from Spiritual Babylon. Ezra preserved the records of that great revolution, and transmitted them to the church in this book. It gives us an account of the Jews return from their captivity, chap. 1, 2. Of the building of the temple, notwithstanding the opposition it met with, chap. 3-6. Of Ezra's coming to Jerusalem, chap. 7, 8. Of his obliging those that had married strange wives to put them away, chap. 9, 10.

## I

The proclamation of Cyrus, for the release of the Jews, and building of the temple, ver. 1-4. The return of many of them, ver. 5, 6. Orders given for restoring the vessels of the temple, ver. 7-11.

1. Fulfilled - Nebuchadnezzar carried many of the Jews into captivity in the first year of his reign (the fourth of Jehoiakim). He reigned forty-five years, his son Evil-merodach twenty-three, and his grandson Belshazzar, three years, which make up the seventy years foretold by Jeremiah. First year - Of his reign in Babylon: for he had been king of Persia for many years.

2. All, &c. - In those parts of the world; all that vast empire formerly under the Assyrians and Babylonians. The gift of which he ascribes to the great God; by that express prophecy of Isaiah concerning him, Isaiah xliv, 28; xlv, 1, 13, so long before he was born; which prophecy the Jews had doubtlessly shewed him, which also carried a great evidence with it, especially to him who was so highly encouraged by it: or by a special illumination which God vouchsafed to him, as he did to Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, and some other Heathen princes.

5. Then rose up, &c. - These being a new generation, went out like their father Abraham, from this land of the Chaldees, not knowing whither they went.

6. Strengthened their hands - God can, when he pleases, incline the hearts of strangers to be kind to his people; yea, make those strengthen their hands, who formerly weakened them.

8. Sheshbazzar - Zerubbabel; the Chaldeans called him Sheshbazzar, that is, Joy in tribulation, but among his own people he was called Zerubbabel, a stranger in Babylon. So he looked upon himself, tho' (Josephus says) he was captain of the life- guard.

## II

The leaders that returned, ver. 1, 2. The people, ver. 3-35 The priests, Levites and retainers to the temple, ver. 36-63. The sum total and their substance, ver. 64-67. Their offerings, ver. 68-70.

1. The province - Of Judah, called a province, chap. v, 8. And he calls it thus emphatically to mind himself and his brethren of that sad change which their sins had made among them, that from an illustrious, independent, and formidable kingdom, were fallen to be an obscure, servile, and contemptible province, first under the Chaldeans, and now under the Persians.

2. Who came, &c. - This catalogue, differs in some names and numbers from that Neh. vii, 6-64, which might be because several names were given to the same persons; and because of the many changes which might happen in the same families between the time of the first making of this catalogue by Ezra, and the making it anew so many years after.

3. The children - The posterity, as that word is constantly taken in this catalogue. Of Parosh - That descend either from Parosh, or from that family whereof Parosh was the chief. And so for the rest.

5. Seven hundred, &c. - In Neh. vii, 10, they were only six hundred and fifty two, it seems seven hundred and seventy five marched out of Babylon, but some of them died, others were hindered by sickness, or other casualties, and so there came only six hundred and fifty two to Jerusalem. And the like is to be said in the like differences: which it suffices to hint once for all.

21. Beth-lehem - And so these were the remainders of the inhabitants of that city. (And the like may be said of the two following names, Netophah and Anathoth, or others of the like nature.) So little was Beth-lehem among the thousands of Judah! Yet thence must the Messiah arise.

39. Harim - The head of one of the twenty four courses which David appointed, 1 Chron. xxiv, 8, of all which courses, some observe here are not above four or five that returned. There is another Harim mentioned above, ver. 32, but that was no priest, as this was ver. 36.

43. Nethinims - Persons devoted to the inferior services of the priests and Levites. Commonly supposed to be the Gibeonites, given, (so their name signifies) by Joshua first, and again by David, when Saul had expelled them, to the priests and Levites, for those services.

55. Servants - Who had lived in Solomon's family, and after his death, called themselves and their families by that name, esteeming it a great honour that they had been servants to so great a prince.

62. Genealogy - The Jews were generally very exact in their genealogies from their own choice and interest, that they might preserve the distinctions of the several tribes and families, which was necessary both to make out their titles to offices or inheritances, and to govern themselves thereby in the matter of marriages, and from the special providence of God, that so it might be certainly known of what tribe and family the Messiah was born.

63. Tirshatha - The governor, Zerubbabel. With Urim, &c. - That this point which could not be found out by human skill, might be determined by Divine direction. Hereby it appears that the Urim and Thummim were lost in the destruction of the city and temple, tho' the Jews fed themselves with hopes of recovering them, but in vain. And by the want of that oracle, they were taught to expect the great oracle, the Messiah.

64. The whole, &c. - The particular sums here recited, come only to twenty and nine thousand eight hundred and eighteen. Unto whom are added in this total sum twelve thousand five hundred and forty two. Which, either were of the other tribes beside Judah and Benjamin: or were such as were supposed to be Israelites, but could not prove their pedigree by their genealogies.

65. Women - For women as well as men were employed in this exercise in the temple-service.

68. The house - That is, to the ruins of the house; or to the place were it stood.

69. Sixty one thousand drams - Sixty one thousand drams of gold amount to something more than so many pounds of our money. So bishop Cumberland, who likewise supposes five thousand pounds of silver, to be about thirty seven thousand pounds sterling.

70. And all Israel in their cities - And they dwelt in peace, in perfect harmony, a blessed presage of their settlement, as their discord in the latter times of that state, was of their ruin.

## III

They set up the altar, offer sacrifices thereon, and keep the feasts, ver. 1-6. They contribute, and lay the foundation of the temple, ver. 7-13.

1. Seventh month - This was a sacred kind of month wherein there were divers festivals, for which the people had been preparing themselves, and now came to Jerusalem to the celebration of them.

2. Altar - Which was of more present necessity than the temple, both to make atonement to God for all their sins, and to obtain God's assistance for the building of the temple, and to strengthen their own hearts and hands in that great work.

3. For fear - So they made the more haste, lest they should be hindered. Apprehension of dangers should quicken us in our duty. Have we many enemies? We have the more need to have God for our friend and to keep up our correspondence with him.

4. Tabernacles - This seems to be mentioned for all the solemnities of this month, whereof this was the most eminent, otherwise it is not probable, that they would neglect the day of atonement which was so severely enjoined, Lev. xxiii, 27-29, and was so exceeding suitable to their present condition.

5. Offering - The morning and evening, sacrifice. The law required much; but they offered more; for tho' thy had little wealth, they had much zeal. Happy they that bring with them out of the furnace of affliction, such a holy heat as this!

6. Burnt-offerings - And the other sacrifices which were to be offered with them upon that day, being the feast of trumpets. Burnt-offerings are often put for all sacrifices.

9. Joshua - Not the high-priest so called, but a Levite, of whom see chap. ii, 40. To set forward - To encourage them to a vigourous prosecution of the work.

11. Sung - That everlasting hymn, which will never be out of date, and to which our tongue should never be out of tune, the burden of Psalm 1xxxvi, 1-26. Whatever our condition is, let it be owned, that God is good, and whatever fails, that his mercy fails not.

12. Had seen - Which divers of them might well do; because it was destroyed not sixty years ago. Wept - Because of the poor preparations made for this, in comparison of what was made for the other temple: because this was destitute of those things which were the principal glory of the former temple, namely, the ark, and the Urim and Thummim; because these foundation-stones were far inferior to the former, both for quantity and price, 1 Kings vii, 9, 10, and because these foundations were of a far narrower compass than the former: for although the foundations of this

house of the Lord, strictly so called, were of equal largeness with those of the former, yet the foundations of the whole building belonging to the first temple, were far larger than these.

13. Could not discern - The mixture of sorrow and joy here, is a representation of this world. In heaven all are singing and none sighing; in hell all are wailing, and none rejoicing: but here on earth we can scarce discern the shouts of joy from the noise of the weeping, let us learn to rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Meantime let us ourselves rejoice as though we rejoiced not, and weep as though we wept not.

## IV

THE adversaries, not being allowed to build with them, endeavour to hinder the work, ver. 1-5. They falsely accuse them to Artaxerxes, ver. 6-16. Who thereupon orders the work to be stopt, ver. 17-22. It is stopt, ver. 23, 24.

1. The adversaries - The Samaritans. The relicks of the ten tribes, and the foreigners who had joined with them.

2. With you - This they spake not sincerely, but that by this conjunction with them, they might pry into their counsels, and thereby find some matter of accusation against them. We seek - For so they did, though in a mongrel way, 2 Kings xvii, 26, &c. Esarhaddon - Son of Sennacherib, and after him king of Assyria, who brought or sent these persons hither, either,

1. in the day's of Salmanasar, who reigned in Assyria but eight years before Esarhaddon; and so Esarhaddon might be one of his commanders, and the man by whom that colony was sent. Or,
2. in the reign of Esarhaddon, who sent this second colony to strengthen the first.

3. With us - As being of another nation and religion, and therefore not concerned in Cyrus's grant, which was confined to the Israelites. Take heed, whom you go partners with, and on whose hand you lean. While we trust God with an absolute confidence, we must trust men with a prudent caution.

5. Cyrus - For though Cyrus still favoured the Jews, yet he was then diverted by his wars, and his son Cambyses was left his vice- roy, who was a wicked prince, and an enemy to the Jews. Until - Hebrew. and until, &c. not only in the reign of Cyrus but also of Cambyses, and of the magician, after whom was Darius.

6. Ahasuerus - A common name to divers kings of Persia. Cambyses the son and successor of Cyrus, was known to be no friend to the Jewish nation.

7. Artaxerxes - Cambyses, called by his Chaldee name, Ahashuerus, ver.

6, and here by his Persian name, Artaxerxes: by which he is here called in the inscription of this letter, because so he was called by himself, and others in the letters written either by him; or to him. Interpreted - It was written in the Chaldee or Syrian language, and in the Syrian character: for sometimes the Chaldee or Syrian words are written in the Hebrew character.

10. Asnapper - Either Esarhaddon, or some other person of eminency, who was captain of this colony, and conducted them hither. The river - Euphrates. Time - The date of the epistle was particularly expressed therein, but here it was sufficient to note it in general.

12. Be it known, &c. - This is a mere fiction, which being confidently affirmed, they thought would easily find belief with a king whose heart and ears they possessed by their hired counsellors.

23. To cease. &c. - As they abused the king by their misinformations, in the obtaining of this order, so they abused him in the execution of it; for the order was only to prevent the walling of the city. But having power in their hands, they, on this pretense, stopt the building of the temple. See what need we have to pray, not only for kings, but for all in authority under them: because the quietness of our lives depends much on the integrity and wisdom of inferior magistrates as well as the supreme.

24. Darius - Darius the son of Hystaspes, successor of Cambyses.

## V

Zerubbabel encouraged by Haggai and Zechariah, sets the work forward again, ver. 1, 2. Their adversaries oppose them again, ver. 3-5. Write to Darius, ver. 6-17.

1. The son - His grand-child; for he was the son of Baraciah. Prophesied - Commanding them from God to return to building the temple, with a promise of his favour and assistance.

2. Helping - Encouraging the people to work by their presence, and assurance of success. It is supposed, the work had stopt about fifteen years. The first chapter of Haggai is the best comment on these two verses.

3. Shethar-boznai - Not Rehum and Shimshai, &c. who were either dead, or removed from their office by Darius.

4. We - Jews. Accordingly - According to what they asked. That made this building - That were the undertakers and encouragers of it.

8. Great God - And indeed, thus far the greater part of the Samaritans agreed with them.

17. Now therefore. &c. - If the case had been so fairly stated to Artaxerxes, he would hardly have hindered the work. The people of God could not be persecuted, if they were not belied.

## VI

Darius's answer, ver. 1-7. His decree, ver. 8-12. The temple is finished, ver. 13-15. The dedication of it, ver. 16-18. The passover kept, ver. 19-22.

1. A decree - To search the rolls in Babylon, where search was first made; but not finding the edict there, they searched in Achmetha, or Ecbatana, and found it.

2. Achmetha - The royal city of the Medes and Persians.

3. Cubits - Those proportions differ from those of Solomon's temple, which was but thirty cubits high, only the porch was a hundred and twenty cubits high, and but twenty cubits in breadth. Either therefore Solomon's cubits were sacred cubits, which were larger than the other, and these but common cubits. Or, the sixty cubits of height are meant only for the porch. And the word rendered breadth, may be rendered the extension or the length of it; it being improbable that the king should give orders about the breadth, and none about the length of it.

12. Destroy - Tho' this temple was at length most justly destroyed by the righteous hand of God, yet perhaps the Romans, who were the instruments of that destruction, felt the effects of this curse. For that empire sensibly declined ever after, 'till it was wholly destroyed.

14. Through the prophesying - This is a seasonable intimation that this great and unexpected success was not to be ascribed to chance, or to the kindness or good humour of Darius, but unto God only, who by his prophets had required and encouraged them to proceed in the work, and by his mighty power disposed Darius's heart to such kind and noble purposes.

21. Children of Israel - Probably some out of each of the twelve tribes.

22. Joyful - He had given them both cause to rejoice, and hearts to rejoice. God is the fountain whence all the streams of true joy flow. Of Assyria - Of the king of Persia, who was now king of Assyria also, here so called emphatically, to note the great power and goodness of God in turning the hearts of these great monarchs, whose predecessors had been the chief persecutors and oppressors of God's people.

## VII

An account of Ezra and his expedition to Jerusalem, ver. 1-10. The commission which Artaxerxes gave him, ver. 11-26. His thankfulness to God for it, ver. 27, 28.

1. Artaxerxes - The same of whom he speaks, chap. vi, 14. The son - His grand-son. Here are divers persons omitted for brevity sake, which may be supplied out of 1 Chron. vi, 1-xi, 47. Ezra was not himself the high priest; but he was nearly related to him.

6. Went - With the king's consent and commission. Scribe - A learned and expert doctor. The Jews say, he collected and collated all the copies of the law, and published an accurate edition of it, with all the books that were given by Divine inspiration, and so made up the canon of the Old Testament. Moses in Egypt, and Ezra in Babylon, were wonderfully fitted for eminent service to the church. According, &c. - By the favour of God so disposing the heart of the king.

10. To teach - The order of things in this verse is very observable; first he endeavours to understand God's law and word, and that not for curiosity or ostentation, but in order to practice: next he consciously practices what he did understand, which made his doctrine much more effectual: and then he earnestly desires and labours to instruct others, that they also might know and do it.

11. Words - The phrase seems emphatical, noting that he explained both the words and the things: for the Jews in the land of their captivity had in a great measure lost both the language, and the knowledge of God's commands, and therefore Ezra and his companions instructed them in both.

14. According, &c. - To make inquiry into all abuses and deviations from your law, and to redress them. Which - Which is now and always in thine hand, being the matter of thy daily study.

16. Find - Procure, as that word is used, Gen. vi, 8; xxvi, 12 Psalm 8iv, 3. Whatsoever thou canst get of my subjects by way of free gift. The people - Of Israel.

25. The wisdom - Which God hath put into thy heart, and which appears in the works of thy hand. All that professed the Jewish religion, were to be under the jurisdiction of these Judges.

26. Let judgment - What could David himself, as king, have done more, for the honour of God, and the furtherance of religion?

27. Blessed, &c. - Ezra cannot proceed in his story, without inserting this thankful acknowledgment of God's goodness to him and the people.

28. As the hand, &c. - If God gives us his hand, we are bold and chearful: if he withdraws it, we are weak as water. Whatever service we are enabled to do for God and our generation, God must have all the glory of it.

## VIII

The company that went up with Ezra, ver. 1-15. He sends for the Levites, ver. 16-20. Proclaims a fast, ver. 21-23. Delivers the treasure he brought to the priests and Levites, ver. 24-30. Goes on to Jerusalem, ver. 31, 32. The treasure delivered in there, ver. 33, 34. The people offer, ver. 35. The king's commissions delivered to his lieutenants, ver. 36.

3. Males - Though the males only be expressed yet doubtless they carried the women along with them, as they did the little ones.

13. Whose names are, &c. - It seems the rest came before; so that now all the sons of that family returned.

15. Of Levi - None who were simple Levites, and not the priests. And therefore the Levites mentioned, chap. vii, 7, by anticipation were not yet come to him.

18. By the good hand - If where ministers have been wanting, the vacancies are well supplied, let us ascribe it to the good hand of God, qualifying them for the service, inclining them to it, and opening a door for them.

21. A fast - For public mercies. Publick prayers must be made, that all who are to share in the comfort, may share in the requests for it. Afflict ourselves - For our sins; and so be qualified for the pardon of them. When we are entering on any new condition of life, our care should be to bring into it none of the guilt of the sins of our former condition. When we are in any imminent danger, let us make our peace with God, and then nothing can hurt us. Right way - A safe and prosperous journey; such a way and course as might be best for us.

23. Intreated - He gave us an assurance of his gracious answer to our request.

35. Sin offering - For it is the atonement that secures every mercy to us, which will not be truly comfortable, unless iniquity be taken away, and our peace made with God. They offer twelve bullocks, twelve he-goats, and ninety six rams, (eight times twelve) signifying the union of the two kingdoms. They did not any longer go two tribes one way, and ten tribes another; but all the twelve met by their representatives at the same altar.

## IX

Ezra is troubled at the marriages with strange women, ver. 1-4. His solemn confession to God, ver. 5-15.

3. I rent - Both mine inner and my upper garment.

4. Evening sacrifice - When the people used to assemble together. All good people ought to own those that appear and act for God against vice and profaneness. Every one that fears God, ought to stand by them, and do what he can to strengthen their hands.

5. Heaviness - From that mournful posture, and put myself into the posture of a petitioner. He did this at the time of the evening sacrifice, because then devout people used to come into the courts of the temple, that hearing his confession, they likewise might be made sensible of the sins of the people. And he had an eye to that great propitiation, of which that sacrifice was a peculiar type.

6. Our - He includes himself in the number of the transgressors, because he himself was guilty of many sins; and because the princes and priests, and so many of the people having done this, the guilt was now become national.

7. Have we been - We are not purged from the guilt of our fathers sins, but we are still feeling the sad effects of them; yea, and are repeating the same sins.

8. A little space - It is but a little while since God hath delivered us, and yet we are already returned to our sin. A remnant - The far greatest part of the Israelitish nation were yet in captivity. A nail - Some kind of settlement; whereas before we were tossed and removed from place to place as our masters pleased. It is a metaphor from tents, which are fastened by cords and nails, or pins. Holy place - In Jerusalem, called the holy city, Neh. xi, 1, 18 Dan. ix, 24, which is peculiarly mentioned, because of the temple, which was the nail that fastened their tents and gave them some hopes of continuing in their land. To lighten - That he might revive and comfort our hearts. For as darkness is often put for a state of sorrow and affliction, so light is put for joy and comfort. In bondage - For we are not quite delivered, being even here in subjection to our former lords.

9. A wall - The favour of the kings of Persia whose edicts were their security against all those enemies wherewith they were encompassed: and the gracious providence of God, which had planted them in their own land, and watched over them from time to time.

11. It is unclean - This land is as corrupt as any of the rest of the heathen nations.

12. Strong - Although you may fancy making leagues and marriages with them, as the only way to establish you, yet I assure you, it will weaken and ruin you, and the contrary course will make you strong.

15. We are - We are here in thy presence, and so are all our sins; we are arraigning ourselves before thy tribunal, acknowledging thee to be just, if thou destroy us. Before thee - In judgment, as that word is often used, we must needs fall and perish at thy presence.

## X

The people mourn, ver. 1. Shechaniah encourages Ezra to put away the strange wives, ver. 2-4. All Israel swear to do it, ver. 5. Ezra, mourning assembles the people, ver. 6-9 They all, on his exhortation, agree to the reformation, ver. 10-14. They perform it, ver. 15-17. The names of them that had married strange wives, ver. 18-44.

1. There assembled - The account of his grief, and publick expressions thereof in the court before the temple, being in an instant dispersed over all the city, brought a great company together. See what an happy influence the example of great ones may have upon their inferiors!

2. We - He saith, we, in the name of the people, and their several families, and his own amongst the rest. For this man's name is not in the following catalogue, but there we have his father, Jehiel, and his father's brethren, five other sons of his grandfather, Elam, ver. 26. It was therefore an evidence of his great courage, and good conscience, that he durst so freely discharge his duty, whereby he shewed, that he honoured God more than his nearest and dearest relations. Hope - In case of our repentance, and reformation.

3. Such as are born - These children were only cast out of the common-wealth of Israel, but were not utterly forsaken; probably care was taken by authority, that they should have provision made for them.

6. Went - That with the princes and elders, he might consult about the execution of their resolution. Thither - 'Till he saw something done.

9. Of Judah - Not only of these two tribes, as appears from the following catalogue, where there are priests and Levites; but all the Israelites, ver. 25, who are thus described, because the greatest part of them were of these tribes, though others were mixed with them: and because they all now dwelt in that land, which formerly was appropriated to those tribes. The street - In that street of the city, which was next the temple, and within the view of it, that so they might be as in God's presence, whereby they might be awed to a more faithful and vigourous prosecution of their work. And this place they might chuse rather than the court of the people, because they thought it might be polluted by the delinquents, who were all to come thither. Great rain - Which they took for a token of God's displeasure against them.

14. Our rulers - Let the great council, called the Sanhedrim, be settled, and meet to determine of all particular causes. Judges - Who are best able to inform the great council of the quality of the persons, and all matters of fact and circumstances. Until - Until the thing be done, and God's wrath thereby removed.

15. Employed - To take care that the business should be executed in the manner proposed, that the officers and delinquents of every city should come successively in convenient time and order, as these should appoint, to keep an exact account of the whole transaction, and of the names of the

cities and persons whose causes were dispatched, to give notice to others to come in their turns, and to prepare the business for the hearing of the Judges. These two were priests, as their helpers were Levites; that so they might inform the persons concerned, in any matter of doubt.

16. Separated - Sequestered themselves from all other business, and gave themselves wholly to this.

25. Of Israel - Of the people of Israel, distinguished from the priests and Levites hitherto named.

44. Had children - This implies that most of their wives were barren. Which came to pass by God's special providence, to manifest his displeasure against such matches, and that the putting them away might not be encumbered with too many difficulties. One would think this grievance altogether removed. Yet we meet with it again, Neh. xiii, 22. Such corruptions are easily and insensibly brought in, tho' not easily purged out. The best reformers can but do their endeavour. It is only the Redeemer himself, who when he cometh to Sion, will effectually turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

# NOTES ON THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

## NEHEMIAH.

THIS book continues the history of the children of the captivity, the Jews lately returned out of Babylon. We have a full account of Nehemiah's labours for them, in these his commentaries: wherein he records not only the works of his hands, but the very workings of his heart, inserting many devout reflections and ejaculations, which are peculiar to his writing. Twelve years he was the tirshatha, or governor of Judea, under the same Artaxerxes that gave Ezra his commission. This book relates his concern for Jerusalem and commission to go thither, chap. 1, 2. His building the wall of Jerusalem, notwithstanding much opposition, chap. 3, 4. His redressing the grievances of the people, chap. 5. His finishing the wall, chap. 6. The account he took of the people, chap. 7. His calling the people to read the law, fast and pray, and renew their covenant, chap. 8-10. He peoples Jerusalem and settles the tribe of Levi, chap. 11, 12. He reforms divers abuses, chap. 13. This was the last historical book that was written, as Malachi, the last prophetical book of the old testament.

### I

Nehemiah is informed of the deplorable state of the Jews at Jerusalem, ver. 1-3. He fasts and prays, ver. 4-11

1. The words - Or rather, the acts, as the word often signifies. Chisleu - Which is the ninth month, containing part of November, and part of December. Year - Of Artaxerxes. Shushan - The royal city of Persia.

3. The province - In Judea, now a province under the Persian monarchs. The wall, &c. - The walls and gates continue as Nebuchadnezzar left them; the Jews not being in a condition to rebuild them, nor having commission from the kings of Persia to do so.

4. The God of heaven - Who seeth in secret; secret; having no opportunity of doing it openly.

6. Which I pray, &c. - He refers to all the prayers, which he had for some time been putting up.

11. To fear thy name - Those who truly desire to fear his name, shall be graciously accepted of God. This man - The king: who is but a man and therefore his heart is wholly at thy disposal. favour with men is then comfortable, when we see it springing from the mercy of God. Cup-bearer - Whereby I had opportunity to speak to him, and some favour with him.

## II

Artaxerxes sends Nehemiah to Jerusalem, with a commission to build the wall, ver. 1-8. He comes thither, to the grief of his enemies, ver. 9-11. He secretly views the ruins of it, ver. 12-16. He informs the rulers of his commission, ver. 17, 18. Answers them that derided him, ver. 19, 20.

1. Nisan - Four months after he had heard those sad tidings. The reason of this long delay might be either that his turn of attending upon the king did not come 'till that time: or that 'till then he wanted a fit opportunity to move it to him.

2. Sad - His fasting joined with inward grief had made a sensible change in his countenance. Afraid - It was an unusual and ungrateful thing to come into the king of Persia's presence with any token of sorrow. And he feared a disappointment, because his request was great and invidious, and odious to most of the Persian courtiers.

3. Why should, &c. - All the grievances of the church, but especially its desolations, ought to be matter of grief to all good people, to all that have a concern for God's honour, and are of a public spirit.

4. Let, &c. - My sadness comes not from any disaffection to the king, for whom my hearty prayers are that he may live for ever; but from another cause. Sepulchres - Which by all nations are esteemed sacred and inviolable. He saith not a word of the temple as he spake before a Heathen king who cared for none of these things. I prayed - To direct my thoughts and words, and to incline the king's heart to grant my request.

6. The queen - Which is here noted, as an unusual thing; for commonly the kings of Persia dined alone, and perhaps because the queen expressed some kindness to him, and promoted his request. How long - This question shewed the king's affection to him, and that he was not willing to want his attendance longer than was necessary. A time - He built the walls in fifty two days, chap. vi, 15, and probably not long after returned to the king, by whom he was sent a second time with a more ample commission.

8. King's forest - Of the forest of Lebanon, famous for choice trees. Palace - Of the king's palace, which was adjoining to the house of God. Enter - That I shall build to dwell in while I am there.

10. Horonite - So called either, from the place of his birth or rule, which is supposed to be Horonaim, an eminent city of Moab. The servant - So called probably from the condition from

which he was advanced to his present power and dignity: which also may be mentioned as one reason why he now carried himself so insolently, it being usual for persons suddenly raised from a low state, so to demean themselves.

12. Night - Concealing both his intentions as long as he could, knowing that the life of his business lay in secrecy and expedition. Beast - To prevent noise.

13. I went - The footmen who accompanied him directing and leading him in the way. His design was to go round the city, to observe the compass and condition of the walls and gates, that he might make sufficient provisions for the work.

14. No place - The way being obstructed with heaps of rubbish.

16. That did - Or, were to do, whom he intended to employ in it.

18. Rise up - Let us do it with vigour, and diligence, and resolution, as those that are determined to go through with it. Their hands - Their own and one anothers.

20. No portion - You have no authority over us, nor interest in our church and state, but are aliens from the common-wealth of Israel. Memorial - No testimony, or monument, either of your relation to us by birth or religion, or of your kindness to us, or to this place.

## III

The names of those who presided over the builders, and the parts which each company built, ver. 1-32.

1. Eliashib - Grand-child of Joshua, the first high-priest after their return from Babylon. Rose - Began the work. Ministers should be foremost in every good work, animating others by their example as well as doctrine. Sheep-gate - Which was next to the temple; so called, because the sheep were brought thro' it to be sacrificed. Sanctified - Or, they prepared or repaired it: for so the word sometimes signifies. But our translation seems best, both because that use of the word is most common, and because this is spoken only of this gate, which being built by the priests, and nighest to the temple, and with a special eye to the service of the temple, for which both men and things were most commonly brought in this way, and being also the first part of the building, might be in a peculiar manner sanctified by solemn prayer and sacrifice, whereby it was dedicated to God's service.

5. Their nobles - Did not submit to it, would not further it, either through sloth or covetousness, or secret compliance with the enemies of the Jews. Of their Lord - Of God, whom they owned for their Lord, whose work this was, because it had proceeded thus far by his singular providence: and because it was done for the defense of the city, and people, and temple of God. And therefore they are branded to all posterity. Let not nobles think any thing beneath them, by which they may benefit their country. What is their nobility good for, but that it places them in an higher and larger sphere of usefulness?

7. The throne - Unto the place where the governor of the country on this side Euphrates, under the Persian kings, sometimes had a palace or throne.

8. Fortified - It is not said, they repaired, but they fortified it, either because this part of the wall was less demolished than the other, and therefore they needed not to repair it, but only to make it stronger: or, to note their extraordinary care and diligence, that they would not only repair it, but make it stronger than ever.

9. Half part - As Rome was anciently divided into several quarters or regions, so was Jerusalem; and especially into two parts, whereof one was in the tribe of Benjamin, and nearest the temple, the other in the tribe of Judah, these accordingly had two several rulers, this man and the other, ver. 12, but both under the chief governor of the city.

12. His daughters - Who were either heiresses or rich widows, and caused part to be done at their charges.

14. Beth-haccerem - A town or territory, the government whereof was divided between two persons.

16. Made - By Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx, 20. Whereby it is distinguished from that pool which was natural. Mighty - Or, of the valiant: which possibly was formerly appointed for the receipt of those chief captains that should attend upon the king in their courses.

20. Earnestly - Did his work with eminent diligence and fervency: which is here noted to his commendation. And it is probable, this good man's zeal provoked many, to take the more pains, and make the more haste.

21. The door - Therefore the door was not in the middle of the house, as now they commonly are, but at one end of it.

27. Tekoites - The same spoken of before, who having dispatched their first share sooner than their brethren, freely offered to supply the defects of others, who, as it seems, neglected that part of the work which had been committed to them. And this their double diligence is noted both for the greater shame of their nobles, who would not do any part of it, and for their own honour, who were so far from being corrupted by that bad example, that they were quickened to greater zeal and industry in this pious work.

30. The sixth son of Zalaph - It seems, his five elder brethren, laid not their hands to the work. But in doing that which is good, we need not stay to see our betters go before us.

## IV

The enemies scoff, but Nehemiah prays, and continues the work, ver. 1-6. To frustrate their design, he prays and sets a guard, ver. 7-13. He encourages the workmen, and directs them how to proceed, ver. 14-18. His farther directions, ver. 19-23.

2. In a day - Do they intend to begin, and finish the work, all in one day? For if they spend any long time about it, they cannot think that we will suffer them to do it. The stones - Will they pick up their broken stones out of the ruins, and patch them together. Burnt - Which stones were burnt, and broken, by the Chaldeans when they took the city.

4. A prey - Give them for a prey to their enemies, and let these carry them into the land of captivity.

5. Cover not - Let their wickedness be in thy sight, so as to bring down judgments upon them, that either they may be reformed, or others may be warned by their example. God is said to cover or hide sin when he forbears to punish it. Provoked thee - They have not only provoked us builders, but thee also.

6. The half - Unto half its height.

10. Judah - The Jews now dwelling in Judah, some of them being partly terrified by their enemies, and partly wearied with continual labour. Rubbish - More than we are able suddenly to remove. Not able - Being forced to spend our time in removing the rubbish, and therefore we must desist for a season.

12. By them - Or, among them: whereby they came to the knowledge of their counsels. Tho' these had not zeal enough to help in the work, yet they had some concern for their brethren. Ten tribes - Very often, a certain number for an uncertain. Be upon you - They will invade you every way, by which we can come to you, or you to us; therefore keep watches on every side.

13. Behind - Within the walls where they were not yet raised to their due height, and therefore most liable to the enemies assault. Higher - Upon the tops of the walls where they were finished, and the towers which were built here and there upon the wall; whence they might shoot arrows, or throw stones.

14. Looked - He looked up, engaged God for him, and put himself and his cause under the Divine protection. That was his way, and should be ours: all his cares, all his griefs, all his fears he spread before God. Great and terrible - You think your enemies are great and terrible. But what are they in comparison of God? Especially in opposition to him?

16. From that time forth - Lest our enemies should repeat their enterprize. My servants - Of my domestick servants, and of my guards. Held, &c. - All their weapons: they stood in their arms prepared for battle. Were behind - To encourage them in their work, sometimes to assist with their own hands: and to direct and command them in case of an assault. Judah - The Jews who were upon the wall.

17. A Weapon - This is to be taken figuratively; being a proverbial speech, as when they say of a man pretending kindness, he carries bread in one hand, and a stone in another. Thus must we work out our salvation, with the weapons of our warfare in our hands. For in every duty we must expect opposition from our spiritual enemies.

18. Sounded - To call the people together, when, and where it was necessary.

23. Washing - When they were to wash and cleanse themselves from some impurity, which might befall them or their garments.

## V

The poor complain of being oppressed by the rich, ver. 1-5. Nehemiah removes the oppression, ver. 6-13. He sets an example of compassion on the poor, ver. 14-19.

2. Many - Which is in itself a blessing, but to us is turned into a curse. Take up - We are forced to take up corn, upon unreasonable terms.

3. The dearth - Which might happen, both from the multitude of the people in and near Jerusalem, from their work, which wholly took them up, and kept them from taking care of their families, and from the expectation of their enemies invasion, which hindered them from going abroad to fetch provision, and the people round about from bringing it to them.

5. Our flesh - We are of the same nature, and religion with them, though they treat us as if we were beasts or Heathens. Bondage - We are compelled to sell them for our subsistence. Daughters - Which was an evidence of their great necessity, because their daughters were more tender, and weak, and unfit for bond-service, and more exposed to injuries than their sons. Redeem - Which we are allowed to do, Exod. xxi, 7-11, but have not wherewith to do it.

7. Exact - Which was against the plain and positive law of God, Deut. xxiii, 19, 20, especially in this time of publick calamity. I set - I called a publick congregation, both of the rulers and people, the greatest part whereof were free from this guilt, and therefore more impartial Judges of the matter, and represented it to them, that the offenders might be convinced, and reformed; if not for fear of God, or love of their brethren, yet at least for the publick shame and the cries of the poor. Ezra, and Nehemiah were both good and useful men; but of how different tempers? Ezra was a man of a mild tender spirit, and when told of the sin of the rulers, rent his clothes and wept: Nehemiah forced them to reform, being of a warm and eager spirit. So God's work may be done, and yet different methods taken in doing it; which is a good reason why we should not arraign the management of others, nor make our own standard.

8. We - I, and my brethren, and predecessors, have used our utmost interest and power, both with the kings of Persia, that our brethren might be redeemed from bondage, and with particular persons in Babylon, and Persia, whose bond-slaves the Jews were, and who would not part with them without a price. Be sold - Do you expect that we should pay you a price for them, as we did to the Babylonians?. Or, must we use as much importunity to solicit you for their redemption, as we did to their enemies?

9. Reproach - Who are round about you, and observe all your actions, and will reproach both you for such barbarous usage of your brethren, and religion for your sakes.

10. Brethren - In office; these who are employed with me in the government of this people. Servants - In my name, and for my use. Exact - As a just recompense for our pains and care for the publick good, to which we wholly devote ourselves, even to the neglect of all our private concerns. But I freely remit my own right, and therefore you also ought to do so, seeing I lay no burden upon you, but what I am willing to bear a part of upon my own shoulders.

11. Also - Also require not: which is to be supplied out of the next verse, where it is expressed in their grant of this desire. Hundredth part - Which they required every month for the use of their monies or goods, according to the custom then used.

12. Require - For the hundredth part. Priests - As witnesses; that the oath being taken before the priests, who acted in God's name, the oath might make the more deep and durable impression upon their consciences.

13. My lap - The extreme parts of my garment, which I first folded together, and then shook it and scattered it asunder. This was a form of swearing then in use.

14. Twelve years - Not that he continued so long together at Jerusalem, but he so long governed Jerusalem by himself when present, and in his absence, by a deputy. The bread - That allowance which by the laws of God and nations, and of the king of Persia, the governors might require.

15. The former - Not Ezra, who was no governor, nor Zerubbabel, but others between him and Nehemiah, whom he forbears to name. Beside, &c. - Which they required of the people every day to defray their other expenses. Their servants - Ruled them with rigor and cruelty; which fault of the servants is charged upon their masters, because they did not restrain them. He had an awe of God's mercy, and a fear of offending him. Those that truly fear God, will not dare to do any thing cruel or unjust. And this is not only a powerful, but an acceptable principle both of justice and charity.

16. I continued - Overseeing, directing, and encouraging the workmen, which was my whole business; and this at my own cost. Bought - Of our poor brethren, whose necessities gave abundant opportunity of enriching myself with good bargains.

17. Rulers - Not only Jews of the inferior sort, for whom meaner provisions might suffice, but also their rulers, for whom better provision was fit; who resorted to him upon all occasions, to give him notice of the enemies designs; or to receive his orders.

18. Required not - But bore it out of my own estate: which was very considerable, his office in the Persian court being a place of great profit.

19. According - As I have done thy people good for thy sake, so do me good for thine own sake; for thou art pleased, and hast promised graciously to reward us according to our works, and to mete to men the same measure which they meet to others.

## VI

Nehemiah's answer to his enemies, courting him to an interview, ver. 1-4. To their charge of rebellion, ver. 5-9. To Shemaiah's false prophecy, ver. 10-14. Notwithstanding the treachery of some of the nobles, the work is finished, ver. 15-19

1. The doors - Not all of them.

2. Meet - To consult about the common service of our master the king of Persia, or to make a friendly accommodation.

4. Four times, &c. - We must never be overcome by the greatest importunity, to do anything ill or imprudent: but when we are attacked with the same temptation, still resist it with the same reason and resolution.

5. Open letter - As speaking of a thing commonly known.

7. A king - We have now a king of our nation. Counsel - That we may impartially examine the matter, that thy innocency may be cleared.

9. Strengthen my hands - A good prayer, when we are entering on any particular services or conflicts in our Christian warfare.

10. Shut up - In his chamber adjoining to the temple, upon pretense of singular devotion, and communion with God, and withal upon pretense of certain knowledge, by the Spirit of God concerning their approaching danger, from which thy could be safe nowhere but in the temple. For if Nehemiah had done this, the people would have left their work, and every one have shifted for his own safety.

11. As I - I the chief governor, upon whose presence, the very life of the whole city and nation in a great measure depends: I who have professed such resolution, and courage, and confidence in God. I, who have had such eminent experience of God's assistance, of his calling me to this employment, and carrying me through it when our danger was greater than now it is. Shall I now dishonour God and religion, and betray the people and city of God by my cowardice? Go in - Tho' his life depended upon it.

13. And sin - By going into a place forbidden to me, and that in such a manner, which would have been both sinful and shameful. Reproach - As a coward, and conscious of my own guilt, that they might make me contemptible and odious both to my own people, and to the king of Persia.

14. My God, &c. - This prayer we are not to imitate.

15. Elul - Answering part to our August, and part to September.

## VII

Nehemiah appoints persons to keep the city, ver. 1-4. Reviews the people, ver. 5-7.

3. Hot - 'Till it be clear and broad day; when the people will be ready in case of an assault. They - The watches appointed to that end. Watches - Nehemiah was now about to return to the court, and left the charge of the city to these in his absence.

5. God put it into mine heart - Whatever good motion is in our minds, we must acknowledge it to come from God. What is done by human prudence is to be ascribed to the direction of Divine Providence.

7. Tirshatha - Nehemiah. So it is no wonder that the number of the monies, and other things here contributed, differ from that Ezra ii, 68, 69, because this is another collection.

## VIII

The solemn reading and expounding of the law, ver. 1-8. The joy of the people, ver. 9-12. The keeping of the feast of tabernacles, ver. 13-18.

2. First day - This was the feast of trumpets, which is called a sabbath, and on which they were to have an holy convocation, Lev. xxiii, 24. And it was on this day, the altar was set up, after their return from captivity; in remembrance of which they had probably kept it ever since, with more than ordinary solemnity.

7. Understand - As well the words, which being Hebrew, now needed to be translated into the Chaldee or Syriack language, now, the common language of that people, who together with their religion, had also in a great part lost their language; as also the meaning of them: they expounded

the mind and will of God in what they read, and applied it to the peoples present condition. Place - That is, In their several places and stations into which the company seems to have been distributed for conveniency of hearing; it not being likely that so vast a congregation could distinctly hear one man's voice. Or, by their stations, that is, by the several stations of the Levites, and persons last named; who seem to have had several scaffolds, by comparing this with chap. ix, 4, upon which thy stood, as Ezra did upon his pulpit, ver. viii, 4.

8. They - Ezra and his companions successively. Sense - The meaning of the Hebrew words, which they expounded in the common language. Thy gave - So they gave them both a translation of the Hebrew words into the Chaldee, and an exposition of the things contained in them.

9. Wept - Out of a sense of their guilt and danger by reason of it.

10. Eat - Feast before the Lord. Send - For the relief of your poor brethren. Holy - Being the feast of trumpets, and the beginning of this joyful month, wherein so many days of thanksgiving were to be observed. Strength - Rejoicing in God in serving him with chearfulness, and thankfulness, which is your duty always, but now especially, will give you that strength both of mind and body, which you greatly need, both to perform all the duties required of you, and to oppose all the designs of your enemies.

13. Levites - Chusing rather to confess their ignorance than vainly to pretend to more knowledge than they had: wherein they shew both humility, and serious godliness, that they were more careful to learn their duty than to preserve their reputation.

15. Mount - The mount of Olives, which was next Jerusalem, and stored with olive-branches, and probably with the rest: for these trees seem to have been planted hereabouts principally, for the use of the city in this very feast, which, though, long neglected, should have been celebrated every year. And this place seems to be here designed as the most eminent place, being put for any place near to the several cities of Judah, where these branches were to be procured.

17. Done so - So, as to the manner and circumstances. They never kept this feast so joyfully, having not only the same causes of rejoicing which they formerly had, but special causes to increase their joy; they never kept it so solemnly and religiously: for whereas at other times, only the first and last day of that feast were celebrated with an holy convocation, now there was an holy convocation, and the people assembled, and attended upon the reading of the law, every day of this feast.

## IX

The people keep a solemn fast, ver. 1-3. The Levites bless God for his goodness to them and their fathers, ver. 4-8. In Egypt and in their journey out of it, ver. 9-12. On mount Sinai, ver. 13, 14. And their journey toward Canaan, ver. 15-18. In the wilderness, ver. 19-21. In driving out the Canaanites, ver. 22-26. In hearing their prayer when in trouble, ver. 27-31. They confess their sin, ver. 32-37. And seal a covenant with God, ver. 38.

1. Now - The next day, but one after the feast of tabernacles, which begun on the fourteenth day, and ended on the twenty second, for their consciences having been fully awakened and their

hearts filled with grief for their sins, which they were not allowed to express in that time of publick joy; now they resume their former thoughts, and recalling their sins to mind, set apart a day for solemn fasting and humiliation.

2. Separated - From all unnecessary society with the Heathens, and particularly from those strange women whom some of them had married. For though Ezra had done this formerly, yet, it seems, there were some criminals, without his knowledge, or, these were some new delinquents, that since that time had fallen into the same error, and shewed the truth of their repentance by forsaking their beloved sins, and dearest relations.

3. Book of the law - As they did before, giving them the sense of what they read. Fourth part - For three hours; there were twelve hours in their day, probably they began after the morning sacrifice, and continued their work till the evening sacrifice. The work of a fast-day is good work. We should endeavour to make a day's work, a good day's work of it.

4. Stairs - Upon such stairs, or pulpits, as the Levites used to stand upon, when they taught the people. But they stood upon several pulpits, each of them teaching that part of the congregation which was allotted him, or praying, or blessing God with them. Loud voice - Thereby testifying their deep sense of their sins and miseries, and their servant, and importunate desire of God's mercy.

13. Good statutes - The moral and judicial precepts were all founded on natural equity. And even the ceremonial were tokens of God's goodness, being types of gospel-grace.

17. Made - Designed, and resolved to do so, Num. xiv, 4, and therefore they are said to do so, as Abraham is said to have offered up Isaac, Heb. xi, 17, because he intended to do it.

22. Divide - The Heathen nations, whom God in a great measure destroyed, and the remainders of them he dispersed into corners; that whereas before the Israelites came, they had large habitations, now they were cooped up, some in one town, and some in another, in the several corners of their land, while the Israelites dwelt in a large place, and had the possession of their whole land, some few and small parcels excepted.

32. Mercy - He adds mercy, because the covenant in itself was not a sufficient ground of hope, because they had so basely broken it. God was discharged from keeping it, and therefore they fly to God's free and rich mercy for relief.

33. Thou art just. &c. - It becomes us, when we are under the rebukes of providence, be they ever so sharp, or ever so long continued, still to justify God, and to own we are punished less than our iniquities deserve.

37. Yieldeth much, &c. - We plow, and sow, and labour, and thou givest thy blessing to our endeavours; and yet in a great measure this is not for ourselves, as formerly it was, but for our kings, to whom we pay heavy tributes. Dominion - Pressing or forcing both us and our beasts to go and to do what they please.

38. Sure covenant, &c. - It was sealed and left upon record, that it might be a witness against them, if they dealt deceitfully.

## X

The names of those who set their seal to the covenant, ver. 1- 27. An account of those who consented thereto, ver. 28-31. They engage to adhere to the temple service, ver. 32-39.

1. Sealed - Both in their own names, and in the name of all the rest. It may seem strange that Ezra doth not appear among them. But that might be because he was prevented, by some sickness, or other extraordinary impediment. It is true, we meet with Ezra after this, at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, chap. xii, 36, and therefore he was then freed from this impediment, whatsoever it was.

29. Their nobles - The commonality agreed with the nobles in this good work, great men never look so great, as when they encourage religion and are examples of it: and they would by that, as much as any thing, make an interest in the most valuable of their inferiors, who would cleave to them closer than they can imagine. Observe their nobles are called their brethren; for in the things of God, rich and poor, high and low meet together. They cleave - They ratified what the others had done in their names, declaring their assent to it.

31. People of the land - The Heathens. On the sabbath - They that covenant to keep all the commandments of God, must particularly covenant to keep the sabbath holy. For the profanation of this is a sure inlet to all manner of profaneness.

## XI

The rulers and men drawn by lot dwell at Jerusalem, ver. 1, 2. Their names, numbers and families, ver. 3-19. The cities and villages that were peopled by the rest, ver. 20-36.

1. To dwell - That the buildings of the city might be compleated, and the safety of it better provided for.

2. Blessed - Because they denied themselves, and their own safety and profit for the publick good; for this city was the butt of all the malicious plots of their enemies; and for the present it was rather chargeable than beneficial to its inhabitants.

3. Province - Of Judea, which was now made a province. Israel - The generality of the people of Israel, whether of Judah, or Benjamin, or any other tribe. These he calls Israel rather than Judah, because there were many of the other tribes now incorporated with them; and because none of the tribes of Israel, except Judah and Benjamin, dwelt in Jerusalem.

9. Overseer - The captain of their thousand.

16. Outward - For those things belonging to the temple and its service, which were to be done without it, or abroad in the country, as the gathering in of the voluntary contributions, or other necessary provision out of the several parts of the land.

17. To begin - In the publick and solemn prayers and praises, which were constantly joined with the morning and evening sacrifice, at which the singers were present, and praised God with a psalm or hymn which, this man began.

21. The Nethinims dwelt in Ophel - Which was upon the wall of Jerusalem, because they were to do the servile work of the temple: therefore they were to be posted near it, that they might be ready to attend.

24. Was, &c. - Or, on the king's part, to determine civil causes and controversies between man and man, by the laws of that kingdom; between the king and people; as in matters of tribute, or grievances.

36. Divisions - Or, for the Levites (those who were not settled in Jerusalem) there were divisions, places appointed for them, and distributed among them. Thus were they settled free and easy, tho' few and poor. And they might have been happy, but for that general lukewarmness, with which they are charged by the prophet Malachi, who prophesied about this time and in whom prophecy ceased for some ages, 'till it revived in the great prophet.

## XII

The chief of the priests and Levites that came up with Zerubbabel, ver. 1-9. The succession of the chief-priests, ver. 10- 21. The eminent Levites, ver. 22-26. The wall dedicated, ver. 27- 43. The offices of the priests and Levites settled, ver. 44-47.

1. Priests - The chief of the priests, the heads of those twenty four courses which David appointed by divine direction, 1 Chron. xxiv, 1-19. And whereas there were twenty four, and here but twenty-two, and ver.

12, &c. only twenty, the reason of this difference may be, because two of the twenty four courses were extinct in Babylon, and two of the persons here named, ver. 2, 5, Hattush, and Maadiah, may be omitted in the account of the posterity of these, ver. 12, &c. because they had no posterity. Ezra - Either this was another Ezra, or if it were the same mentioned Ezra vii, 1, he lived to a great age; which may well be supposed, considering his great sobriety, and his great piety to which God promised long life, and withal the special providence of God continuing him so long in such a season, wherein the church of God did greatly need his help and counsel.

8. Moreover, &c. - He was to see, that the psalms of thanksgiving were continually sung in the temple, in due time and manner.

10. Jeshua - Here follows a catalogue of the Jewish high-priests; which was the more necessary, because their times were now to be measured, not by the years of their kings as formerly, but by their high-priests.

12. Priests - As their fathers were priests in the days of Joshua, so in the days of Joiakim the son of Joshua, the sons of those persons executed the priesthood in their father's steads, some of their fathers probably being yet living, and many of them dead.

22. Darius - Darius Noehus; and so this Jaddua might be father to him who was in the days of Darius Codomanus, and of Alexander the Great.

27. The wall - Of the city itself, which is here dedicated to God, and to his honour and service, not only upon a general account, by which we ought to devote ourselves, and all that is ours, to God; but upon a more special ground, because this was a place which God himself had chosen, and sanctified by his temple and gracious presence, and therefore did of right belong to him; whence it is often called the holy city. And they restored it to God by this dedication, withal imploring the presence, and favour, and blessing of to this city by solemn prayers, and praises, and sacrifices,

wherewith this dedication was accompanied. Places - To which they were now retired after that great and general assembly, chap. 8, 9, & 10. chap. viii, 1 &c.

30. Purified themselves - They that would be instrumental to sanctify others, must sanctify themselves, and set themselves apart for God, with purity of mind and sincerity of intention.

31. Princes - And half of the people with them. The wall - For the wall was broad and strong, and so ordered that men might conveniently walk upon it. Right hand - Towards the south and east.

39. Stood still - Waiting, as also their brethren did, that they might go together in due order into God's house, there to perfect the solemnity.

43. The children rejoiced - And their hosanna's were not despised, but are recorded to their praise. All that share in public mercies, ought to join in public thanksgivings.

44. Rejoiced - For the eminent gifts and graces which they observed in many of them: for the great benefit which they had now received by their ministry: and for the competent provision which hereby was made for them, that so they might wholly wait upon their office. The sure way for ministers to gain an interest, in the affections of their people, is to wait on their ministry, to spend their whole time, and thought, and strength therein.

45. The ward - That ward, or charge, which God had prescribed to them. And in particular the charge of purification, of taking care that no unclean person or thing should enter into the house or courts of the Lord.

47. Sanctified - They set apart the first-fruits and tithes from their own share, and devoted them to the use of the Levites. And so did the Levites by the tithe of the tithes. Thus they all conscientiously paid their dues, and did not profane those things which God had sanctified, nor take them into their own common use. When what is contributed for the support of religion, is given with an eye to God, it is sanctified, and will cause the blessing to rest upon the house, and all that is therein.

## XIII

The Israelites are separated from the mixt multitude, ver. 1-3. Nehemiah cleansed the chambers of the temple, ver. 4-9. He recovers and secures the portion of the priests and Levites, ver. 10-14. Contends with the nobles concerning the sabbath, and takes care for the due observance of it, ver. 15-22. Restrains them from marrying strange wives, ver. 23-31.

1. That day - Not presently after the dedication of the wall and city, but upon a certain day, when Nehemiah was returned from the Persian court to Jerusalem, from which he had been absent for some considerable time, in which some errors and abuses had crept in. Not come - Not be incorporated into the common-wealth of Israel, nor be joined with any Israelite in marriage.

3. Multitude - All the heathenish people with whom they had contracted alliance.

4. Eliashib - The high-priest. Chamber - Of the chambers, the high-priest having the chief power over the house of God, and all the chambers belonging to it. Tobiah - The Ammonite, and a violent enemy to God's people.

5. Prepared - By removing the things out of it, uniting divers small chambers into one, and furnishing it for the use of Tobiah when he came to Jerusalem: whom he seems to have lodged there, that he might have more free communication with him.

6. But, &c. - Eliashib took the occasion of my absence to do these things. Came I - From Jerusalem; where he had been once and again.

8. Grieved me - That so sacred a place should be polluted by one who in many respects ought not to come there, being no priest, a stranger, an Ammonite, and one of the worst of that people; and that all this should be done by the permission and order of the high-priest.

10. Not given - Which might be either,

1. from this corrupt high-priest Eliashib, who took their portions, as he did the sacred chambers, to his own use, or employed them for the entertainment of Tobiah, and his other great allies. Or,
2. from the people, who either out of covetousness reserved them to themselves, contrary to their own solemn agreement, or were so offended at Eliashib's horrid abuse of sacred things, that they abhorred the offering and service of God, and therefore neglected to bring in their tithes, which they knew would be perverted to bad uses. Fled - To his possession in the country, being forced to do so for a livelihood.

11. Contended - I sharply reproved those priests to whom the management of those things was committed, for neglect of their duty, and breach of their late solemn promise. Why, &c. - You have not only injured men in with-holding their dues, but you have occasioned the neglect of God's house and service. Gathered - To Jerusalem from their several country possessions. Set - Restored them to the exercise of their office.

12. Bought - Out of the respect which they had to Nehemiah, and because they saw they would now be applied to their proper uses.

13. Faithful - By the consent of those who knew them. Such he now sought out the more diligently, because he had experience of the perfidiousness of the former trustees.

16. Jerusalem - The holy city, where God's house was; and where the great judicatories of the nation were. So this is added as an aggravation of their sin, that it was done with manifest contempt of God and man.

17. Nobles - Their chief men and rulers; whom he charges with this sin, because though others did it, it was by their countenance or connivance: probably too by their example. If the nobles allowed themselves in recreations, in idle visits and idle talk on the sabbath day, the men of business would profane it by their worldly employments, as the more justifiable of the two.

19. At the gates - Out of a diffidence in those, to whom the keeping of the gates was committed.

22. Cleanse - Because the work they now were set upon, though common in its nature, yet was holy in design of it, and had respect unto the sabbath: and, because the day in which they were to do this was the sabbath-day, for the observation whereof they were obliged to purify themselves. Gates - The gates of the city; not daring to trust the common porters, he commits the charge of them upon the sabbath-days, to the Levites, to whom the care of sanctifying the sabbath did properly belong. Mercy - Whereby he intimates, that though he mentioned his good-works, as things wherewith God was well-pleased, and which he had promised to reward, yet he neither did, nor durst trust to their merit, or his own worthiness, but, when he had done all, he judged himself an

unprofitable servant, and one that needed God's infinite mercy to pardon all his sins, and particularly those infirmities and corruptions which adhered to his good deeds.

25. Cursed - Caused them to be excommunicated and cast out of the society of God's people. This and the following punishments were justly inflicted upon them, because this transgression was contrary both to a plain law of God, and to their own late solemn covenants. Smote - I caused to be beaten with stripes, according to the law, Deut. xxv, 2, such whose faults were most aggravated; to whom he added this punishment over and above the former. Plucked off - Or, shaved them. The hair was an ensign of liberty among the eastern nations; and baldness was a disgrace, and token of slavery and sorrow.

28. And one, &c. - Said by Josephus to be that Manasses, who by Sanballat's interest procured liberty to build the Samaritan temple in mount Gerizim; to which those priests who had married strange wives, or been otherwise criminal, betook themselves, and with, or after them, others of the people in the same or like circumstances. Chased - From my presence and court, from the city and temple, and from the congregation and church of Israel.

31. For good - This may well be the summary of our petitions. We need no more to make us happy but this.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF ESTHER

BOTH Jews and Christians have generally supposed Mordecai to be the writer of this book, which shews the care of God even over those Israelites, who were still scattered among the Heathens. It is the narrative of a plot to cut off all the Jews, disappointed by a wonderful concurrence of providences. The name of God is not found in this book: but the, finger of God is, directing so many minute events for the deliverance of his people. The particulars are very encouraging to God's people, in the most difficult and dangerous times. Here we are told how Esther came to be queen, and Mordecai to be great at court, chap. 1, 2. How Haman obtained an order for the destruction of the Jews, chap. 3. The distress of the Jews thereupon, chap. 4. The defeating of Haman's plot against Mordecai, chap. 5-7. The defeating of his plot against the Jews, chap. 8. The care taken to perpetuate the memory of this, chap. 9, 10.

### I

Ahasuerus feasts his great men, ver. 1-9. Sends for his queen, who refuses to come, ver. 10, 11. He divorces her, ver. 12-22.

1. Ahasuerus - Many suppose this to be Darius Hystapas, for his kingdom was thus vast, and he subdued India, as Herodotus reports: and one of his wives was called Atossa, differing little

from Hadassah, which is Esther's other name, Esth ii, 7. Provinces - So seven new provinces were added to those hundred and twenty mentioned, Dan. vi, 1.

2. Sat - Was settled in the peaceable possession of it. Shushan - The chief or royal city. Shushan might be the proper name of the palace, which thence was given to the whole city. Here the kings of Persia used to keep their courts in winter, as at Exbatana in summer.

4. Many days - Making every day a magnificent feast, either for all his princes, or for some of them, who might come to the feast successively, as the king ordered them to do. The Persian feasts are much celebrated in authors, for their length and luxury.

6. Beds - For in those eastern countries, they did not then sit at tables as we do, but rested or leaned upon beds or couches.

8. The law - According to this law which the king had now made, that none should compel another to drink more than he pleased. How does this Heathen prince shame many, that are called Christians, who think they do not make their friends welcome, unless they make them drunk, and under pretense of sending the health round, send the sin round, and death with it!

9. Women - While the king entertained the men. For this was the common custom of the Persians, that men and women did not feast together.

12. Refused - Being favoured in this refusal by the law of Persia, which was to keep mens wives, and especially queens, from the view of other men.

13. The times - The histories of former times, what princes have done in such cases as this was.

14. Saw - Who had constant freedom of access to the king, and familiar converse with him: which is thus expressed, because the Persian kings were very seldom seen by their subjects. Sat - Who were his chief counsellors and officers.

18. Contempt - Contempt in the wives, and thereupon wrath in the husbands; and consequently strife in families.

## II

The virgins of the kingdom are gathered together, ver. 1-4. And Esther with the rest, ver. 5-8. She finds favour with the king's chamberlain, ver. 9-11. The manner of preparing the virgins, and bringing them to the king, ver. 12-14. Esther pleases him, who makes her queen, ver. 15-20. Mordecai discovers a conspiracy against the king, ver. 21-23.

3. Keeper - Of all the women, both virgins and concubines: only the virgins he himself took care of, as requiring more care and caution, and the concubines be committed to Shaashgaz, ver. 14, his deputy. Purification - That is, to cleanse them from all impurities, to perfume, and adorn, and every way prepare them for the king: for the legal purification of the Jews he never regarded.

7. Esther - Hadassah was her Hebrew name before her marriage; and she was called Esther by the king after it.

9. Pleased - Because she was very beautiful, therefore he supposed she would be acceptable to the king; and by the Divine power, which moveth the hearts of men which way he pleaseth.

10. Shew it - Lest the knowledge hereof should either make her contemptible, or bring some inconvenience to the whole nation; but there was also an hand of God in causing this to be concealed, for the better accomplishment of that which he designed, though Mordecai was ignorant of it.

13. Desired - For ornament, or by way of attendance. And it should be observed, that every one whom the king took to his bed, was his wife of a lower rank, as Hagar was Abraham's, so that it would have been no sin or dishonour to Esther, though she had not been made queen.

19. Sat - By office, as one of the king's guards or ministers; being advanced to this place by Esther's favour.

## III

Haman offended at Mordecai, resolves to destroy all the Jews, ver. 1-6. He obtains an order from the king, to have them all slain on one day, ver. 7-11. This order is sent throughout the kingdom, ver. 12-15.

1. Agagite - An Amalekite of the royal seed of that nation, whose kings were successively called Agag. All the princes - Gave him the first place and seat, which was next to the king.

2. But, &c. - Probably the worship required was not only civil, but Divine: which as the kings of Persia arrogated to themselves, so they did sometimes impart this honour to some of their chief favourites, that they should be adored in like manner. And that it was so here, seems more than probable, because it was superfluous, to give an express command to all the kings servants, to pay a civil respect to so great a prince, which of course they used, and therefore a Divine honour must be here intended. And that a Jew should deny this honour, is not strange, seeing the wise Grecians did positively refuse to give this honour to the kings of Persia themselves, even when they were to make their addresses to them: and one Timocrates was put to death by the Athenians for worshipping Darius in that manner.

4. To see - What the event of it would be. For, &c. - And therefore did not deny this reverence out of pride, but merely out of conscience.

6. Scorn - He thought that vengeance was unsuitable to his quality. Destroy - Which he attempted, from that implacable hatred which, as an Amalekite, he had against them; from his rage against Mordecai; and from Mordecai's reason of this contempt, because he was a Jew, which as he truly judged, extended itself to all the Jews, and would equally engage them all in the same neglect. And doubtless Haman included those who were returned to their own land: for that was now a province of his kingdom.

7. They cast - The diviners cast lots, according to the custom of those people, what day, and what month would be most lucky, not for his success with the king (of which he made no doubt) but for the most effectual extirpation of the Jews. Wherein appears likewise both his implacable malice, and unwearied diligence in seeking vengeance of them with so much trouble to himself; and God's singular providence in disposing the lot to that time, that the Jews might have space to get the decree reversed.

11. The silver - Keep it to thy own use; I accept the offer for the deed.

15. The city - Not only the Jews, but a great number of the citizens, either because they were related to them, or engaged with them in worldly concerns; or out of humanity and compassion toward so vast a number of innocent people, appointed as sheep for the slaughter.

## IV

The Jews fast and mourn, ver. 1-3. Esther is informed of the design, ver. 4-9, Mordecai presses her to intercede with the king, ver. 10-14. She desires all the Jews to keep a solemn fast, ver. 15-19.

1. Cry - To express his deep sense of the mischief coming upon his people. It was bravely done, thus publickly to espouse a just cause though it seemed to be a desperate one.

2. Sackcloth - Lest it should give the king any occasion of grief and trouble. But what availed, to keep out the badges of sorrow unless they could have kept out the causes of sorrow too? To forbid sackcloth to enter unless they could likewise forbid sickness, and trouble, and death?

4. To clothe - That so he might be capable of returning to his former place, if not of coming to her to acquaint her with the cause of his sorrow.

11. Inner court - Within which, the king's residence and throne was. Not called - This was decreed, to maintain both the majesty, and the safety of the king's person; and by the contrivance of the greater officers of state, that few or none might have access to the king but themselves and their friends. I have not been called, &c. - Which gives me just cause to fear that the king's affections are alienated from me, and that neither my person nor petition will be acceptable to him.

14. From another place - This was the language of strong faith, against hope believing in hope. Who knoweth - It is probable God hath raised thee to this honour for this very season. We should every one of us consider, for what end God has put us in the place where we are? And when an opportunity offers of serving God and our generation, we must take care not to let it slip.

16. Fast - And pray; so as you use to do, leave off your common dinners by day, and suppers at night, and eat and drink no more than mere necessity requires; that so you may give yourselves to constant and fervent prayers. Maidens - Which she had chosen to attend upon her person, and were doubtless either of the Jewish nation, or Proselytes. Which is not, &c. - Which may belong, either

1. to the thing only, that as they did fast, so she would. Or, rather,
2. to the time of three days and three nights; for so she might do, though she went to the king on the third day. For the fast began at evening, and so she might continue her fast three whole nights, and two whole days, and the greatest part of the third; a part of a day being reputed a day in the account of scripture, and other authors: of which see on Matt. xii, 40. Yea, she might fast all that day too: for it is probable she went not to the king 'till he had dined; when she supposed she might find him in the most mild and pleasant humour, and then returned to her apartment, where she fasted 'till the evening.

## V

Esther finding favour with the king, invites him and Haman to a banquet, ver. 1-5. She invites them to a second, ver. 6-8. Haman makes a gallows for Mordecai, ver. 9-14.

2. Held out - In testimony that he pardoned her presumption, and was ready to grant her petition. Touched - In token of her thankful acceptance of the king's favour, and of her reverence and submission.

3. It shall be given - God in his providence often prevents the fears and outdoes the hopes of his servants. To the half of the kingdom - A proverbial expression: that is, nothing in reason shall be denied.

4. Haman - Whom she invited, that by shewing such respect to the king's great favourite, she might insinuate herself the more into the king's affection; and, that if she saw fit, she might then present her request to the king.

6. Of wine - So called, because it consisted not of meats, which probably the king had plentifully eaten before, but of fruits and wines; which banquets were very frequent among the Persians.

8. Tomorrow - I will acquaint thee with my humble request. She did not present her petition at this time, but delayed it 'till the next meeting; either because she was a little daunted with the king's presence, or, because she would farther engage the king's affection to her, and would also intimate to him that her petition was of a more than ordinary nature: but principally by direction of Divine providence, which took away her courage of utterance for this time, that she might have a better opportunity for it the next time, by that great accident which happened before it.

9. Nor moved - To shew how little he feared him, and that he had a firm confidence in his God, that he would deliver him and his people in this great exigency.

10. Refrained - From taking present vengeance upon Mordecai, which he might easily have effected, either by his own, or any of his servants hands, without any fear of inconveniency to himself. But herein God's wise and powerful providence appeared, in disposing Haman's heart, contrary to his own inclination, and making him, as it were, to put fetters upon his own hands.

12. Am I - Thus he makes that matter of glorying which was the occasion of his utter ruin. So ignorant are the wisest men, and subject to fatal mistakes, rejoicing when they have most cause of fear, and sorrowing for those things which tend to joy and comfort.

13. Availeth - Gives me no content. Such torment did his envy and malice bring upon him. Sitting - Enjoying that honour and privilege without disturbance, and denying me the worship due to me by the king's command. Thus tho' proud men have much to their mind, if they have not all to their mind, it is nothing. The thousandth part of what Haman had, would give a modest, humble man, as much happiness as he expects to receive from anything under the sun. And Haman as passionately complains, as if he was in the lowest depth of poverty!

14. Fifty cubits - That it may be more conspicuous to all, and thereby be more disgraceful to Mordecai, and strike all Haman's enemies with a greater dread of despising or opposing him.

## VI

Providence recommends Mordecai to the king's favour, ver. 1- 3. Haman is constrained publickly to honour him thro' the city, ver. 4-11. His friends foretell his doom, ver. 12, 13, He goes to the banquet, ver. 14.

1. Sleep - How vain are all the contrivances of foolish man against the wise and omnipotent God, who hath the hearts and hands of kings and all men perfectly at his disposal, and can by such trivial accidents (as they are accounted) change their minds, and produce such terrible effects. Were read - His mind being troubled he knew not how, nor why, he chuses this for a diversion, God putting this thought into him, for otherwise he might have diverted himself, as he used to do, with his wives or concubines, or voices and instruments of musick, which were far more agreeable to his temper.

3. Nothing - He hath had no recompence for this great and good service. Which might either happen through the king's forgetfulness; or through the envy of the courtiers; or because he was a Jew, and therefore odious and contemptible.

4. Haman - Early in the morning, because his malice would not suffer him to sleep; and he was impatient 'till he had executed his revenge; and was resolved to watch for the very first opportunity of speaking to the king, before he was engaged in other matters. Outward court - Where he waited; because it was dangerous to come into the inner court without special license, chap. iv, 11.

6. Man - He names none, because he would have the more impartial answer. And probably knew nothing of the difference between Haman and Mordecai. Thought - As he had great reason to do, because of the favour which the king had shewed to him above all others.

8. Royal apparel - His outward garment, which was made of purple, interwoven with gold, as Justin and Cartius relate.

12. Gate - To his former place; shewing that as he was not overwhelmed by Haman's threats, so he was not puffed up with this honour. Cover'd - In token of his shame and grief for his unexpected disappointment, and for the great honour done to his abhorred adversary, by his own hands, and with his own public disgrace.

13. Wise men - The magicians, whom after the Persian manner he had called together to consult upon this strange emergency.

14. To bring - Who was now slack to go thither, by reason of the great dejection of his own mind.

## VII

Esther petitions for her life, and the lives of her people, ver. 1- 4. She tells the king that Haman is the man who designed her ruin, ver. 5, 6. By the king's order, he is hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai, ver. 7-10.

3. My life - It is my only request, that thou wouldst not give me up to the malice of that man who designs to take away my life. Even a stranger, a criminal, shall be permitted to petition for his life. But that a friend, a wife, a queen, should have occasion to make such a petition, was very affecting.

4. Sold - By the cruelty of that man who offered a great sum to purchase our destruction. Countervail - His ten thousand talents would not repair the king's loss, in the customs and tributes which the king receives from the Jews, within his dominions.

5. Who, &c. - The expressions are short and doubled, as proceeding from a discomposed and enraged mind. Durst - That is, to circumvent me, and procure a decree, whereby not only my estate should be so much impaired, and so many of my innocent subjects destroyed, but my queen also involved in the same destruction. We sometimes startle at that evil, which we ourselves are chargeable with. Ahasuerus is amazed at that wickedness, which he himself was guilty of. For he consented to the bloody edict. So that Esther might have said, Thou art the man!

6. Afraid - And it was time for him to fear, when the queen was his prosecutor, the king his judge, his own conscience a witness against him. And the surprising turns of providence that very morning, could not but increase his fear.

7. Went - As disdaining the company and sight of so audacious a person: to cool and allay his troubled and inflamed spirits, and to consider what punishment was fit to be inflicted upon him. He saw - By the violent commotion of the king's mind.

8. Bed - On which the queen sat at meat. Force - Will he attempt my queen's chastity, as he hath already attempted her life! He speaks not this out of real jealousy, but from an exasperated mind, which takes all occasions to vent itself against the person who gave the provocation. They - The king's and queen's chamberlains attending upon them. Covered - That the king might not be offended or grieved with the sight of a person whom he now loathed: and because they looked upon him as a condemned person; for the faces of such used to be covered.

## VIII

The estate of Haman is given to Esther, ver. 1, 2. Esther petitions the king, to reverse the edict against the Jews, ver. 3-6. They are authorized to defend themselves, ver. 7-14. The Jews and their friends rejoice, ver. 15-17.

1. The house - With all his goods and estate, which being justly forfeited to the king, he no less justly bestows it upon the queen, to compensate the danger to which Haman had exposed her. Came - Was by the queen's desire admitted into the king's presence, and family, and, as it seems, made one of the seven princes. Had told - How nearly he was related to her: which 'till this time she had wisely concealed.

2. Ring - That ring which he had formerly given to Haman he now gives to Mordecai, and with it that power whereof this ring was a sign, making him, as Haman had been, the keeper of his signet. Set - As her steward, to manage that great estate for her as he thought fittest.

3. To put - To repeal that cruel decree.

5. If &c. - She uses various expressions, that she might confirm the king's favour, by such a full submission to his good pleasure. Haman - She prudently takes off the hatefulness of the action from the king, and lay's it upon Haman, who had for his own ends contrived the whole business, and circumvented the king in it.

8. Reverse - For this reason he could not recall the former letters, because they were irrevocable by the law of the Medes and Persians. How much more prudent is our constitution, that no law whatever can be established as to be unrepealable? It is God's prerogative, not to repent, and to say what can never be altered.

9. Then - Which was above two months after the former decree. All which time God suffered the Jews to lie under the error of this dreadful day, that they might be more throughly humbled for, and purged from those many and great sins under which they lay; that they might be convinced of their great sin and folly in the many offers they had had of returning to their native country, by which means being dispersed in the several parts of this vast dominion, they were like to be a very easy prey to their enemies, whereas their brethren in Judea were in a better capacity to preserve themselves: and for the greater illustration of God's glorious power, and wisdom, and goodness, in giving his people such an admirable and unexpected deliverance.

10. Riders - Which were not employed in sending the former letter: but this coming later required more care and speed, that the Jews might be eased from their present fears, and have time to provide for their own defense.

11. To stand - To fight for the defense of their lives against all that should seek to destroy them. The power - Either governors or governed, without any exception either of age, dignity, or sex, Both little ones and women - Which is here added, to strike the greater terror into their enemies; and according to the laws and customs of this kingdom; whereby children were punished for their parents offenses: yet we read nothing in the execution of this decree of the slaughter of women or children, nor is it probable, they would kill their innocent children, who were so indulgent to their families, as not to meddle with the spoil.

15. Great crown - Which the chief of the Persian princes were permitted to wear but with sufficient distinction from the king's crown. The city - Not only Jews, but the greatest number of the citizens, who by the law of nature abhorred bloody counsels, and had a complacency in acts of mercy.

16. Joy - This explains the former metaphor by two words expressing the same thing, to denote the greatness of the joy. honour - Instead of that contempt under which they had lain.

## IX

The Jews slay their enemies, ver. 1-11. A second day is granted them, ver. 12-19. A yearly feast is instituted, in memory of this great deliverance, ver. 20-32

2. No man - Their enemies, though they did take up arms against them, yet were easily conquered and destroyed by them.

6. Shushan - In the city so called. Slew - Whom they knew to be such as would watch all opportunities to destroy them; which also they might possibly now attempt to do.

10. But, &c. - Because they would leave it to their children, that it might appear what they did was not done out of malice, or covetousness, but out of mere necessity, and by that great law of self-preservation.

12. What - In which doubtless many more were slain. So that I have fully granted thy petition. And yet, if thou hast any thing farther to ask, I am ready to grant it.

13. Let it, &c. - To kill their implacable enemies. For it is not improbable that the greatest and worst of them had hidden themselves for that day; after which, the commission granted to the Jews being expired, they confidently returned to their homes. Hanged - They were slain before; now let their bodies be hanged on their father's gallows, for their greater infamy, and the terror of all others who shall presume to abuse the king in like manner, or to persuade him to execute such cruelties upon his subjects.

26. Pur - This Persian word signifies a lot, because Haman had by lot determined this time to be the time of the Jews destruction.

27. As joined - Gentile Proselytes; who were obliged to submit to other of the Jewish laws, and therefore to this also; the rather because they enjoyed the benefit of this day's deliverance; without which the Jewish nation and religion had been in a great measure, if not wholly, extinct. According - According to that writing which was drawn up by Mordecai, and afterwards confirmed by the consent of the Jews.

29. Wrote - The former letter, ver. 20, did only recommend but this enjoins the observation of this solemnity: because this was not only Mordecai's act, but the act of all the Jews, binding themselves and posterity.

30. Peace - With peace, friendship and kindness to his brethren, and truth, sincerity.

31. Cry - For those great calamities which were decreed to all the Jews, and for the removing of which, not only Esther, and the Jews in Shushan, but all other Jews in all places, did doubtless fly to God by fasting, and strong cries.

32. Either - Who had received authority from the king. The book - In the records which the Jews kept of their most memorable passages.

## X

The greatness of Ahasuerus, and of Mordecai, ver. 1-3.

2. Chronicles, &c. - These are lost long since, and buried in oblivion, while the sacred writings remain throughout the world. When the kingdoms of men, monarchs and their monarchies are destroyed, and their memorial is perished with them, the kingdom of God among men, and the records of that kingdom, shall remain as the days of heaven.

# NOTES ON THE BOOK OF JOB

THE preceding books of scripture are, for the most part, plain and easy narratives, which he that runs may read and understand: but in the five poetical books, on which we are now entering, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song, are many things hard to be understood. These therefore require a more close application of mind, which yet the treasures they contain will abundantly recompence. The former books were mostly historical: these are doctrinal and devotional. And they are wrote in verse, according to the ancient rules of versifying, tho' not in rhythm, nor according to the rules of latter tongues. Job is a kind of heroic poem; the book of Psalms a collection of sacred odes, Solomon's song, a Divine pastoral. They are all poetical, yet serious and full of majesty. They have a poetic force and flame, without poetic fury, move the affections, without corrupting the imagination; and while they gratify the ear, improve the mind, and profit the more by pleasing. We have here much of God, his infinite pefections, and his government both of the world, and of the church. And we have much of Christ, who is the spring, and soul, and center of revealed religion. Here is what may enlighten our understandings, and acquaint us with the deep things of God. And this divine light may bring into the soul a divine fire, which will kindle and inflame devout affections, on which wings we may soar upwards, until we enter into the holiest. We are certain that the book of Job is a true history. That there was such a man as Job, undeniably appears, from his being mentioned by the prophet, together with Noah and Daniel, Ezek xiv, 14, and the narrative we have of his prosperity and piety, his strange afflictions and exemplary patience, the substance of his conferences with his friends, and God's discourse with him out of the whirlwind, with his return to a prosperous condition, are no doubt exactly true. We are sure also this book is very ancient, probably of equal date with the book of Genesis itself. It is likely, Job was of the posterity of Nahor, Abraham's brother, whose first-born was Uz, and in whose family religion was kept up, as appears Gen. xxxi, 53, where God is called not only the God of Abraham, but the God of Nahor. He lived before sacrifices were confined to one altar, before the general apostacy of the nations, and while God was known by the name of God Almighty, more than by the name of Jehovah: for he is called Shaddai, the Almighty, above thirty times in this book. And that he lived before (probably very little before) the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, we may gather from hence, that there is no allusion at all to that grand event throughout the whole book. In this noble poem we have,

1. A monument of primitive theology;
2. A specimen of Gentile piety: for Job was not of the promised seed, no Israelite, no proselyte:
3. An exposition of the book of providence, and a clear solution of man difficult passages therein:
4. A great example of patience and close adherence to God in the deepest calamities: and
5. An illustrious type of Christ, emptied and humbled, in order to his greater glory. In this book we have, an account of Job's sufferings, chap. 1, 2, Not without a mixture of human frailty, chap. 3. A dispute between him and his three friends, chap. 4-31. The interposal of Elihu, and of God himself, chap. 32-41. The end of all in Job's prosperity, chap. 42.

## I

Job's piety, children, substance, ver. 1-5. Satan obtains leave to try him, ver. 6-12. His oxen, sheep, camels and servants destroyed, ver. 13-17. His sons and daughters killed, ver. 18, 19. His patience and piety, ver. 20-22.

1. Uz - Part of Arabia. Perfect - Not legally or exactly, but as to his sincere intentions, hearty affections, and diligent endeavours to perform all his duties to God and men. Upright - Hebrew. right, exact and regular in all his dealings, with men; one of an unblameable conversation. Feared - One truly pious, and devoted to God. Eschewed - Carefully avoiding all sin against God or men.

3. Camels - Camels in these parts were very numerous, and very useful, both for carrying burdens in these hot and dry countries, as being able to endure thirst much better than other creatures, and for service in war. Asses - He-asses also may be included in this expression, because the greatest part of them (from which the denomination is usually taken) were she asses. The greatest - That lived in those parts. The account of his piety and prosperity comes before the account of his afflictions, to shew that neither of these will secure us from the common, no, nor from the uncommon calamities of human life.

4. Feasted - To testify and maintain their brotherly love. His day - Each his appointed day, perhaps his birth-day, or the first day of the month.

5. When - When each of them had had his turn. Satisfied - He exhorted them to examine their own consciences, to repent of any thing, which had been amiss in their feasting, and compose their minds for employments of a more solemn nature. Early - Thereby shewing his ardent zeal in God's service. May be - His zeal for God's glory, and his true love to his children, made him jealous. Cursed - Not in a gross manner, which it is not probable either that they should do, or that Job should suspect it concerning them, but despised or dishonoured God; for both Hebrew and Greek words signifies cursing, are sometimes used to note only, reviling or setting light by a person. Hearts - By slight and low thoughts of God, or by neglecting to give God the praise for the mercies which they enjoyed. Thus - It was his constant course at the end of every feasting time, to offer a sacrifice for each. Parents should be particular in their addresses to God, for the several branches of their family; praying for each child, according to his particular temper, genius and disposition.

6. A day - A certain time appointed by God. The sons - The holy angels, so called, chap. xxxviii, 7 Dan. iii, 25, 28, because of their creation by God, for their resemblance of him in power, and dignity, and holiness, and for their filial affection and obedience, to him. Before - Before his throne, to receive his commands, and to give him an account of their negotiations. But you must not think that these things are to be understood literally; it is only a parabolical representation of that great truth, that God by his wise and holy providence governs all the actions of men and devils: It being usual with the great God to condescend to our shallow capacities, and to express himself, as the Jews phrase it, in the language of the sons of men. And it is likewise intimated, that the affairs of earth are much the subject of the counsels of the unseen world. That world is dark to us: but we lie open to it.

9. For nought - Out of pure love and respect to thee? No. It is policy, not piety, that makes him good; he doth not serve thee, but serveth himself of thee, serving thee for his own ends.

12. Behold, &c. - It seems strange, that, God should give Satan such a permission as this. But he did it for his own glory, for the honour of Job, for the explanation of providence, and the encouragement of his afflicted people in all ages.

14. Messenger, &c. - One messenger immediately followed another; Satan so ordering by God's permission, that there might seem to be more than ordinary displeasure of God against him in his troubles, and that he might not have leisure to recollect himself, but be overwhelmed by a complication of calamities.

15. Sabeans - A people of Arabia, who led a wandering life, and lived by robbery and spoil. I - Whom Satan spared, that Job might have speedy and certain intelligence of his calamity.

16. The fire of God - As thunder is the voice of God, so lightning is his fire. How terrible then were the tidings of this destruction, which came immediately from the hand of God! And seemed to shew, that God was angry at his very offerings, and would receive no more from his hands.

17. Chaldeans - Who also lived upon spoil, as Xenephon and others observe.

19. The young men - This was the greatest of Job's losses, and therefore Satan reserved it to the last, that if the other provocations failed, this might make him curse God. They died by a wind of the devils raising, but which seemed to be the immediate hand of God. And they were taken away, when he had the most need of them, to comfort him under all his other losses. Such miserable comforters are creatures: in God we have a constant and sufficient help.

20. Shaved - Caused his hair to be shaved or cut off, which was then an usual ceremony in mourning. Worshipped - Instead of cursing God, which Satan said he would do, he adored him, and gave him the glory of his sovereignty, of his justice, and of his goodness also, in this most severe dispensation.

21. Naked - I brought none of these things with me, when I came out of my mother's womb into the world, but I received them from the hand of God, who hath now required his own again. Return thither - I shall be as rich when I die as I was when I was born, and therefore have reason to be contented with my condition, which also is the common lot of all men. Into the lap of our common mother, the earth, as the weary child lays its head in its mother's bosom. We go out of the world naked; the body doth, tho' the sanctified soul goes clothed. (2Cor v, 3.) Death strips us of all our enjoyments: clothing can neither warm nor adorn a dead body. Taken - He hath taken away nothing but his own, and what he so gave that he reserved the supreme disposal of in his own hand. And what is it to me, by what hand he that gives, resumes what he gave?

22. Charged - Hebrew. not imputed folly to God; so far was he from blaspheming God, that he did not entertain any dishonourable thought of God, as if he had done anything unworthy of his infinite wisdom, or justice, or goodness, but heartily acquiesced in his good pleasure, and in his righteous though sharp proceedings against him. Discontent and impatience do in effect impute folly to God. Against the workings of these we should carefully watch, acknowledging that God has done well, but we have done foolishly.

## II

Satan moves for another trial of Job, which God permits, ver. 1- 6. Satan smites him with boils from head to foot, ver. 7, 8. He is tempted by his wife, but resists the temptation, ver. 9, 10 His friends come to comfort him, ver. 11-13.

3. Still - Notwithstanding all his afflictions, and thy suggestion to the contrary. Movedst - This, as the rest of this representation, is not to be understood literally: But the design is to signify both the devil's restless malice in promoting man's misery and God's permission of it for wise and holy ends.

4. Skin, &c. - The sense is, this is so far from being an evidence of Job's sincere and generous piety, that it is only an act of mere self- love; he is contented with the loss of his estate, and children too, so long as he sleeps in a whole skin; and he is well pleased, that thou wilt accept of these a ransom in his stead; and it is not true patience which makes him seem to bear his crosses so submissively, but policy, that he may appease thy wrath against him, and prevent those farther plagues, which, for his hypocrisy, he fears thou wilt otherwise bring upon his own carcase.

6. In thine hand - If God did not chain up the roaring lion, how soon would he devour us! As far as he permits the wrath of Satan and wicked men, to proceed against his people, he will make it turn to his praise and theirs, and the remainder thereof he will restrain. Job, in being thus maligned of Satan, was a type of Christ. He had permission to bruise his heel, to touch his bone and his flesh; yea, and his life also; because by dying he was to do what Job could not do, to destroy him that had the power of death.

7. Boils - Like those inflicted upon the Egyptians, which are expressed by the same word, and threatened to apostate Israelites, Deut. xxviii, 27, whereby he was made loathsome to himself, and to his nearest relations, and filled with consuming pains in his body, and no less torments and anguish in his mind.

8. Scrape - This he did not with soft linen clothes, either because he had not now a sufficient quantity of them; or because therein he must have had the help of others who abhorred to come near him. Nor with his own hands or fingers, which were also ulcerous, and so unfit for that use; but with potsherds, either because they were next at hand, and ready for his present use; or in token of his deep humiliation under God's hand, which made him decline all things that favoured of tenderness and delicacy. Hebrew. in dust or ashes, as mourners used to do. If God lay him among the ashes, there he will contentedly sit down. A low spirit becomes low circumstances, and will help to reconcile us to them.

9. Then said his wife - Whom Satan spared, to be a troubler and tempter to him. It is his policy, to send his temptations by the hands of those that are dear to us. We must therefore carefully watch, that we be not drawn to any evil, by them whom we love and value the most. Die - I see thou art set upon blessing of God, thou blessest God for giving, and thou blessest God for taking away, and thou art still blessing God for thy loathsome diseases, and he rewards thee accordingly, giving thee more and more of that kind of mercy for which thou blessest him. Go on therefore in thy generous course, and bless God, and die as a fool dieth.

10. Shall we - Shall we poor worms give laws to our supreme Lord, and oblige him never to afflict us? And shall not those great and manifold mercies, which from time to time God hath given us, compensate these short afflictions? Ought we not to bless God for those mercies which we did

not deserve; and contentedly bear those corrections which we do deserve. And if we receive so much good for the body, shall we not receive some good for our souls? That is, some affliction, whereby we may be made partakers of his holiness? Let murmuring therefore, as well as boasting, be forever excluded. Sin with his lips - By any reflections upon God, by any impatient or unbecoming expression.

11. They - Who were persons eminent for birth and quality, for wisdom and knowledge, and for the profession of the true religion, being probably of the posterity of Abraham, a-kin to Job, and living in the same country. Eliphaz descended from Teman, the grandson of Esau, Gen. xxxvi, 11. Bildad probably from Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah, Gen. xxv, 2. Zophar is thought to be same with Zepho, (Gen. xxxvi, 11.) a descendant from Esau. The preserving of so much wisdom and piety among those who were not children of the promise, was an happy presage of God's grace to the Gentiles, when the partition wall should be taken down.

13. Upon the ground - In the posture of mourners condoling with him. Seven days - Which was the usual time of mourning for the dead, and therefore proper both for Job's children, and for Job himself, who was in a manner dead, while he lived: not that they continued in this posture so long together, which the necessities of nature could not bear; but they spent the greatest part of that time in sitting with him, and silent mourning over him. None spake - About his afflictions and the causes of them. The reason of this silence was the greatness of their grief for him, and their surprize and astonishment at his condition; because they thought it convenient to give him time to vent his own sorrows, and because as yet they knew not what to say to him: for though they had ever esteemed him to be a truly good man, and came with full purpose to comfort him, yet the prodigious greatness of his miseries, and that hand of God which they perceived in them, made them now question his sincerity, so that they could not comfort him as they had intended, and yet were loth to grieve him with reproofs.

## III

We have here Job cursing his birth day, and complaining that he was born, ver. 1-10. Complaining that he did not die as soon as he was born, ver. 11-19. Complaining that his life was continued, now he was in misery, ver. 20-26.

1. His day - His birth-day, in vain do some endeavour to excuse this and the following speeches of Job, who afterwards is reproved by God, and severely accuseth himself for them, chap. xxxviii, 2; xl, 4; xiii, 3, 6. And yet he does not proceed so far as to curse God, but makes the devil a liar: but although he does not break forth into direct reproaches of God, yet he makes indirect reflections upon his providence. His curse was sinful, both because it was vain, being applied to a thing, which was not capable of blessing and cursing, and because it cast a blame upon God for bringing that day, and for giving him life on that day.

3. Let the day - Let the remembrance of that day be utterly lost.

4. Darkness - I wish the sun had never risen upon that day, or, which is all one, that it had never been; and whensoever that day returns, I wish it may be black, and gloomy, and uncomfortable. Regard - From heaven, by causing the light of the sun which is in heaven to shine upon it.

5. Death - A black and dark shadow like that of the place of the dead, which is a land of darkness. Slain - Take away its beauty and glory. Terrify - That is, men in it. Let it be always observed as a frightful and dismal day.

6. Darkness - Constant and extraordinary darkness, without the least glimmering of light from the moon or stars. Be joined - Reckoned as one, or a part of one of them.

8. The day - Their birth-day: when their afflictions move them to curse their own birth-day, let them remember mine also, and bestow some curses upon it. Mourning - Who are full of sorrow, and always ready to pour out their cries, and tears, and complaints.

9. The stars - Let the stars, which are the glory and beauty of the night, be covered with thick darkness, and that both in the evening twilight, when the stars begin to shine; and also in the farther progress of the night, even 'till the morning dawns. Look - Let its darkness be aggravated with the disappointment of its expectations of light. He ascribes sense or reasoning to the night, by a poetical fiction, usual in all writers. Dawning - Hebrew. the eye-lids of the day, the morning-star which ushers in the day, and the beginning, and progress of the morning light, let this whole natural day, consisting of night and day, be blotted out of the catalogue of days.

10. It - The night or the day: to which those things are ascribed which were done by others in them, as is frequent in poetical writings. Womb - That it might never have brought me forth. Nor hid - Because it did not keep me from entering into this miserable life, and seeing, or experiencing, these bitter sorrows.

12. The knees - Why did the midwife or nurse receive and lay me upon her knees, and not suffer me to fall upon the bare ground, 'till death had taken me out of this miserable world, into which their cruel kindness hath betrayed me? Why did the breasts prevent me from perishing through hunger, or supply me that should have what to suck? Thus Job unthankfully despises these wonderful mercies of God towards poor helpless infants.

14. Kings - I had then been as happy as the proudest monarchs, who after all their great achievements and enjoyments, go down into their graves. Built - Who to shew their wealth and power, or to leave behind them a glorious name, rebuilt ruined cities, or built new cities and palaces, in places where before there was mere solitude and wasteness.

16. Hidden - Undiscerned and unregarded. Born before the due time. Been - In the land of the living.

17. There - In the grave. The wicked - The great oppressors and troublers of the world cease from their vexations, rapins and murders. Weary - Those who were here molested and tired out with their tyrannies, now quietly sleep with them.

18. The oppressor - Or, taskmaster, who urges and forces them to work by cruel threatenings and stripes. Job meddles not here with their eternal state after death, of which he speaks hereafter, but only their freedom from worldly troubles, which is the sole matter of his present discourse.

19. Small and great - Persons of all qualities and conditions. Are there - In the same place and state, all those distinctions being forever abolished. A good reason, why those who have power should use it moderately, and those that are in subjection should take it patiently.

20. Light - The light of life. Bitter - Unto those to whom life itself is bitter and burdensome. Life is called light, because it is pleasant and serviceable for walking and working; and this light is said to be given us, because it would be lost, if it were not daily renewed to us by a fresh gift.

21. Dig - Desire with as much earnestness as men dig for treasure: but it is observable, Job durst not do anything to hasten or procure his death: notwithstanding all his miseries, he was contented to wait all the days of his appointed time, 'till his change came, chap. xiv, 14.

22. Glad, &c. - To be thus impatient of life, for the sake of the trouble we meet with, is not only unnatural in itself, but ungrateful to the giver of life, and shews a sinful indulgence of our own passion. Let it be our great and constant care, to get ready for another world: and then let us leave it to God, to order the circumstances of our removal thither.

23. Hid - From him; who knows not his way, which way to turn himself, what course to take to comfort himself in his miseries. Hedged in - Whom God hath put as it were in a prison, so that he can see no way or possibility of escape.

24. Before, &c. - Hebrew. before the face of my bread, all the time I am eating, I fall into sighing and weeping, because I am obliged to eat, and to support this wretched life, and because of my uninterrupted pains of body and of mind, which do not afford me one quiet moment. Roarings - My loud outcries, more befitting a lion than a man. Poured out - With great abundance, and irresistible violence, and incessant continuance, as waters flow in a river, or as they break the banks, and overflow the ground.

25. Feared - Even in the time of my prosperity, I was full of fears, considering the variety of God's providences, the changeableness of this vain world, God's justice, and the sinfulness of all mankind. And these fears of mine, were not in vain, but are justified by my present calamities.

26. Quiet - I did not misbehave myself in prosperity, abusing it by presumption, and security, but I lived circumspectly, walking humbly with God, and working out my salvation with fear and trembling. Therefore in this sense also, his way was hid, he knew not why God contended with him.

## IV

Eliphaz owns Job's former usefulness, but infers from his present state and behaviour, that he was an hypocrite, ver. 1-6. He affirms that God never afflicts man, but for his wickedness, ver. 7-11. He confirms his assertion, by the words he heard in a vision, ver. 12-21. By all this he aims to make Job both penitent and patient under his sufferings.

2. If we, &c. - He speaks with great modesty. He will not undertake the cause alone, but joins his friends with him. He will not promise much, but only assay, or try if he could propose any thing pertinent to Job's case. Withhold - When he hears such words from such a person as thou art.

4. Feeble knees - Such as were weak hearted, and fainting under their trials.

6. Thy fear - We now plainly see what was the nature of thy fear of God, thy confidence in him, the uprightness of thy ways, and thy hope in God's mercy. Thy present carriage discovers that it was but mere talk and appearance.

7. Innocent - Therefore thou art guilty of some great, though secret crimes, and thy sin hath now found thee out. Cut off - By the sickle of Divine vengeance before his time, which is like to be thy case. Eliphaz here advances another argument to prove Job an hypocrite; taken not only from his impatience under afflictions, but from his afflictions themselves.

8. Even - As thou hast never seen any example of a righteous man cut off, so I have seen many of wicked men cut off for their wickedness. They - They that designedly work wickedness, first preparing themselves for it, and then continuing to execute it, as husbandmen first plow the ground, and then cast in the feed. Reap - The fruit of their iniquity, the just punishment of it.

9. The blast - Of his nostrils, as it follows; by his anger, which in men shews itself, in the nostrils, by hot and frequent breathings there, by a secret, but mighty judgment of God, they are blown away as chaff by the wind.

10. The roaring - Nor can they escape, even were they strong as lions, yea, as the strongest and fiercest of them. Broken - Which is true literally; the lions when taken having most commonly their teeth broken, as ancient and modern writers relate. But this is meant of powerful tyrants, who are fitly compared to lions, Ezek xxxii, 2; xxxviii, 13, who though for a time they persecute and oppress other men, yet in due time they are restrained, and broken, and crushed in pieces by the mighty power of God. Possibly he may secretly accuse Job, or his children, that being persons of great wealth and power, they had abused it to ruin their neighbours, and therefore were justly cut off.

11. Scattered - Gone from their dens several ways to hunt for prey, and can find none.

12. Now - To convince Job of the sin and folly of impatience, Eliphaz relates a vision he had had, perhaps since he came to him. Which in that age and state of the church, before the holy scriptures were written, was the usual way of God's discovering his mind to those that sought him. A thing - Hebrew. a word, from God, a message. Secretly - Hebrew. was stolen, or brought by stealth unto me, privately and secretly, as the word of God used to come to the prophets, being spoken in their ear, as it was to Samuel, with a low and still voice. He does not pretend to have understood it fully; but something of it he perceived. How little a portion is heard of God! How little do we know of him in this world.

13. In thoughts - These thoughts arose from the visions of the night, which it is probable he had seen before. Visions differed from dreams herein, that God imparted his mind to men in dreams when asleep, but in visions, when they were awake. And these visions sometimes happened by day, but most frequently by night. Sleep - In the dead of the night, when men usually are in a deep sleep; though Eliphaz was not now asleep.

15. A spirit - An angel in visible shape, otherwise he could not have discerned it. Stood up - Through that excessive horror caused by so glorious, unusual, and terrible a presence.

16. Stood - Having passed by him to, and again, he made a stand, and addressed himself to speak. The form - Exactly and distinctly. An image - I saw some visible resemblance, though in a confused manner. Silence - The spirit, which possibly had made some noise with his motion, now standing still made no noise; all other persons and things about me were silent, and I also kept in my voice and breath, that I might distinctly hear. In the Hebrew, the words run thus, silence and a voice I heard.

17. More just - Pretend more strictly to observe the laws of justice? Shall (enosh) mortal, miserable man (so the word signifies) be thus insolent? Nay, shall geber, the strongest and most eminent man, stand in competition with God? Those that find fault with the directions of the Divine law, the dispensations of the Divine grace, or the disposal of the Divine providence, do make

themselves more just and pure than God: who being their maker, is their Lord and owner: and the author of all the justice and purity that is in man.

18. Servants - They are called his servants by way of eminency, that general name being here appropriated to the chief of the kind, to intimate that sovereign dominion which the great God hath over the angels, and much more over men. With folly - Without all doubt, this refers to those angels who foolishly and wickedly fell from God.

19. How, &c. - The sense is, what strange presumption then is it for a foolish and mortal man, to make himself more just than God. In them - Who though they have immortal spirits, yet those spirits dwell in mortal bodies, which are great clogs, and incumbrances, and snares to them. These are called houses, (because they are the receptacles of the soul, and the places of its settled abode) and houses of clay, because they were made of clay, or earth, and to note their great frailty and mutability; whereas the angels are free spirits, unconfined to such carcasses, and dwell in celestial, and glorious, and everlasting mansions. Whose - Whose very foundation, no less than the rest of the building, is in the dust; had their original from it, and must return to it. We stand but upon the dust: some have an higher heap of dust to stand upon than others. But still it is the earth that stays us up, and will shortly swallow us up. Before - Sooner than a moth is crushed, which is easily done by a gentle touch of the finger. Or, at the face of a moth. No creature is so contemptible, but one time or other it may have the body of man in its power.

20. Destroyed - All the day long, there is not a moment wherein man is not sinking towards death and corruption. Perish - In reference to this present worldly life, which when once lost is never recovered. Regarding - Hebrew. without putting the heart to it, this is so common a thing for all men, though never so high and great, to perish in this manner, that no man heeds it, but passes it by as a general accident not worthy of observation.

21. Excellency - Whatsoever is by common estimation excellent in men, all their natural, and moral, and civil accomplishments, as high birth, great riches, power and wisdom, these are so far from preserving men from perishing, that they perish themselves, together with those houses of clay in which they are lodged. Without wisdom - Even without having attained that only wisdom for which they came into the world. Shall such mean, weak, foolish, sinful, dying creatures as this, pretend to be more just than God, more pure than his maker? No: instead of quarrelling with his afflictions, let him admire that he is out of hell.

## V

Sin occasions destruction, ver. 1-5. Affliction is the common lot of mankind, ver. 6-7. In affliction we should fly to God, who is both able and willing to help, ver. 8-16. He will deliver them that trust in him, ver. 17-27.

1. Call - Call them all as it were by their names: will not every good man confirm what I say? If - Try if there be any one saint that will defend thee in these bold expostulations with God. Thou mayst find fools or wicked men, to do it: but not one of the children of God.

2. Killeth - A man's wrath, and impatience, preys upon his spirit, and so hastens his death; and provokes God to cut him off. The foolish - The rash and inconsiderate man, who does not weigh things impartially. Envy, &c. - I perceive thou art full of envy at wicked men, who seem to be in a happier condition than thou, and of wrath against God; and this shews thee to be a foolish and weak man. For those men, notwithstanding their present prosperity, are doomed to great and certain misery. I have myself seen the proof of this.

3. Foolish - The wicked man. Root - Not only prosperous for the present, but, as it seemed, firm and secure for the future. Suddenly - In a moment, beyond mine, and his own, and all other mens expectation. Cursed - l saw by the event which followed his prosperity, that he was a man accursed of God.

4. Children - Whose greatness he designed in all his enterprizes, supposing his family would be established for ever. Safely - Are exposed to dangers and calamities, and can neither preserve themselves, nor the inheritance which their fathers left them. There is no question but he glances here, at the death of Job's children.

5. Harvest - Which they confidently expect to reap after all their cost and labour, but are sadly and suddenly disappointed. The hungry - The hungry Sabeans eat it up. Thorns - Out of the fields: in spite of all dangers or difficulties in their way.

6. The dust - It springs not up by merely natural causes, as herbs grow out of the earth: but from God. Eliphaz here begins to change his voice, as if he would atone for the hard words he had spoken.

7. Is born - He is so commonly exposed to various troubles, as if he were born to no other end: affliction is become natural to man, and is transmitted from parents, to children, as their constant inheritance; God having allotted this portion to mankind for their sins. And therefore thou takest a wrong course in complaining so bitterly of that which thou shouldest patiently bear, as the common lot of mankind. As - As naturally, and as generally, as the sparks of fire fly upward. Why then should we be surprized at our afflictions as strange, or quarrel with them, as hard?

8. I would - If I were in thy condition. Seek - By prayer, and humiliation, and submission, imploring his pardon, and favour.

9. Who, &c. - Here Eliphaz enters upon a discourse of the infinite perfection of God's nature and works; which he doth as an argument to enforce the exhortation to seek and commit his cause to God, ver. 8, because God was infinitely able either to punish him yet far worse, if he continued to provoke him; or to raise him from the dust, if he humbly addressed himself to him: and that by a representation of God's excellency and glory, and of that vast disproportion which was between God and Job, he might convince Job of his great sin in speaking so boldly and irreverently of him. marvelous - Which (though common, and therefore neglected and despised, yet) are matter of wonder to the wisest men. The works of nature are mysteries: the most curious searches come far short of full discoveries: and the works of Providence are still more deep and unaccountable.

10. Rain - He begins with this ordinary work of God, in which he implies that there is something wonderful, as indeed there is in the rise of it from the earth, in the strange hanging of that heavy body in the air, and in the distribution of it as God sees fit; and how much more in the hidden paths of Divine Providence?

11. To set up - That is, he setteth up. Another example of God's great and wonderful works. He gives this instance to comfort and encourage Job to seek to God, because he can raise him out of his greatest depths.

13. The wise - Men wise to do evil, and wise in the opinion of the world, he not only deceives in their hopes and counsels, but turns them against themselves. Froward - Or, wrestlers: such as wind and turn every way, as wrestlers do, and will leave no means untried to accomplish their counsels. Is carried - Is tumbled down and broken, and that by their own precipitation.

14. Meet - In plain things they run into gross mistakes, and chuse those courses which are worst for themselves. Darkness often notes misery, but here ignorance or error. Grope - Like blind men to find their way, not knowing what to do.

15. Mouth - Which was ready to swallow them up.

16. So - So he obtains what he hoped for from God, to whom he committed his cause. Iniquity - Wicked men. Stoppeth - They are silenced and confounded, finding that not only the poor are got out of their snares, but the oppressors themselves are ensnared in them.

17. Behold - Eliphaz concludes his discourse, with giving Job a comfortable hope, if he humbled himself before God. Happy - Hebrew. Blessednesses (various and great happiness) belong to that man whom God rebukes. The reason is plain, because afflictions are pledges of God's love, which no man can buy too dear; and are necessary to purge out sin, and thereby to prevent infinite and eternal miseries. Without respect to this, the proposition could not be true. And therefore it plainly shews, that good men in those ancient times, had the belief, and hope of everlasting blessedness. Despise not - Do not abhor it as a thing pernicious, refuse it as a thing useless, or slight it as an unnecessary thing. But more is designed than is exprest. Reverence the chastening of the Lord: have an humble, aweful regard to his correcting hand, and study to answer the design of it. The Almighty - Who is able to support and comfort thee in thy troubles, and deliver thee out of them: and also to add more calamities to them, if thou art obstinate and incorrigible.

18. For he, &c. - God's usual method is, first to humble, and then to exalt. And he never makes a wound too great, too deep for his own cure.

19. Deliver - If thou seekest to him by prayer and repentance. Here he applies himself to Job directly. Six - Manifold and repeated. Touch - So as to destroy thee. Thou shalt have a good issue out of all thy troubles, though they are both great and many.

20. He shall - These things he utters with more confidence, because the rewards or punishments of this life, were more constantly distributed to men in the Old Testament according to their good or bad behaviour, than they are now: and because it was his opinion, that great afflictions were the certain evidences of wickedness; and consequently, that great deliverances would infallibly follow upon true repentance.

22. Laugh - With a laughter of joy and triumph, arising from a just security and confidence in God's watchful and gracious providence.

23. League - Thou shalt be free from annoyance thereby, as if they had made an inviolable league with thee. This is a bold metaphor, but such as are frequent both in scripture and other authors. This is an addition to the former privilege; they shall not hurt thee, ver. 22, nay, they shall befriend thee, as being at peace with thee. Our covenant with God is a covenant with all the creatures, that they shall do us no hurt, but serve and be ready to do us good.

24. Know - By certain experience.

25. Know - By assurance from God's promises, and the impressions of his Spirit; and by experience in due time.

26. Full age - In a mature and old, but vigourous age, as the word implies. It is a great blessing, to live to a full age, and not to have the number of our years cut short. Much more, to be willing

to die, to come chearfully to the grave: and to die seasonably, just in the bed-time, when our souls are ripe for God.

27. Searched - This is no rash or hasty conceit, but what both I and my brethren have learned by deep consideration, long experience, and diligent observation. Know thou - Know it for thyself; (So the word is) with application to thy own case. That which we thus hear and know for ourselves, we hear and know for our good.

## VI

Job shews that he has reason to complain, ver. 1-7. He compassionately wishes for death, ver. 8-13. Reproves his friends for their uncharitable censures, ver. 14-30.

2. My grief - The cause of my grief. Weighed - Were fully understood, and duly considered. O that I had an equal judge! that would understand my case, and consider whether I have not cause for complaints. Together - Together with any other most heavy thing to be put into the other scale.

3. Sea - Which is heavier than dry sand. Swallowed - My voice and spirit fail me. I cannot find, or utter words sufficient to express my sorrow or misery.

4. Arrows - So he fitly calls his afflictions, because, like arrows, they came upon him swiftly and suddenly one after another, immediately shot by God into his spirit. Poison - Implying that these arrows were more keen than ordinary, being dipped in God's wrath, as the barbarous nations used to dip their arrows in poison, that they might not only pierce, but burn up and consume the vital parts. Drinketh - Exhausteth and consumeth my soul. In array - They are like a numerous army, who invade me on every side. This was the sorest part of his calamity, wherein he was an eminent type of Christ, who complained most of the sufferings of his soul. Now is my soul troubled. My soul is exceeding sorrowful. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Indeed trouble of mind is the sorest trouble. A wounded spirit who can bear.

5. Doth, &c. - Even the brute beasts, when they have convenient food, are quiet and contented. So it is no wonder that you complain not, who live in ease and prosperity, any more than I did, when I wanted nothing.

6. Can, &c. - Do men use to eat unsavoury meats with delight, or without complaint? Men commonly complain of their meat when it is but unsavoury, how much more when it is so bitter as mine is?

7. The things, &c. - The sense may be, those grievous afflictions, which I dreaded the very thought of, are now my daily, though sorrowful bread.

9. Destroy - To end my days and calamities together.

10. Harden - I would bear up with courage under all my torments, with the hopes of death, and blessedness after death. Spare - Not suffer me to live any longer. Concealed - As I have steadfastly believed them, and not wilfully departed from them, so I have not been ashamed, nor afraid, boldly to profess and preach the true religion in the midst of Heathens. And therefore I know if God doth cut me off, I shall be a gainer by it.

11. Strength - My strength is so spent, that it is vain for me to hope for such restitution as thou hast promised me, chap. v, 22. End - What is death to me? It is not terrible, but comfortable. That - Then why should I desire to prolong my life. But as desirous of death as Job was, yet he never offered to put an end to his own life. Such a thought will never be entertained by any, that have the least regard to the law of God and nature. How uneasy soever the soul's confinement in the body may be, it must by no means break the prison, but wait for a fair discharge.

12. Is, &c. - I am not made of stone or brass, but of flesh and blood, as others are, therefore I am unable to endure these miseries longer, and can neither hope for. nor desire the continuance of my life.

13. What, &c. - If my outward condition be helpless and hopeless? Have I therefore lost my understanding, cannot I judge whether it is more desirable for me to live or to die, whether I be an hypocrite or no, whether your words have truth and weight in them; whether you take the right method in dealing with me?

14. To him - Hebrew. to him that is melted or dissolved with affections. But. &c. - But thou hast no pity for thy friend; a plain evidence that thou art guilty of what thou didst charge me with, even of the want of the fear of God. The least which those that are at ease can do for them that are pained, is to pity them, to feel a tender concern for them, and to sympathize with them.

15. Brethren - Friends; for though Eliphaz only had spoken, the other two shewed their approbation of his discourse. Deceitfully - Adding to the afflictions which they said they came to remove. And it is no new thing, for even brethren to deal deceitfully. It is therefore our wisdom to cease from man. We cannot expect too little from the creature, or too much from the creator.

16. Which - Which in winter when the traveler neither needs nor desires it, are full of water congealed by the frost. Snow - Under which the water from snow, which formerly fell, and afterward was dissolved, lies hid. So he speaks not of those brooks which are fed by a constant spring, but of them which are filled by accidental falls of water or snow.

17. Warm - When the weather grows milder. Hot - In the hot season, when waters are most refreshing and necessary.

18. Perish - They are gone out of their channel, flowing hither and thither, 'till they are quite consumed.

19. Tema - This place and Sheba were both parts of the hot and dry country of Arabia, in which waters were very scarce, and therefore precious and desirable, especially to travelers. Companies - Men did not there travel singly, as we do, but in companies for their security against wild beasts and robbers.

20. Hoped - They comforted themselves with the expectation of water. Ashamed - As having deceived themselves and others. We prepare confusion for ourselves, by our vain hopes: the reeds break under us, because we lean upon them.

21. Nothing - You are to me as if you had never come to me; for I have no comfort from you. Afraid - You are shy of me, and afraid for yourselves, lest some further plagues should come upon me, wherein you for my sake, should be involved: or, lest I should be burdensome to you.

22. Did I say - Give me something for my support or relief. You might have at least given me comfortable words, when I expected nothing else from you.

23. Deliver - By the force of your arms, as Abraham delivered Lot. Redeem - By price or ransom.

24. Teach - Convince me by solid arguments. I will - I will patiently hear and gladly receive your counsels.

25. Forcible - The words of truth have a marvelous power. Reprove - But there is no truth in your assertions or weight in your arguments.

26. Words - Do you think it is sufficient to quarrel with some of my words, without giving allowance for human infirmity, or extreme misery. Desperate - Of a poor miserable, hopeless and helpless man. As wind - Which pass away and are forgotten.

27. Overwhelm - You load with censures and calumnies. Desolate - Me who am deprived of all my children, my estate, and my friends. I spoke all I thought, as to my friends, and you thence occasion to cast me down.

28. Look - Consider my cause better than you have done, that you may give a more righteous judgment. Evident - You will plainly discover it.

29. Return - Turn from your former judgment. Iniquity - Or, there shall be no iniquity, in my words. Righteousness - In this cause or matter between you and me; and you will find the right to be on my side.

30. Is there - Consider if there be any untruth or iniquity in what I have already said, or shall farther speak. Taste - My judgment, which judgeth of words and actions, as the palate doth of meats.

## VII

Job bemoans himself to his friends, ver. 1-6. To God, ver. 7- 16. Begs for pardon and death, ver. 17-21.

1. Is there not - Job is here excusing what he cannot justify, his passionate longing for death. A time - Is there not a time limited by God, wherein man shall live in this sinful, and miserable world? And is it a crime in me, to desire that God would bring me to that joyful period? Our time on earth is limited and short, according to the narrow bounds of this earth. But heaven cannot be measured, nor the days of heaven numbered. Hireling - Whose time is short, being but a few years, or days, whose condition is full of toil and hardship.

2. Shadow - That is, the sun-set, the time allotted for his rest.

3. So - This so respects not so much the desire of an hired servant, as the ground of it, his hard toil and service. Possess - God, hath given me this as my lot and inheritance. Months - So he calls them rather than days, to note the tediousness of his affliction. Vanity - Empty and unsatisfying. Nights - He mentions nights, because that is the saddest time for sick and miserable persons; the darkness and solitude of the night being of themselves uncomfortable, and giving them more opportunity for solemn and sorrowful reflections.

5. Worms - Which were bred out of Job's corrupted flesh and sores. Dust - The dust of the earth upon which he lay. Broken - By ulcers in all parts of it.

6. Swifter - The time of my life hastens to a period. Shuttle - Which passes in a moment from one end of the web to the other. Hope - Of enjoying any good day here.

7. O - He turns his speech to God. Perhaps observing, that his friends grew weary of hearing it. If men will not hear us, God will: if men cannot help us, he can: for his arm is not shortened, neither is his ear heavy.

8. No more - In this mortal state: I shall never return to this life again. Am not - If thou cast one angry look upon me, I am not; thou canst look me into eternity.

9. No more - Never until the general resurrection. When we see a cloud which looked great, as if it would eclipse the sun, of a sudden dispersed and disappearing, say, Just such a thing is the life of man, a vapor that appears for a while and then vanisheth away.

10. Any more - He shall no more be seen and known in his former habitation. It concerns us to secure a better place when we die: for this will own us no more.

11. Therefore - Since my life is so vain and short, and when once lost, without all hopes of recovery. I will plead with God for pity before I die; I will not smother my anguish within my breast, but will ease myself by pouring out my complaints.

12. A sea - Am I as fierce and unruly as the sea, which, if thou didst not set bounds to it, would overwhelm the earth? Or, am I a vast and ungovernable sea-monster? Which thou must restrain by thy powerful providence. That, &c. - That thou shouldest guard and restrain me with such heavy and unexampled miseries? We are apt in affliction to complain of God, as if he laid more upon us than there is occasion for: whereas we are never in heaviness, but when there is need, nor more than there is need.

17. What, &c. - What is there in that poor, mean, creature called man, miserable man, as this word signifies, which can induce thee to take any notice of him, or to make such account of him? Man is not worthy of thy favour, and he is below thy anger; that thou shouldest concern thyself so much about him, as one near and dear to thee?

18. And try, &c. - What is man that vain, foolish creature, that thou shouldest magnify or regard, or visit him, (with thy mercy and blessings, that thou shouldest so far honour and regard him, as by thy visitation to preserve his spirit, or hold his soul in life) and try him, which God doth not only by afflictions, but also by prosperity and both inward and outward blessings? That thou shouldst observe his motions every moment, as in care for him, and jealous over him?

19. How long - How long will it be ere thou withdraw thy afflicting hand? Swallow - That I may have a breathing time: a proverbial expression.

20. Sinned - Although I am free from those crying sins, for which my friends suppose thou hast sent this judgment upon me, yet, I freely confess I am a sinner, and therefore obnoxious to thy justice. What, &c. - To satisfy thy justice, or regain thy favour? Who dost know and diligently observe all mens inward motions, and outward actions; and therefore, if thou shalt be severe to mark mine iniquities, I have not what to say or do unto thee. My case is singular, none is shot at as I am.

21. Pardon - Seeing thou art so gracious to others, why may not I hope for the same favour from thee? Dust - If thou dost not speedily help me, it will be too late. But I shall not be - It will be to late to shew me favour.

## VIII

Bildad affirms, that Job had spoken amiss, ver. 1-3. That if he would sincerely seek to God, God would help him, ver. 4-7. That it is usual with God, to destroy the hypocrite, ver. 8-19. The joy of the upright, ver. 20-22.

2. Strong wind - Boisterous and violent.

3. Doth God - Hebrew. The might God, as this word signifies, the Almighty, or All-sufficient God, as the next name of God implies. These names are emphatically used, to prove that God cannot deal unjustly or falsely with men, because he hath no need of it, nor temptation to it, being self-sufficient for his own happiness, and being able by his own invincible power to do whatsoever pleaseth him. Pervert - Judge unrighteously? No, this is inconsistent with God's nature, and with his office of governor of the world.

4. If - If thou wast innocent, thy children, upon whom a great part of these calamities fell, might be guilty; and therefore God is not unrighteous in these proceedings.

5. Betimes - Hebrew. rise early to seek him, if thou wouldest seek him speedily, early and diligently.

6. Habitation - The concerns of thy house and family; which thou hast got and managed with righteousness.

8. Search - Seriously and industriously search the ancient records.

9. We, &c. - But lately born, and therefore have but little knowledge and experience. We live not so long as they did, to make observations on the methods of Divine Providence.

10. Utter - Not partially, but sincerely, speaking their inward thoughts; not rashly, but from deep consideration; not by hearsay, but their own knowledge.

11. Can, &c. - The hypocrite cannot build his hope, without some false, rotten ground or other, any more than the rush can grow without mire, or the flag without water.

12. Greenness - Whereby it promises long continuance. Tho' no man cut it down, it withers of itself, sooner than other herbs.

13. Paths - Of wicked men. By their paths he doth not understand their manner of living, but the events which befall them, God's manner of dealing with them.

14. Hope - Whose wealth and outward glory, the matter of his hope, and trust, shall be cut off suddenly and violently taken away from him. Web - Which tho' it be formed with great art and industry, is easily swept down, or pulled in pieces.

15. House - He shall trust to the multitude of his children and servants, and to his wealth, all which come under the name of a man's house in scripture. Hold it - To uphold himself by it. But his web, that refuge of lies, will be swept away, and he crushed in it.

16. He - The secure and prosperous sinner may think himself wronged, when he is compared to a rush or flag. Compare him then to a flourishing and well-rooted tree. Yet even then shall he be suddenly cut off. Green - Flourisheth in the world. Before the sun - Publickly and in the view of all men. Branch - His children, who are here mentioned as additions not only to his comfort, but also to his strength and safety. Garden - A place where it is defended from those injuries to which the trees of the field are subject, and where, besides the advantages common to all trees, it hath peculiar helps from the art and industry of men. So he supposes this man to be placed in the most desirable circumstances.

17. Heap - Of stones. This circumstance is added, to signify its firmness and strength, that it was not in loose and sandy ground, which a violent wind might overthrow, but in solid ground, within which were many stones, which its numerous and spreading roots embrace, folding and interweaving themselves about them. Seeth - The tree reacheth thither, takes the advantage of that place for the strengthening of itself.

18. He - God, who is the saviour of good men, and the destroyer of the wicked. It - The place; to which denying him, and seeing him, are here ascribed figuratively. Not seen - He shall be so utterly extirpated and destroyed, that there shall be no memorial of him left.

19. Behold - This is the issue of the flourishing state. This all his joy comes to. And, &c. - Out of the same earth or place shall another tree grow.

20. Behold - God who will not help the evildoer, will not cast away a good man, tho he may be cast down. Yet it may be, he will not be lifted up in this world: and therefore Bildad could not infer, that if Job was not restored to temporal prosperity, he was not a good man. Let us judge nothing before the time, but wait 'till the secrets of all hearts are revealed, and the present difficulties of providence solved, to universal and everlasting satisfaction.

21. 'Till, &c. - And what I have said in general of good men, shall be made good to thee, if thou art such: God will not forsake thee, nor desist from doing thee good, 'till he give thee abundant matter of rejoicing.

## IX

God's justice, wisdom, power and sovereignty, ver. 1-13. Job condemns himself, as not able to contend with God, ver. 14-21. Shews that we cannot judge men by their outward condition, ver. 22-24. And complains of the greatness of his troubles, and the loss he was at, what to say or do, ver. 25-35.

2. I know - That God is just in all his ways, that he doth ordinarily bless the righteous, and punish the wicked. Before God - And I know that no man is absolutely just, if God be severe to mark what is amiss in him.

3. One - One accusation among a thousand which God shall produce against him.

4. He - He is infinitely wise, and searcheth all mens hearts and ways, and discovers a multitude of sins which mens short sighted- eyes cannot see; and therefore can charge them with innumerable evils, where they thought themselves innocent, and sees far more malignity than men could discern in their sins. Mighty - So that whether men contend with God by wisdom or by strength: God will be conqueror. Hardened himself - Obstinately contended with him. The devil promised himself that Job in the day of his affliction, would curse and speak ill of God. But instead of that, he sets himself to honour God, and speak highly of him. As ill pained as he is, and as much as he is taken up with his own miseries, when he has occasion to mention the wisdom and power of God, he forgets his complaints and expatiates with a flood of eloquence on that glorious subject.

5. Who - He proceeds to give evidence of the Divine power and wisdom. Removeth - Suddenly and unexpectedly. They - The mountains, to which he ascribes sense and knowledge figuratively. In anger - In token of his displeasure with the men that live upon them.

6. The earth - Great portions of it, by earthquakes, or by removing islands. Pillars - The deep and inward parts of it, which like pillars supported those parts that appear to our view.

8. Who. &c. - A farther description of a black and tempestuous season, wherein the heavens seem to be brought down nearer to the earth. Treadeth - Represseth and ruleth them when they rage and are tempestuous: for treading upon any thing, signifies in scripture using power and dominion over it.

9. Ordereth - Disposeth them, governeth their rising and setting, and all their influences. These he names as constellations of greatest eminency; but under them he seems to comprehend all the stars, which as they were created by God, so are under his government. Arcturus is a northern constellation, near that called the Bear. Orion is a more southerly constellation, that rises to us in December. The Pleiades is a constellation not far from Orion, which we call the seven stars: by the chambers, (or inmost chambers, as the word signifies) of the south, he seems to understand those stars and constellations which are toward the southern pole, which are called inward chambers, because they are for the most part hid and shut up from these parts of the world.

10. Doth great things, &c. - Job here says the same that Eliphaz had said, chap. v, 9, and in the original, in the very same words, with design to shew his full agreement with him, touching the Divine perfections.

11. Goeth - He works by his providence in ways of mercy or judgment. Passeth - He goeth from place to place: from one action to another: he speaks of God after the manner of men.

12. Taketh - If he determines to take away from any man his children or servants, or estate, who is able to restrain him from doing it? Or who dare presume to reprove him for it? And therefore far be it from me to quarrel with God, whereof you untruly accuse me.

13. Helpers - Those who undertake to uphold and defend one another against him. Stoop - Fall and are crushed by him.

14. How shall I - Since no creature can resist his power, and no man can comprehend his counsels and ways; how can I contend with him? Answer his allegations and arguments, produced against me.

15. Tho' - Though I were not conscious to myself of any sin. Would not - I durst not undertake to plead my cause against him; or maintain my integrity before him, because he knows me better than I know myself. Supplication - That he would judge favourably of me and my cause, and not according to the rigor of his justice.

16. Yet - I could not believe that God had indeed granted my desire, because I am still full of the tokens of his displeasure; and therefore should conclude that it was but a pleasant dream, and not a real thing.

17. Breaketh - Unexpectedly, violently, and irrecoverably. Cause - Not simply without any desert of his, but without any special cause of such singular afflictions; and peculiar and extraordinary guilt, such as his friends charged him with.

18. Breath - My pains are continual, and I have not so much as a breathing time free from them.

19. If - If my cause were to be decided by power. Is Strong - Stronger than I. Judgment - If I would contend with him in a way of right. Who - There is no superior judge that can summon him and me together.

20. Justify - If I plead against God mine own righteousness and innocency.

21. Perfect - If I should think myself perfect, yet I would not know, not acknowledge, my soul; I could not own nor plead before God the integrity of my soul, but would only make supplication to my judge, I would abhor, or condemn my life, I would not trust to the integrity either of my soul and heart, or of my life, so as to justify myself before the pure and piercing eyes of the all-seeing God.

22. This - In the other things which you have spoken of God's greatness, and justice, I do not contend with you, but this one thing I do, and must affirm against you. He - God sends afflictions promiscuously upon good and bad men.

23. Suddenly - If some common judgment come upon a people. Laugh - God will be well pleased, to see how the same scourge, which is the perdition of the wicked, is the trial of the innocent, and of their faith, which will be found unto praise and honour and glory.

24. The earth - The dominion over it. Into - Into their power. As good men are frequently scourged, so the wicked are advanced. Faces - Meantime he covers the faces of wise and good men, fit to be Judges, and buries them alive in obscurity, perhaps suffers them to be condemned, and their faces covered as criminals, by those to whom the earth is given. This is daily done: if it be not God that doth it, where and who is he that doth?

25. Now - What he had said of the calamities which God frequently inflicts upon good men, he now exemplifies in himself. My days - The days of my life. Post - Who rides upon swift horses. See - I enjoy no good in them. Seeing is often put for experiencing either good or evil.

26. Eagle - Which flies swiftly, especially when in the sight of his prey. See here how swift the motion of time is! It is always upon the wing, hastening to its period. What little need have we of past- times! What great need to redeem time, which runs out, runs on so fast toward eternity! And how vain are the enjoyments of time, which we may be deprived of, even while time continues! Our day may be longer than our sunshine: and when that is gone, it is as if it had never been.

28. Afraid - I find all such endeavours vain; for if my griefs be suspended for a time, yet my fears continue. Will not - I plainly perceive thou, O God, (to whom he makes a sudden address, as he doth also, ver. 31,) wilt not clear my innocency by removing those afflictions which make them judge me guilty of some great crime. Words proceeding from despair and impatience.

29. I shall - I shall be used like a wicked man still. Why - Why then should I comfort myself with vain hopes of deliverance, as thou advisest me.

30. If - If I clear myself from all imputations, and fully prove my innocency before men.

31. Yet - God would prove him to be a most guilty creature, notwithstanding all his purity before men. Abhor - I shall be so filthy, that my own clothes, if they had any sense in them, would abhor to touch me.

32. A man - But one infinitely superior to me in majesty, and power, and wisdom, and justice. That - That I should presume to debate my cause with him. Come - Face to face, to plead upon equal terms.

33. Days-man - Or, umpire. Lay his hand - Order and govern us in pleading; and oblige us to stand to his decision. Our Lord Jesus is now the blessed days-man, who has mediated between heaven and earth, has laid his hand upon us both: to him the father hath committed all judgment. But this was not made so clear then, as it is now by the gospel, which leaves no room for such a complaint as this.

34. Fear - The fear and dread of his majesty and justice. Let him not deal with me according to his perfect justice, but according to his grace and clemency.

35. Then - I would speak freely for myself, being freed from that dread, which takes away my spirit and courage. It is not - I am not free from his terror, and therefore cannot plead my cause with him.

## X

Job complains of the hardships he was under, ver. 1-7. Pleads with God, that he is his workmanship, ver. 8-13. Complains again, that God deals severely with him, ver. 14-17. Comforts himself with the thoughts of death, ver. 18-22.

1. Shall I - Shall I give over complaining?

2. Condemn - Or, pronounce me not to be a wicked man, neither deal with me as such, as I confess thou mightest do in rigorous justice: O discover my integrity by removing this stroke, for which my friends condemn me. Wherefore - For what ends and reasons, and for what sins; for I am not conscious to myself of any peculiar sins by which I have deserved to be made the most miserable of all men. When God afflicts, he contends with us: when he contends with us, there is always a reason for it. And it is desirable to know, what that reason is, that we may forsake whatever he has a controversy with us for.

3. Good - Dost thou take any pleasure in it? Far be it from Job, to think that God did him wrong. But he is at a loss to reconcile his providences with his justice. And so other good men have often been, and will be, until the day shall declare it.

4. Eyes of faith - No. Eyes of flesh cannot see in the dark: but darkness hideth not from God. Eyes of flesh are but in one place at a time, and can see but a little way. But the eyes of the Lord are in every place, and run to and fro thro' the whole earth. Eyes of flesh will shortly be darkened by age, and shut up by death. But the eyes of God are ever the same, nor does his sight ever decay. As man - Man sees the outside only, and Judges by appearances: but thou seest mine heart.

5. Man's - Man's time is short and uncertain, and therefore he must improve it, and diligently search out the crimes of malefactors, lest by death he lose the opportunity of doing justice: but thou art eternal, and seest at one view all mens hearts, and all their actions present and to come; and therefore thou dost not need to proceed with me in this manner, by making so long a scrutiny into my heart and life.

6. Searchest - Keeping me so long upon the rack, to compel me to accuse myself.

7. Wicked - An hypocrite, as my friends account me. Deliver - But thou art the supreme ruler of the world; therefore I must wait thy time, and throw myself on thy mercy, in submission to thy sovereign will.

9. Clay - As a potter makes a vessel of clay; so this may note both the frailty of man's nature, which of itself decays and perishes, and doth not need such violent shocks to overthrow it; and the excellency of the Divine artifice commended from the meanness of the materials; which is an

argument why God should not destroy it. Again - I must die by the course of nature, and therefore while I do live, give me some ease and comfort.

10. As milk - Thus he modestly and accurately describes God's admirable work in making man out of a small and liquid, and as it were milky substance, by degrees congealed and condensed into that exquisite frame of man's body.

11. Clothed - Covered my inward and more noble parts; which are first formed. So he proceeds in describing man's formation gradually. Bones - The stay and strength of the body; and some of them, as the skull and ribs, enclose and defend its vital parts.

12. Life - Thou didst not only give me a curious body, but also a reasonable soul: thou didst at first give me life, and then maintain it in me; both when I was in the womb (which is a marvelous work of God) and afterward when I was unable to do anything to preserve my own life. favour - Thou didst not give mere life, but many other favours, such as nourishment by the breast, education, knowledge, and instruction. Visitation - The care of thy providence watching over me for my good, and visiting me in mercy. Preserved - My life, which is liable to manifold dangers, if God did not watch over us every day and moment. Thou hast hitherto done great things for me, given me life, and the blessings of life, and daily deliverances: and wilt thou now undo all that thou hast done? And shall I who have been such an eminent monument of thy mercy, now be a spectacle of thy vengeance.

13. Hid - Both thy former favours and thy present frowns. Both are according to thy own will, and therefore undoubtedly consistent, however they seem. When God does what we cannot account for, we are bound to believe, there are good reasons for it hid in his heart. It is not with us, or in our reach to assign the cause; but I know this is with thee.

14. Markest - If I am a wicked man, I cannot hide it from thee; and thou wilt punish me for it.

15. Wicked - An hypocrite, as my friends esteem me. Righteous - An upright man; so whether good or bad, all comes to one. Yet - Yet I have no comfort, or hopes of any good. Confusion - I am confounded within myself, not knowing what to say or do. Let my extremity move thee to pity, and help me.

16. Lion - Which hunteth after his prey with great eagerness, and when he overtakes it, falls upon it with great fury. Returnest - The lion tears its prey speedily, and so ends its torments; but thou renewest my calamities again and again, and makest my plagues wonderful both for kind and extremity, and continuance.

17. Witnesses - Thy judgments, which are the evidences both of my sins, and of thy wrath. Indignation - My miseries are the effects of thine anger. Army - Changes may denote the various kinds, and an army the great number of his afflictions.

20. Cease - My life is short, and of itself hastens to an end, there is no need that thou shouldest grudge me some ease for so small a moment.

## XI

Zophar charges Job with falsehood and pride, ver. 1-4. Wishes that God would convince him of his wisdom, justice, and unsearchable perfections, ver. 5-9. Of his sovereignty, power and the

cognisance he takes of men, ver. 10-12. He assures him, that on his repentance, God would restore him to prosperity, but that the wicked should perish, ver. 13-20.

1. Then answered - How hard is it, to preserve calmness, in the heat of disputation! Eliphaz began modestly: Bildad was a little rougher: But Zophar falls upon Job without mercy. "Those that have a mind to fall out with their brethren, and to fall foul upon them, find it necessary, to put the worst colours they can upon them and their performances, and right or wrong to make them odious."

2. Answered - Truly, sometimes it should not. Silence is the best confutation of impertinence, and puts the greatest contempt upon it.

3. Lies - Both concerning thy own innocency, and concerning the counsels and ways of God. Mockest - Our friendly and faithful counsels, chap. vi, 14, 15, 25, 26.

4. Doctrine - Concerning God and his providence. Clean - I am innocent before God; I have not sinned either by my former actions, or by my present expressions. But Zophar perverts Job's words, for he did not deny that he was a sinner, but only that he was an hypocrite.

5. Speak - Plead with thee according to thy desire: he would soon put thee to silence. We are commonly ready with great assurance to interest God in our quarrels. But they are not always in the right, who are most forward, to appeal to his judgment, and prejudge it against their antagonists.

6. Secrets - The unsearchable depths of God's wisdom in dealing with his creatures. Double - That they are far greater (the word double being used indefinitely for manifold, or plentiful) than that which is manifested. The secret wisdom of God is infinitely greater than that which is revealed to us by his word or works: the greatest part of what is known of God, is the least part of those perfections that are in him. And therefore thou dost rashly in judging so harshly of his proceedings with thee, because thou dost not comprehend the reasons of them, and in judging thyself innocent, because thou dost not see thy sins; whereas the all- knowing God sees innumerable sins in thee, for which he may utterly destroy thee.

7. Find out - Discover all the depths of his wisdom, and the reasons of his actions?

10. Cut off - A person or family. Shut - Its a prison, or in the hands of an enemy. Gather - Whether it pleaseth God to scatter a family, or to gather them together from their dispersions. Hinder - Or, who can contradict him, charge him with injustice in such proceedings?

11. Knoweth - Though men know but little of God, yet God knows man exactly. He knoweth that every man in the world is guilty of much vanity and folly, and therefore seeth sufficient reason for his severity against the best men. Wickedness - He perceiveth the wickedness of evil men, though it be covered with the veil of religion. Consider - Shall he only see it as an idle spectator, and not observe it as a judge to punish it?

12. Man - That since the fall is void of all true wisdom, pretends to be wise, and able to pass a censure upon all God's ways and works. Colt - Ignorant, and dull, and stupid, as to divine things, and yet heady and untractable.

13. Heart - To seek God; turning thy bold contentions with God into humble supplications.

15. Lift up - Which denotes chearfulness, and holy boldness. Without spot - Having a clear and unspotted conscience. Steadfast - Shall have a strong and comfortable assurance of God's favour.

16. As waters - Thou shalt remember it no more, than men remember a land-flood, which as it comes, so it goes away suddenly.

17. Shine - Light in scripture commonly signifies prosperity and glory. Thy comfort, like the morning-light shall shine brighter and brighter, until the perfect day.

18. Secure - Thy mind shall be quiet and free from terrors, because thou shalt have a firm and well-grounded confidence in God. Dig - Either to fix thy tents, which after the manner of the Arabians were removed from place to place: or to plough the ground, as he had done, chap. i, 14, or to make a fence about thy dwelling.

20. Fail - Either with grief and tears for their sore calamities: or with long looking for what they shall never attain. Their hope - They shall never obtain deliverance out of their distresses, but shall perish in them. Ghost - Shall be as vain and desperate as the hope of life is in a man, when he is at the very point of death.

## XII

Job blames his friends for their self-conceit and unkind behaviour, ver. 1-5. Shews that the wicked often prosper, ver. 6- 11. Confirms and enlarges upon what had been said, of the wisdom, power and providence of God, ver. 12-25.

2. Ye - You have engrossed all the reason of mankind; and each of you has as much wisdom as an whole people put together. All the wisdom which is in the world, lives in you, and will be utterly lost when you die. When wise and good men die, it is a comfort to think that wisdom and goodness do not die with them: it is folly to think, that there will be a great, irreparable loss of us when we are gone, since God has the residue of the spirit, and can raise up others more fit to do his work.

3. But - In these things, which he speaks not in a way of boasting, but for the just vindication both of himself, and of that cause of God, which for the substance of it he maintained rightly, as God himself attests, chap. xlii, 7. Such things - The truth is, neither you nor I have any reason to be puffed up with our knowledge of these things: for the most barbarous nations know that God is infinite in wisdom, and power, and justice. But this is not the question between you and me.

4. Upon God - Even by my religious neighbours, by those who call upon God, and not in vain; whose prayers therefore I covet, not their reproaches. The just - I, who, notwithstanding all their hard censures dare still own it, that through God's grace I am an upright man.

5. Slip with his feet - And fall into trouble; tho' he had formerly shone as a lamp, he is then looked upon as a lamp going out, as the snuff of a candle, which we throw to the ground and tread upon; and accordingly is despised in the thought of him that is at ease.

6. Are secure - Job's friends had all supposed, that wicked men cannot prosper long in the world. This Job opposes, and maintains, that God herein acts as sovereign, and reserves that exact distribution of rewards and punishments for the other world.

7. But - If thou observest the beasts, and their properties and actions, and events, from them thou mayst learn this lesson: that which Zophar had uttered with so much pomp and gravity, chap. xi, 7, 8, 9, concerning God's infinite wisdom, saith Job, thou needest not go into heaven or hell to know. but thou mayst learn it even from the beasts.

9. Lord - This is the only time that we meet with the name Jehovah in all the discourses between Job and his friends. For God in that age was more known by the name of Shaddai, the Almighty.

11. Doth not - This may be a preface to his following discourse; whereby he invites them to hear and judge of his words candidly and impartially; that they and he too might agree in disallowing what should appear to be false, and owning of every truth.

12. Wisdom - These words contain a concession of what Bildad had said, chap. viii, 8, 9, and a joining with him in that appeal; but withal, an intimation that this wisdom was but imperfect, and liable to many mistakes; and indeed mere ignorance and folly, if compared with the Divine wisdom, and therefore that antiquity ought not to be received against the truths of the most wise God.

14. No opening - Without God's permission. Yea, he shuts up in the grave, and none can break open those sealed doors. He shuts up in hell, in chains of darkness, and none can pass that great gulf.

15. The waters - Which are reserved its the clouds, that they may not fall upon the earth. They - The waters upon the earth, springs, and brooks, and rivers. As at the time of the general deluge, to which here is a manifest allusion.

16. With him - The same thing he had said before, ver. 13, but he repeats it here to prepare the way for the following events, which are eminent instances, both of his power and wisdom. Are his - Wholly subject to his disposal. He governs the deceiver and sets bounds to his deceits, how far they shall extend; he also over-rules all this to his own glory, and the accomplishment of his righteous designs of trying the good, and punishing wicked men, by giving them up to believe lies. Yet God is not the author of any error or sin, but only the wise and holy governor of it.

17. Spoiled - The wise counsellors or statesmen, by whom the affairs of kings and kingdoms are ordered, he leadeth away as captives in triumph, being spoiled either of that wisdom which they had, or seemed to have; or of that power and dignity which they had enjoyed. Fools - By discovering their folly, and by infatuating their minds, and turning their own counsels to their ruin.

18. Looseth - He freeth them from that wherewith they bind their subjects to obedience, their power and authority, and that majesty which God stamps upon kings, to keep their people in awe. Girdeth - He reduces them to a mean and servile condition; which is thus expressed, because servants did use to gird up their garments (that after the manner of those parts were loose and long) that they might be fitter for attendance upon their masters: he not only deposes them from their thrones, but brings them into slavery.

20. The speech - By taking away or restraining the gift of utterance from them. Or, by taking away their understanding which should direct their speech. Trusty - Of those wise and experienced counsellors, that were trusted by the greatest princes.

22. Darkness - The most secret counsels of princes, which are contrived and carried on in the dark.

23. Nations - What hitherto he said of princes, he now applies to nations, whom God does either increase or diminish as he pleases.

25. Grope - Thus are the revolutions of kingdoms brought about by an overruling providence. Heaven and earth are shaken: but the Lord remaineth a king forever.

## XIII

Job sharply reproves his friends, ver. 1-13. Professes his faith, ver. 14-16. Desires to be heard, ver. 17-19. Expostulates with God, ver. 20-28.

1. Lo - All this which either you or I have discoursed concerning the infinite power and wisdom of God. I know, both by seeing it, by my own observation and experience, and by hearing it from my ancestors.

3. Surely - I had rather debate the matter with God than with you. I am not afraid of presenting my person and cause before him, who is a witness of my integrity.

8. Accept - Not judging according to the right of the cause, but the quality or the person.

12. Remembrance - Mouldering and coming to nothing. And the consideration of our mortality should make us afraid of offending God. Your mementos are like unto ashes, contemptible and unprofitable.

14. Wherefore - And this may be a reason of his desire of liberty of speech, because he could hold his tongue no longer, but must needs tear himself to pieces, if he had not some vent for his grief. The phrase having his life in his hand, denotes a condition extremely dangerous.

17. Hear - He now comes more closely to his business, the foregoing verses being mostly in way of preface.

18. Behold - I have seriously considered the state of my case, and am ready to plead my cause.

19. The ghost - My grief would break my heart, if I should not give it vent.

21. Withdraw - Suspend my torments during the time of my pleading with thee, that my mind may be at liberty. Do not present thyself to me in terrible majesty, neither deal with me in rigorous justice.

22. Then - This proposal savoured of self-confidence, and of irreverence towards God; for which, and the like speeches, he is reproved by God, chap. xxxviii, 2, 3; xl, 2.

23. My sin - That I am a sinner, I confess; but not that I am guilty of such crimes as my friends suppose, if it be so, do thou, O Lord, discover it.

25. Leaf - One that can no more resist thy power, than a leaf, or a little dry straw can resist the wind or fire.

26. Writest - Thou appointest or inflictest. A metaphor from princes or Judges, who anciently used to write their sentences.

28. He - He speaks of himself in the third person, as is usual in this and other sacred books. So the sense is, he, this poor frail creature, this body of mine; which possibly he pointed at with his finger, consumeth or pineth away.

## XIV

Man's life is but short, sorrowful, and sinful; on which consideration he pleads for mercy, ver, 1-6. Other creatures revive, but man does not, ver. 7-12. Various wishes and complaints, ver. 13-22.

1. Man - A weak creature, and withal corrupt and sinful, and of that sex by which sin and all other calamity was brought into the world.

2. Flower - The flower is fading, and all its beauty soon withers and is gone. The shadow is fleeting, and its very being will soon be lost in the shadows of night. Of neither do we make any account, in neither do we put any confidence.

4. Not one - No man. This is the prerogative of thy grace, which therefore I humbly implore.

5. Determined - Limited to a certain period. With thee - In thy power and disposal. Thou hast appointed a certain end of his days, beyond which he cannot prolong his life.

6. Turn - Withdraw thine afflicting hand from him, that he may have some present ease. 'Till - He come to the period of his life, which thou hast allotted to him, as a man appoints a set time to an hired servant.

8. Die - To outward appearance.

9. Scent - By means of water. Scent or smell, is figuratively ascribed to a tree.

10. Man - Two words are here used for man. Geber, a mighty man, tho' mighty, dies. Adam, a man of earth, returns to it. Before death, he is dying daily, continually wasting away. In death, he giveth up the ghost, the spirit returns to God that gave it. After death, where is he? Not where he was: his place knows him no more. But is he nowhere? Yes, he is gone to the world of spirits, gone into eternity, gone, never to return to this world!

11. As - So it is with man. Or thus, as when the waters fail from the sea, when the sea forsakes the place into which it used to flow, the river which was fed by it, decayeth and drieth up without all hopes of recovery.

12. Lieth - In his bed, the grave. 'Till - Until the time of the general resurrection, when these visible heavens shall pass away.

13. The grave - The grave is not only a resting-place, but an hiding-place to the children of God. He hides them in the grave, as we hide our treasure in a place of secrecy and safety. Hide me there, not only from the storms of this life, but for the glory of a better. Until thy wrath be past - As long as our bodies lie in the grave, there are some fruits of God's wrath against sin: until the set time comes, for their being remembered, as Noah was remembered in the ark, Gen. viii, 1. Our bodies shall not be forgotten in the grave, there is a time set for their being inquired after.

14. Shall he live? - He shall not in this world. Therefore I will patiently wait 'till that change comes, which will put a period to my calamities.

15. Answer thee - Thou shalt call my soul to thyself: and I will chearfully answer, Here I am: knowing thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands - A love for the soul which thou hast made, and new-made by thy grace.

16. Numbereth - Thou makest a strict enquiry into all my actions.

17. Sealed - As writings or other choice things, that they may all be brought forth upon occasion, and not one of them forgotten. Thou keepest all my sins in thy memory. But herein Job speaks rashly.

18. And - As when a great mountain falls, by an earthquake or inundation, it moulders away like a fading leaf, (as the Hebrew word signifies) and as the rock, when by the violence of winds or earthquakes it is removed out of its place, and thrown down, is never re-advanced: and as the waters by continual droppings, wear away the stones, so that they can never be made whole again: and as thou wastest away, by a great and violent inundation, the things which grow out of the dust of the earth, herbs, and fruits, and plants, which once washed away are irrecoverably lost; in like

manner, thou destroyest the hope of man: when man dies, all hope of his living again in this world is lost.

20. Prevailest - When once thou takest away this life, it is gone forever. Sendest - To his long home.

21. Knoweth not - Either is ignorant of all such events: or, is not concerned or affected with them. A dead or dying man minds not these things.

## XV

Eliphaz reproves Job for justifying himself, ver. 1-13. Persuades him to humble himself before God, ver. 14-16. Describes the misery of wicked men, ver. 17-35.

2. Fill - Satisfy his mind and conscience. East wind - With discourses not only unprofitable, but also pernicious both to himself and others; as the east-wind was in those parts.

4. Castest off - Hebrew. thou makes void fear; the fear of God, piety and religion, by thy unworthy speeches of God, and by those false and pernicious principles, that God makes no difference between good and bad in the course of his providence, but equally prospers or afflicts both: thou dost that which tends to the subversion of the fear and worship of God. Restrainest prayer - Thou dost by thy words and principles, as far as in thee lies, banish prayer out of the world, by making it useless and unprofitable to men.

5. Uttereth - Thy words discover the naughtiness of thy heart. Crafty - Thou speakest wickedly, and craftily: thou coverest thy impious principles with fair pretenses of piety.

11. Are - Are those comforts, which we have propounded to thee on condition of thy repentance, small and contemptible in thine eyes? Secret - Hast thou any secret and peculiar way of comfort which is unknown to us, and to all other men?

12. Why - Why dost thou suffer thyself to be transported by the pride of thine heart, to use such unworthy expressions? Wink - Why dost thou look with such an angry, supercilious, and disdainful look?

13. Against God - Eliphaz here does in effect give the cause on Satan's side, and affirms that Job had done as he said he would, Curse God to his face.

15. Saints - In his angels, chap. iv, 18, who are called his saints or holy ones, Deut. xxxiii, 2 Psalm ciii, 20. Who though they were created holy, yet many of them fell. Heavens - The angels that dwell in heaven; heaven being put for its inhabitants. None of these are pure, simply and perfectly, and comparatively to God. The angels are pure from corruption, but not from imperfection.

16. Who - Who besides his natural proneness to sin, has contracted habits of sinning; and sins as freely, as greedily and delightfully, as men, especially in those hot countries, drink up water.

17. I - I will prove what I have affirmed, that such strokes as thine are peculiar to hypocrites. Seen - I speak not by hear-say, but from my own experience.

18. Hid - They judged it to be so certain and important a truth, that they would not conceal it in their own breasts.

19. To whom - By the gracious gift of God: this he alleges to make their testimony more considerable, because these were no obscure men, but the most worthy and famous men in their ages; and to confute what Job had said, chap. ix, 24, that the earth was given into the hand of the wicked. By the earth he means the dominion and possession of it. Stranger - No person of a strange nation and disposition, or religion. Passed - Through their land, so as to disturb, or spoil them, as the Sabeans and Chaldeans did thee. God watched over those holy men so, that no enemy could invade them; and so he would have done over thee, if thou hadst been such an one.

20. Pain - Lives a life of care, and fear, and grief, by reason of God's wrath, the torments of his own mind, and his outward calamities. Hidden - He knows not how short the time of his life is, and therefore lives in continual fear of losing it. Oppressor - To the wicked man: he names this one sort of them, because he supposed Job to be guilty of this sin, in opposition of what Job had affirmed of the safety of such persons, chap. xii, 6, and because such are apt to promise themselves a longer and happier life than other men.

21. A sound - Even when he feels no evil, he is tormented with perpetual fears. Come upon him - Suddenly and unexpectedly.

22. Believeth not - When he falls into trouble, he despairs of deliverance, by reason of his guilty conscience. Waited for - Besides the calamity which is upon him, he is in constant expectation of greater; the sword is used for any grievous affliction.

23. Knoweth - From his own guilty conscience.

25. For - Now he gives the reason of all the fore-mentioned calamities, which was his great wickedness. Against God - He sinned against God with an high hand. The Almighty - Which aggravates the madness of this poor worm that durst fight against the omnipotent God.

26. He - The wicked man. Neck - As a stout warrior who cometh close to his adversary and grapples with him. He acts in flat opposition to God, both to his precepts and providences. Bosses - Even where his enemy is strongest.

27. Because - This is mentioned as the reason of his insolent carriage towards God, because he was fat, rich, potent, and successful, as that expression signifies, Deut. xxxii, 15 Psalm lxxviii, 31 Jer. xlvi, 21. His great prosperity made him proud and secure, and regardless of God and men. Fat - His only care is to pamper himself.

28. But - This is fitly opposed to the prosperity last mentioned, and is the beginning of the description of his misery.

29. Substance - What he had gotten shall be taken from him.

30. Depart - His misery shall have no end. Flame - God's anger and judgment upon him. Branches - His wealth, and power, and glory, wherewith he was encompassed, as trees are with their branches. His mouth - And this expression intimates, with how much ease God subdueth his enemies: his word, his blast; one act of his will is sufficient. Go - Hebrew. go back: that is, run away from God faster than he ran upon him, ver. 26. So it is a continuation of the former metaphor of a conflict between two persons.

31. Vanity - In the vain and deceitful things of this world, he subjoins a general caution to all men to take heed of running into the same error and mischief. Vanity - Disappointment and dissatisfaction, and the loss of all his imaginary felicity. Recompence - Hebrew. his exchange; he shall exchange one vanity for another, a pleasing vanity for a vexatious vanity.

32. Accomplished - That vanity should be his recompence. Before - When by the course of nature, and common providence he might have continued much longer.

## XVI

Job upbraids his friends with unkindness, ver. 1-5. Bemoans himself, ver. 6-16. Appeals from their censure to the righteous judgment of God, ver. 17-22.

2. Such things - These things are but vulgar and trivial. And so are all creatures, to a soul under deep conviction of sin, or the arrest of death.

3. End - When wilt thou put an end to these impertinent discourses? He retorts upon him his charge, chap. xv, 2, 3.

7. He - God, as appears by the following words. Weary - Either of complaining, or, of my life. Desolate - Hast turned my society into desolation, by destroying my children and servants.

9. Eyes - Looks upon me with a fierce, and sparkling eye, as enraged persons use to do.

10. They - My friends. Gaped - Opened their mouths wide against me. In all this Job was a type of Christ. These very expressions are used in the predictions of his sufferings, Psalm xxii, 13. They gaped upon me with their mouths, and Micah v, 1. They shall smite the judge of Israel upon the check.

11. The wicked - And thus Christ was delivered into wicked hands, by the determinate counsel of God.

12. Shaken - As a mighty man doth with some stripling, when he wrestleth with him. Mark - That he may shoot all his arrows in me.

13. His archers - Whoever are our enemies, we must look on them as God's archers, and see him directing the arrow.

15. I have - So far am I from stretching out my hand against God, chap. xv, 25, that I have humbled myself deeply under his hand. I have not only put on sackcloth, but sewed it on, as being resolved to continue my humiliation, as long as my affliction continues. Defiled my horn - I have willingly parted with all my wealth, and power, and glory (as the horn often signifies in scripture,) and been content to lie in the dust.

17. Not - And all this is not come upon me for any injurious dealing, but for other reasons known to God only. Pure - I do not cast off God's fear and service, chap. xv, 4. I do still pray and worship God, and my prayer is accompanied with a sincere heart.

18. Earth - The earth is said to cover that blood, which lies undiscovered and unrevenged: but saith Job, if I be guilty of destroying any man, let the earth disclose it; let it be brought to light. Cry - Let the cry of my complaints to men, or prayers to God, find no place in the ears or hearts of God or men, if this be true.

19. Witness - Besides the witness of my conscience, God is witness of my integrity.

22. Go - To the state and place of the dead, whence men cannot return to this life. The meaning is, my death hastens, and therefore I earnestly desire that the cause depending, between me and my friends, may be determined, that if I be guilty of these things, I may bear the shame of it before all men, and if I be innocent, that I may see my own integrity, and the credit of religion, (which suffers upon this occasion) vindicated. How very certainly, and how very shortly are we likewise to go this journey.

## XVII

Job still bemoans himself, ver. 1-7. Encourages good men to hold on their way, ver. 8, 9. Declares he looks for no ease but in the grave, ver. 10-16. Job in this chapter suddenly passes from one thing to another as is usual for men in much trouble.

1. The graves - He speaks of the sepulchres of his fathers, to which he must be gathered. The graves where they are laid, are ready for me also. Whatever is unready, the grave is ready for us: it is a bed soon made. And if the grave be ready for us, it concerns us, to be ready for the grave.

2. Are not - Do not my friends, instead of comforting, mock me? Thus he returns to what he had said, chap. xvi, 20, and intimates the justice of his following appeal.

3. Surety - These words contain, an humble desire to God that he would be his surety, or appoint him a surety who should maintain his righteous cause against his opposers. Strike hands - Be surety to me; whereof that was the usual gesture.

4. Hid - Thou hast blinded the minds of my friends: therefore I desire a more wise and able judge. Therefore - Thou wilt not give them the victory over me in this contest, but wilt make them ashamed of their confidence.

7. As a shadow - I am grown so poor and thin, that I am not to be called a man, but the shadow of a man.

8. Astonied - At the depth and mysteriousness of God's judgments, which fall on innocent men, while the worst of men prosper. Yet - Notwithstanding all these sufferings of good men, and the astonishment which they cause, he shall the more zealously oppose those hypocrites, who make these strange providences of God an objection to religion.

10. Come - And renew the debate, as I see you are resolved to do.

11. My days - The days of my life. I am a dying man, and therefore the hopes you give me of the bettering of my condition, are vain. Purposes - Which I had in my prosperous days, concerning myself and children.

12. They - My thoughts so incessantly pursue and disturb me, that I can no more sleep in the night, than in the day. The light - The day-light, which often gives some comfort to men in misery, seems to be gone as soon as it is begun. Darkness - Because of my grievous pains and torments which follow me by day as well as by night.

13. Wait - For deliverance, I should be disappointed; for I am upon the borders of the grave, I expect no rest but in the dark grave, for which therefore I prepare myself. I endeavour to make it easy, by keeping my conscience pure, by seeing Christ lying in this bed, (so turning it into a bed of spices) and by looking beyond it to the resurrection.

14. Corruption - Hebrew. to the pit of corruption, the grave. Father - I am near a-kin to thee, and thou wilt receive and keep me in thy house, as parents do their children.

15. Hope - The happiness you would have me expect.

16. They - My hopes, of which he spake in the singular number, ver. 15, which he here changes into the plural, as is usual in these poetical books. Bars - Into the innermost parts of the pit: my hopes are dying, and will be buried in my grave. We must shortly be in the dust, under the bars of the pit, held fast there, 'till the general resurrection. All good men, if they cannot agree now will

there rest together. Let the foresight of this cool the heat of all contenders, and moderate the disputers of this world.

## XVIII

Bildad sharply reproves Job, as proud and impatient, ver. 1- 4. And enlarges on the misery of the wicked, ver. 5-12.

2. Ye - Thou, O Job; of whom he speaks here, as also ver. 3, in the plural number, as was a common idiotism of the Eastern language, to speak thus of one person, especially where he was one of eminency. Mark - Consider the matter better.

3. Beasts - Ignorant, and stupid men, chap. xvii, 4, 10.

4. He - Job. Thou art thy own tormentor. Forsaken - Shall God give over the government of the earth for thy sake, to prevent thy complaints and clamours? Shall the counsels of God, which are more immoveable than rocks, and the whole course of his providence be altered to comply with thy humours?

7. Steps - His strong steps, by a vulgar Hebraism: his attempts and actions; such of them as seem to be contrived with greatest strength of understanding, and carried on with greatest resolution. Straitened - Shall be hindered and entangled. He shall be cast into difficulties and perplexities, so that he shall not be able to proceed, and to accomplish his enterprizes.

8. Feet - By his own designs and actions.

13. First-born - A terrible kind of death. The first-born was the chief of his brethren, and therefore this title is given to things eminent in their kind.

14. Confidence - All the matter of his confidence, his riches, and children. Terrors - To death, which even Aristotle called, The most terrible of all terribles. And this it will do, either because it will expose him to his enemies, who will kill him; or because the sense of his disappointments, and losses, and dangers, will break his heart.

15. It - Destruction, expressed ver. 12, shall fix its abode with him. Because - Because it is none of his own, being got from others by deceit or violence. Brimstone - It shall be utterly destroyed, as it were, by fire and brimstone. He seems to allude both to the destruction of Sodom, which happened not long before these times, and to the judgment which befell Job, chap. i, 16.

18. Darkness - From a prosperous life to disgrace and misery, and to the grave, the land of darkness.

20. Astonied - At the day of his destruction. They shall be amazed at the suddenness, and dreadfulness of it. Before - Before the persons last mentioned. Those who lived in the time and place where this judgment was inflicted.

21. The place - The condition.

## XIX

Job complains of the wicked usage of his friends, ver. 1-7. Of the shyness and strangeness of his relations and intimates, ver. 8-19. Pleads for pity, ver. 20-22. Testifies his firm belief of the resurrection, ver. 23-27. Cautions his friends against persisting in their hard censures, ver. 28, 29.

3. Ten - Many times. A certain number for an uncertain. Strange - That you carry yourselves like strangers to me, and condemn me as if you had never known my integrity.

4. Erred - If I have sinned, I myself suffer for my sins, and therefore deserve your pity rather than reproaches.

7. Cry - Unto God. Wrong - That I am oppressed by my friends.

9. Glory - Of my estate, children, authority, and all my comforts. Crown - All my power, and laid my honour in the dust.

10. Every side - In all respects, my person, and family, and estate. Gone - I am a lost and dead man. Hope - All my hopes of the present life, but not of the life to come. Tree - Which being once plucked up by the roots, never grows again. Hope in this life is a perishing thing. But the hope of good men, when it is cut off from this world, is but removed like a tree, transplanted from this nursery to the garden of God.

12. Troops - My afflictions, which are God's soldiers marching under his conduct. Raise - Cast up a trench round about me.

13. Estranged - As we must eye the hand of God, in all the injuries we receive from our enemies, so likewise in all the slights and unkindnesses we receive from our friends.

15. Maids - Who by reason of their sex, commonly have more compassionate hearts than men.

18. Arose - From my seat, to shew my respect to them, though they were my inferiors.

19. Inward - My intimates and confidants, to whom I imparted all my thoughts and counsels.

20. Skin - Immediately, the fat and flesh next to the skin being consumed. As - As closely as it doth to these remainders of flesh which are left in my inward parts.

21. Touched me - My spirit is touched with a sense of his wrath, a calamity of all others the most grievous.

22. As God - As if you had the same infinite knowledge which God hath, whereby you can search my heart and know my hypocrisy, and the same sovereign authority to say and do what you please with me. Not satisfied - Are like wolves or lions that are not contented with devouring the flesh of their prey, but also break their bones.

23. My words - The words which I am now about to speak. And that which Job wished for, God granted him. His words are written in God's book; so that wherever that book is read, there shall this glorious confession be declared, for a memorial of him.

24. Lead - Anciently they used to grave the letters in a stone with an iron tool, and then to fill up the cuts with lead, that the words might be more plainly seen.

25. For - This is the reason of his confidence in the goodness of his cause, and his willingness to have the matter depending between him and his friends, published and submitted to any trial, because he had a living and powerful Redeemer to plead his cause, and to give sentence for him. My Redeemer - In whom I have a particular interest. The word Goel, here used; properly agrees

to Jesus Christ: for this word is primarily used of the next kinsman, whose office it was to redeem by a price paid, the sold or mortgaged estate of his deceased kinsman; to revenge his death, and to maintain his name and honour, by raising up seed to him. All which more fitly agrees to Christ, who is our nearest kinsman and brother, as having taken our nature upon him; who hath redeemed that everlasting inheritance which our first parents had utterly lost, by the price of his own blood; and hath revenged the death of mankind upon the great contriver of it, the devil, by destroying him and his kingdom; and hath taken a course to preserve our name, and honour, and persons, to eternity. And it is well observed, that after these expressions, we meet not with such impatient or despairing passages, as we had before; which shews that they had inspired him with new life and comfort. Latter day - At the day of the general resurrection and judgment, which, as those holy patriarchs well knew and firmly believed, was to be at the end of the world. The earth - The place upon which Christ shall appear and stand at the last day. Hebrew. upon the dust; in which his saints and members lie or sleep, whom he will raise out of it. And therefore he is fitly said to stand upon the dust, or the grave, or death; because then he will put that among other enemies under his feet.

26. Though - Though my skin is now in a great measure consumed, and the rest of it, together with this body, shall be devoured by the worms, which may seem to make my case desperate. Flesh - Or with bodily eyes; my flesh or body being raised from the grave, and re-united to my soul. God - The same whom he called his Redeemer, ver. 25, who having taken flesh, and appearing in his flesh or body with and for Job upon the earth, might well be seen with his bodily eyes. Nor is this understood of a simple seeing of him; but of that glorious and beatifying vision of God, which is promised to all God's people.

27. See - No wonder he repeats it again, because the meditation of it was most sweet to him. For - For my own benefit and comfort. Another - For me or in my stead. I shall not see God by another's eyes, but by my own, and by these self-same eyes, in this same body which now I have. Though - This I do confidently expect, tho' the grave and the worms will consume my whole body.

28. Therefore - Because my faith and hope are in God. The root - The root denotes, a root of true religion. And the root of all true religion is living faith.

29. Sword - Of some considerable judgment to be inflicted on you which is called the sword, as Deut. xxxii, 41, and elsewhere. That - This admonition I give you, that you may know it in time, and prevent it. A judgment - God sees and observes, and will judge all your words and actions.

## XX

Zophar, after a short preface, asserts, that the prosperity, of the wicked is short, and his ruin sure, ver. 1-9. He describes his misery in many particulars, ver. 10-29.

2. Therefore - For this thy severe sentence. Make haste - I speak sooner than I intended. And possibly interrupted Job, when he was proceeding in his discourse.

3. The check - Thy opprobrious reproofs of us. Understanding - I speak, not from passion, but certain knowledge.

4. This - Which I am now about to say. Since - Since the world was made.

6. Though - Though he be advanced to great dignity and authority.

11. Bones - His whole body, even the strongest parts of it. The sin - Of the punishment of it.

12. Mouth - To his taste; though it greatly please him for the present. Hide - As an epicure doth a sweet morsel, which he keeps and rolls about his mouth, that he may longer enjoy the pleasure of it.

14. Turned - From sweet to bitter. Gall of asps - Exceeding bitter and pernicious. Gall is most bitter; the gall of serpents is full of poison; and the poison of asps is most dangerous and within a few hours kills without remedy.

15. Vomit - Be forced to restore them. God, &c. - If no man's hand can reach him, God shall find him out.

17. See - Not enjoy that abundant satisfaction and comfort, which good men through God's blessings enjoy.

18. Swallow - So as to hold it. He shall not possess it long, nor to any considerable purpose. Yea, he shall be forced to part with his estate to make compensations for his wrongs. So that he shall not enjoy what he had gotten, because it shall be taken from him.

20. Belly - He shall have no peace in his mind. Desired - Any part of his desirable things, but shall forfeit and lose them all.

21. Therefore - It being publickly known that he was totally ruined, none of his kindred shall trouble themselves about any relicks of his estate.

22. In, &c. - In the height of prosperity he shall be distressed. Hand, &c. - So his wickedness shall be punished by those as wicked as himself.

23. Rain - This phrase denotes both the author of his plagues, God, and the nature and quality of them, that they shall come upon him like rain; with great vehemency, so that he cannot prevent or avoid it. Eating - As it fell upon thy sons.

24. Flee - From the sword or spear; and so shall think him self out of danger.

25. It - The arrow, which had entered into his body, and now was drawn out of it either by himself or some other person; having in general said, that it came out of his body, he determines also the part of the body, the gall; which shews that the wound was both deep and deadly. Terrors - The terrors of death; because he perceived his wound was incurable.

26. Darkness - All sorts of miseries. Hid - Or, laid up; by God for him. It is reserved and treasured up for him, and shall infallibly overtake him. Secret - In those places where he confidently hopes to hide himself from all evil: even there God shall find him out. Not blown - By man, but kindled by God himself. He thinks by his might and violence to secure himself from men, but God will find him out. With him - With his family, who shall inherit his curse as well as his estate.

27. Heaven - God shall be a swift witness against him by extraordinary judgments; still he reflects upon Job's case, and the fire from heaven. Earth - All creatures upon earth shall conspire to destroy him. If the God of heaven and earth be his enemy, neither heaven nor earth will shew him any kindness, but all the host of both are, and will he at war with him.

28. Increase of his house - His estate. Depart - Shall be lost. Flow - Like waters, swiftly and strongly, and so as to return no more. His - Of God's wrath.

29. Heritage - Hebrew. the heritage; so called, to denote the stability and assurance of it, that it is as firm as an inheritance to the right heir; and in opposition to that inheritance which he had gotten by fraud and violence.

## XXI

Job's preface to his answer, ver. 1-6. He describes the prosperity of wicked men, ver. 7-13. Hardening them in their impiety, ver. 14-16. He foretells their final ruin, ver. 17-21. He observes a great variety in the ways of God, ver. 22-26. He shews, that tho' sinners are always punished in the other world, they often escape in this, ver. 27-34.

2. Hear, &c. - If you have no other comfort to administer, at least afford me this. And it will be a comfort to yourselves in the reflection, to have dealt tenderly with your afflicted friend.

3. Speak - without interruption. Mock - If I do not defend my cause with solid arguments, go on in your scoffs.

4. Is - I do not make my complaint to, or expect relief from you, or from any men, hut from God only: I am pouring forth my complaints to God. If - If my complaint were to man, have I not cause?

5. Mark - Consider what I am about to say concerning the prosperity of the worst of men, and the pressures of some good men, and it is able to fill you with astonishment. Lay, &c. - Be silent.

6. Remember - The very remembrance of what is past, fills me with dread and horror.

13. Moment - They do not die of a lingering and tormenting disease.

14. Therefore - Because of their constant prosperity. Say - Sometimes in words, but commonly in their thoughts and the language of their lives.

16. Lo - But wicked men have no reason to reject God, because of their prosperity, for their wealth, is not in their hand; neither obtained, nor kept by their own might, but only by God's power and favour. Therefore I am far from approving their opinion, or following their course.

17. Often - I grant that this happens often though not constantly, as you affirm. Lamp - Their glory and outward happiness.

19. Layeth up - In his treasures, Rom. ii, 5. Iniquity - The punishment of his iniquity; he will punish him both in his person and in his posterity.

20. See - He shall be destroyed; as to see death, is to die.

21. For, &c. - What delight can ye take in the thoughts of his posterity, when he is dying an untimely death? When that number of months, which by the course of nature, he might have lived, is cut off by violence.

22. Teach - How to govern the world? For so you do, while you tell him that he must not afflict the godly, nor give the wicked prosperity. That he must invariably punish the wicked, and reward the righteous in this world. No: he will act as sovereign, and with great variety in his providential dispensations. High - The highest persons, on earth, he exactly knows them, and gives sentence concerning them, as he sees fit.

25. Another - Another wicked man. So there is a great variety of God's dispensations; he distributes great prosperity to one, and great afflictions to another, according to his wise but secret counsel.

26. Alike - All these worldly differences are ended by death, and they lie in the grave without any distinction. So that no man can tell who is good, and who is bad by events which befall them in this life. And if one wicked man die in a palace, and another in a dungeon, they will meet in the

congregation of the dead and damned; and the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched will be the same to both: which makes those differences inconsiderable, and not worth perplexing ourselves about.

27. Me - I know that your discourses, though they be of wicked, men in general, yet are particularly levelled at me.

29. Them - Any person that passes along the high-way, every one you meet with. It is so vulgar a thing, that no man of common sense is ignorant of it. Tokens - The examples, or evidences, of this truth, which they that go by the way can produce.

30. They - He speaks of the same person; only the singular number is changed into the plural, possibly to intimate, that altho' for the present only some wicked men were punished, yet then all of them should suffer. Brought - As malefactors are brought forth from prison to execution.

31. Declare - His power and splendour are so great, that scarce any man dare reprove him.

32. And - The pomp of his death shall be suitable to the glory of his life. Brought - With pomp and state, as the word signifies. Grave - Hebrew. to the graves; to an honourable and eminent grave: the plural number being used emphatically to denote eminency. He shall not die a violent but a natural death.

33. Valley - Of the grave, which is low and deep like a valley. Sweet - He shall sweetly rest in his grave. Draw - Hebrew. he shall draw every man after him, into the grave, all that live after him, whether good or bad, shall follow him to the grave, shall die as he did. So he fares no worse herein than all mankind. He is figuratively said to draw them, because they come after him, as if they were drawn by his example.

34. How - Why then do you seek to comfort me with vain hopes of recovering my prosperity, seeing your grounds are false, and experience shews, that good men are often in great tribulation, while the vilest of men prosper.

## XXII

Eliphaz, checks Job for his complaints of God, ver. 1-4. Charges miseries on his sins, ver, 5-14. Compares his case to that of the old world, ver. 15-20. Assures him, that if he would return to God, he would shew him mercy, ver. 21-30.

2. Can, &c. - Why dost thou insist so much upon thy own righteousness, as if thou didst oblige God by it.

3. Is it - Such a pleasure as he needs for his own ease and contentment. Nay, God needs not us, or our services. We are undone, forever undone without him: but he is happy, forever happy without us.

4. Reprove - Punish thee. Because he is afraid, lest if he should let thee alone, thou wouldst grow too great and powerful for him: surely no. As thy righteousness cannot profit him, so thy wickedness can do him no hurt.

5. Evil - Is not thy evil, thy affliction, are not thy calamities procured by, and proportionable to thy sins.

6. Surely - He speaks thus by way of strong presumption, when I consider thy unusual calamities, I conclude thou art guilty of all, or some of these crimes. Brother - Of thy neighbour. Nought - Without sufficient and justifiable cause. Stripped - By taking their garment for a pledge, or by robbing them of their rights, all other injuries being comprehended under this.

8. Dwelt - Either by thy sentence or permission, he had a peaceable and sure possession of it, whether he had right to it, or no.

9. Arms - Their supports, and rights.

11. Or - Either thou art troubled with fear of further evils or with the gross darkness of thy present state of misery. Waters - Variety of sore afflictions, which are frequently compared to water.

12. Heaven - And from that high tower looketh down upon men, to behold, and govern, and recompense all their actions, whether good or bad. How high - Yet God is far higher than they, and from thence can easily see all things.

14. Walketh - His delight is in heaven, which is worthy of his care, but he will not burden himself with the care of earth: which was the opinion of many Heathen philosophers, and, as they fancied, was Job's opinion also.

15. Old way - Hebrew. the way of antiquity, of men living in ancient times, their end or success.

16. Out of - Before their time. A flood - Who, together with their foundation, the earth and all their supports and enjoyments in it, were destroyed by the general deluge.

17. Who - He repeats Job's words, chap. xxi, 14, 15, but to a contrary purpose. Job alleged them to shew that they prospered notwithstanding their wickedness; and Eliphaz produces them to shew that they were cut off for it.

18. Yet - Yet it is true, that for a time God did prosper them, but at last, cut them off in a tremendous manner, But - He repeals Job's words, chap. xxi, 16, not without reflection: thou didst say so, but against thy own principle, that God carries himself indifferently towards good and bad; but I who have observed God's terrible judgments upon wicked men, have much more reason to abhor their counsels.

20. Because - Because when wicked men are destroyed, they are preserved. He should have said their substance; but he changes the person, and saith, our substance; either as including himself in the member of righteous persons, and thereby intimating that he pleaded the common cause of all such, while Job pleaded the cause of the wicked, or because he would hereby thankfully acknowledge some eminent and particular preservation given to him amongst other righteous men. Remnant - All that was left undestroyed in the general calamity. Fire - Sodom and Gomorrah. As if he had said, thou mayest find here and there an instance, of a wicked man dying in peace. But what is that to the two great instances of the final perdition of ungodly men, the drowning the whole world, and the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah.

21. Him - With God, renew thy acquaintance with God by prayer, and repentance for all thy sins, and true humiliation under his hand, and hearty compliance with all his commands, and diligent care to serve and enjoy him. It is our honour, that we are made capable of this acquaintance, our misery that by sin we have lost it; our privilege, that through Christ we may return to it; and our unspeakable advantage, to renew and cultivate it. And be at peace - At peace with God, and at peace with thyself, not fretful or uneasy. Good shall come unto thee - All the good thou canst desire, temporal, spiritual, eternal.

22. Receive - Take the rule whereby thou governest thy thoughts, and words, and whole life, not from thy own imaginations or passions, but from God, from his law, which is written in thy

own mind, and from the doctrines and instructions of the holy men of God. And do not only hear them with thine ears, but let them sink into thy heart.

23. If - The Hebrew phrase is emphatical, and implies a thorough turning from sin, to God, so as to love him, and cleave to him, and sincerely devote a man's self to his fear and service. Built - God will repair thy ruins, and give thee more children, and bless thee with prosperity. Thou shalt - It is either,

1. a spiritual promise, if thou dost sincerely repent, God will give the grace effectually to reform thyself and family: or,
2. a temporal promise, thou shalt put away iniquity, or the punishment of thy sins; as iniquity is very often used: far from thy tabernacles; from all thy dwellings, and tents, and possessions.

26. Lift up - Look up to him, with chearfulness and confidence.

27. Make - The word is, thou shalt multiply thy prayer. Under all thy burdens, in all thy wants, cares and fears, thou shalt send to heaven for wisdom, strength and comfort. Pay - Thou shalt obtain those blessings for which thou didst make vows to God, and therefore, according to thy obligation, shalt pay thy vows to him.

28. Established - Thy purposes shalt not be disappointed, but ratified by God. And in all thy counsels, and actions, God shall give thee the light of his direction and governance, and of comfort and success.

29. Cast down - All round about thee, in a time of general calamity. There is - God will deliver thee. He - God.

30. He, &c. - God will have so great a respect to thy innocency, that for thy sake he will deliver those that belong to thee, or live with thee, or near thee, thought in themselves they be ripe for destruction. Their hands - By thy prayers proceeding from a pure heart and conscience. So Eliphaz and his two friends, who in this matter were not innocent, were delivered by the pureness of Job's hands, chap. xlii, 8.

## XXIII

Here seems to be a struggle throughout this chapter between nature and grace, Job complains of his condition, yet with an assurance of God's clemency, ver. 1-7. He cannot understand God's dealings, nor hope for relief, yet holds fast his integrity, ver. 8-14. He is in deep trouble, ver. 15-17

2. Today - Even at this time, notwithstanding all your pretended consolations. Stroke - The hand or stroke of God upon me. Groaning - Doth exceed my complaints.

3. O - I desire nothing more than his acquaintance and presence; but alas, he hides his face from me. Seat - To his throne or judgment-seat to plead my cause before him.

5. Know - If he should discover to me any secret sins, for which he contendeth with me, I would humble myself before him, and accept of the punishment of mine iniquity.

6. No - He would not use his power against me, but for me; by enabling me to plead my cause, and giving sentence according to that clemency, which he uses towards his children.

7. There - At that throne of grace, where God lays aside his majesty, and Judges according to his wonted clemency. Dispute - Humbly propounding the grounds of their confidence. So - Upon such a fair and equal hearing. Delivered - From the damnatory sentence of God. This and some such expressions of Job cannot be excused from irreverence towards God, for which God afterwards reproves him, and Job abhorreth himself.

8. Is not - As a judge to hear and determine my causes, otherwise he knew God was essentially present in all places.

10. Gold - Which comes out of the furnace pure from all dross.

11. Steps - The steps or paths which God hath appointed men to walk in.

14. Performeth - Those calamities which he hath allotted to me. And - There are many such examples of God's proceeding with men.

16. Soft - He hath bruised, and broken, or melted it, so that I have no spirit in me.

17. Because - God did not cut me off by death. Before - These miseries came upon me. Covered - By hiding me in the grave.

## XXIV

Job shews that open sinners are often prosperous, ver. 1-12. That secret sinners often pass undiscovered, ver. 13-18. That God punishes such by secret judgments, and reserves them for future judgment, ver. 19-25.

1. Why - Why (how comes it to pass) seeing times, (the fittest seasons for every, action, and particularly for the punishment of wicked men,) are not hidden from, or unknown to the Almighty God, (seeing all times, and men that live, and things that are done, or to be done in their times and seasons, are exactly known to God) do they that know him, (who love and obey him) not see (whence is it that they cannot discern) his (that is, God's) days? His times and seasons which he takes for the punishment of ungodly men; which if they were constant and fixed in this life, they would not be unknown to good men, to whom God uses to reveal his secrets.

3. Pledge - Contrary to God's law, first written in mens hearts, and afterwards in holy scripture, Exod. xxii, 26, 27.

4. Way - Out of the path or place in which these oppressors walk and range. They labour to keep out of their way for fear of their farther injuries. Hide - For fear of these tyrants.

5. Wild asses - Which are lawless, and fierce, and greedy of prey. Desert - Which is the proper habitation of wild asses. They - The oppressors. Go - To spoil and rob.

6. They - The oppressors. Wicked - Of such as themselves: so they promiscuously robbed all, even their brethren in iniquity.

7. Naked - Those whom they stripped of their garments and coverings.

8. Wet - With the rain-water, which runs down the rocks or mountains into the caves, to which they fled for shelter. Rock - Are glad when they can find a cleft of a rock in which they may have some protection against the weather.

9. They - The oppressors. Pluck - Out of covetousness; they will not allow the mother time for the suckling of her infant.

10. The sheaf - That single sheaf which the poor man had got with the sweat of his brow to satisfy his hunger.

11. Walls - Within the walls of the oppressors for their use. Suffer - Because they are not permitted to quench their thirst out of the wine which they make.

12. Groan - Under grievous oppressions. Soul - The life or blood of those who are wounded to death, as this word properly signifies, crieth aloud to God for vengeance. Yet - Yet God doth not punish them.

13. Light - As well the light of reason and conscience, as the light of Divine Revelation, which was then in good measure imparted to the people of God, and shortly after committed to writing. Know not - They do not approve, nor love, or chuse them.

14. Poor - Where he finds nothing to satisfy his covetousness, he exercises his cruelty.

16. They - The robber: having on that occasion inserted the mention of the adulterer as one who acted his sin in the same manner as the night-thief did, he now returns to him again.

17. Is - Terrible and hateful.

18. Swift - That is, he quickly passeth away with all his glory, as the waters which never stay in one place, but are always hasting away. Portion - His habitation and estate which he left behind him. He - He shall never more see or enjoy his vineyards, or other pleasant places and things, which seem to be comprehended under this particular.

20. Womb - His mother that bare him in her womb. Wickedness - The wicked man. Broken - Broken to pieces, or violently broken down, as the word signifies. Tree - Which being once broken down never grows again.

21. He - He here returns to the declaration of his farther wickednesses, the cause of these judgments. Barren - Barrenness was esteemed a curse and reproach; and so he added affliction to the afflicted.

22. Draweth - Into his net.

23. Yet - Yet his eyes are upon their ways: although God gives them such strange successes, yet he sees and observes them all, and will in due time punish them.

24. The way - Out of this world. Other - They can no more prevent or delay their death, than the meanest men in the world. Corn - In its greatest height and maturity.

## XXV

Bildad teaches us, to think highly and honourably of God, and to think meanly of ourselves, ver. 1-6.

1. Answered - Not to that which Job spake last, but to that which seemed most reprovable in all his discourses; his censure of God's proceedings with him, and his desire of disputing the matter with him. Perhaps Bildad and the rest now perceived that Job and they did not differ so much as

they thought. They owned that the wicked might prosper for a while. And Job owned, they would be destroyed at the last.

2. Dominion - Sovereign power over all persons and things. Fear - Terror, that which justly makes him dreadful to all men, and especially to all that undertake to dispute with him. He - This clause, as well as the following verse, seems to be added to prove God's dominion and dreadfulness: he keepeth and ruleth all persons and things in heaven, in peace and harmony. The angels, though they be very numerous, all own his sovereignty, and acquiesce in his pleasure. The stars, tho' vast in their bulk, and various in their motions: exactly keep the order which God hath appointed them: and therefore it is great folly for thee to quarrel with the methods of God's dealings with thee.

3. Armies - Of the angels, and stars, and other creatures, all which are his hosts. Light - The light of the sun is communicated to all parts of the world. This is a faint resemblance, of the cognisance and care which God takes of the whole creation. All are under the light of his knowledge: all partake of the light of his goodness: his pleasure is to shew mercy: all the creatures live upon his bounty.

4. Man - The word signifies man that is miserable, which supposes him to be sinful; and shall such a creature quarrel with that dominion of God, to which the sinless, and happy, and glorious angels submit? God - Before God's tribunal, to which thou dost so boldly appeal.

5. Moon - The moon, tho' bright and glorious, if compared with the Divine Majesty, is without any lustre or glory. By naming the moon, and thence proceeding to the stars, the sun is also included.

6. Worm - Mean, and vile, and impotent; proceeding from corruption, and returning to it. The son - For miserable man in the last branch he here puts the son of any man, to shew that this is true even of the greatest and best of men. Let us then wonder at the condescension of God, in taking such worms into covenant and communion with himself!

## XXVI

Job observes, that Bildad's discourse was foreign to the matter, ver. 1-4. Enlarges on the power and greatness of God, which yet are unsearchable, ver. 5-14.

4. To whom - For whose instruction hast thou uttered these things? For mine? Dost thou think I do not know, that which the meanest persons are not unacquainted with; that God is incomparably greater and better than his creatures? Whose spirit - Who inspired thee with this profound discourse of thine?

5. Dead things - Job having censured Bildad's discourse, proceeds to shew how little he needed his information in that point. Here he shews that the power and providences of God reaches not only to the things we see, but also to the invisible parts of the world, not only to the heavens above and their inhabitants, and to men upon earth, of which Bildad discoursed, chap. xxv, 2, 3, but also to such persons or things as are under the earth, or under the waters; which are out of our sight and reach; yet not out of the ken of Divine providence. These words may be understood; either,

1. of dead, or lifeless things, such as amber, pearl, coral, metals, or other minerals, which are formed or brought forth; by the almighty power of God, from under

the waters; either in the bottom of the sea, or within the earth, which is the lowest element, and in the scripture and other authors spoken of as under the waters; this being observed as a remarkable work of God's providence, that the waters of the sea, which are higher than the earth, do not overwhelm it. Or,

2. of dead men, and of the worst of them, such as died in their sins, and after death were condemned to farther miseries; for of such this very word seems to be used, Prov. ii, 18; ix, 18, who are here said to mourn or groan from under the waters; from the lower parts of the earth, or from under those subterranean waters, which are supposed to be within and under the earth; Psalm xxxiii, 7, and from under the inhabitants thereof; either of the waters or of the earth, under which these waters are, or with the other inhabitants thereof; of that place under the waters, namely, the apostate spirits. So the sense is, that God's dominion is over all men, yea, even the dead, and the worst of them, who though they would not own God, nor his providence, while they lived, yet now are forced to acknowledge and feel that power which they despised, and bitterly mourn under the sad effects of it in their infernal habitations.

6. Hell - Is in his presence, and under his providence. Hell itself, that place of utter darkness, is not hid from his sight. Destruction - The place of destruction.

7. North - The northern part of the heavens, which is put for the whole visible heaven, because Job and his friends lived in a northern climate. Nothing - Upon no props or pillars, but his own power and providence.

9. Holdeth - From our view, that his glory may not dazzle our sight; he covereth it with a cloud. Throne - The heaven of heavens, where he dwelleth.

11. Pillars - Perhaps the mountains which by their height and strength seem to reach and support the heavens. Astonished - When God reproveth not them, but men by them, manifesting his displeasure by thunders, or earthquakes.

14. Parts - But small parcels, the outside and visible work. Portion - Of his power and wisdom, and providence. His Power - His mighty power, is aptly compared to thunder; in regard of its irresistible force, and the terror which it causes to wicked men.

## XXVII

Job protests his integrity, ver. 1-6. And his dread of hypocrisy, ver. 7-10. Shews the miserable end of the wicked, notwithstanding their long prosperity, ver. 11-23.

1. Parable - His grave and weighty discourse.

2. Who - Though he knows my integrity, yet doth not plead my cause against my friends.

6. Reproach - With betraying my own cause and innocency.

7. Let - I am so far from practicing wickedness, that I abhor the thoughts of it, and if I would wish to be revenged of my enemy, I could wish him no greater mischief than to be a wicked man.

8. Though - Though they prosper in the world. God, as the judge takes it away, to be tried, and determined to its everlasting state. And what will his hope be then? It will be vanity and a lie; it will stand him in no stead.

10. Delight - When he has nothing else to delight in? No: his delight is in the things of the world, which now sink under him. And those who do not delight in God, will not always, will not long, call upon him.

12. Have seen - I speak what is confirmed by your own, as well as others experiences. Vain - To condemn me for a wicked man, because I am afflicted.

15. Remain - Who survive that sword and famine. Widows - For they had many wives. Weep - Because they also, as well as other persons, groaned under their tyranny, and rejoice in their deliverance from it.

16. As clay - In great abundance.

18. A moth - Which settleth itself in a garment, but is quickly and unexpectedly dispossessed of its dwelling, and crushed to death. A booth - Which the keeper of a garden or vineyard suddenly rears up in fruit-time, and as quickly pulls down again.

19. Lie down - In death. Not gathered - Instead of that honourable interment with his fathers, his carcase shall lie like dung upon the earth. One openeth his eyes - That is, while a man can open his eyes, in the twinkling of an eye. He is as if he had never been, dead and gone, and his family and name extinct with him.

20. Terrors - From the sense of approaching death or judgment. Waters - As violently and irresistibly, as a river breaking its banks, or deluge of waters bears down all before it. A tempest - God's wrath cometh upon him like a tempest, and withal unexpectedly like a thief in the night.

21. East-wind - Some terrible judgment, fitly compared to the east-wind, which in those parts was most vehement, and pernicious. Carrieth him - Out of his palace wherein he expected to dwell forever; whence he shall be carried either by an enemy, or by death.

22. Cast - His darts or plagues one after another. Would flee - He earnestly desires to escape the judgments of God, but in vain. Those that will not be persuaded to fly to the arms of Divine grace, which are now stretched out to receive them, will not be able to flee from the arms of Divine wrath, which will shortly be stretched out to destroy them.

23. Clap - In token of their joy at the removal of such a publick pest, by way of astonishment: and in contempt and scorn, all which this gesture signifies in scripture use. His - In token of detestation and derision.

## XXVIII

The wisdom of God in the works of nature, ver. 1-11. A wisdom like this cannot be found in man, neither can it be bought at any price, ver. 12-21. Death makes a report concerning it, ver. 22. It is hid in God, ver. 23-27. To fear God is man's wisdom, ver. 28.

1. Surely - Job having in the last chapter discoursed of God's various providences toward wicked men, and shewed that God doth sometimes, for a season, give them prosperity, but afterwards calls

them to a sad account, and having shewed that God doth sometimes prosper the wicked all their days, so they live and die without any visible token of God's displeasure, when on the contrary, good men are exercised with many calamities; and perceiving that his friends were, scandalized at these methods of Divine providence, and denied the thing, because they could not understand the reason of such dispensations: in this chapter he declares that this is one of the depths of Divine wisdom, not discoverable by any mortal man, and that although men had some degree of wisdom whereby they could search out many hidden things, as the veins of silver, and gold, yet this was a wisdom of an higher nature, and out of man's reach. The caverns of the earth he may discover, but not the counsels of heaven.

3. Perfection - Whatever is deeply wrought in the deepest caverns. Stones of darkness - The precious stones which lie hid in the dark bowels of the earth, where no living thing can dwell.

4. Breaketh out - While men are searching, water breaks in upon them. Inhabitants - Out of that part of the earth which the miners inhabit. Forgotten - Untrodden by the foot of man. Dried up - They are dried up, (or, drawn up, by engines made for that purpose) from men, from the miners, that they may not be hindered in their work.

5. Fire - Coals, and brimstone, and other materials of fire. Unless this refer, as some suppose, to a central fire.

6. Sapphires - Of precious stones; the sapphire, is one of the most eminent, being put for all the rest. In some parts of the earth, the sapphires are mixed with stones, and cut out of them and polished. Hath - The earth continueth. Dust - Distinct from that gold which is found in the mass, both sorts of gold being found in the earth.

7. A path - In the bowels of the earth. Vulture's eye - Whose eye is very quick, and strong, and searcheth all places for its prey.

8. Lion - Which rangeth all places for prey. The birds and beasts have often led men to such places as otherwise they should never have found out; but they could not lead them to these mines, the finding out of them is a special gift of God.

9. He, &c. - This and the two next verses mention other eminent works of God, who overturneth rocks, and produceth new rivers.

10. Seeth - Even those which no human art or industry was ever able to discover. 12. That wisdom - Man hath one kind of wisdom, to discover the works of nature, and to perform the operations of art; but as for that sublime wisdom which consists in the knowledge of God and ourselves, no man can discover this, but by the special gift of God.

13. Found - Among men upon earth, but only among those blessed spirits that dwell above.

14. The depth - This is not to be found in any part of the sea, though a man may dig or dive ever so deep to find it, nor to be learned from any creature.

20. Whence, &c. - By a diligent inquiry, we find at length, that there is a twofold wisdom; one hid in God, which belongs not to us, the other revealed to man, which belongs to us and to our children.

21. Hid - The line and plummet of human reason, can never fathom the abyss of the Divine counsels. Who can account for the maxims, measures and methods of God's government? Let us then be content, not to know the future events of providence, 'till time discover them: and not to know the secret reasons of providence, 'till eternity brings them to light.

22. Death - The grave, the place of the dead, to 'which these things are here ascribed, as they are to the depths, and to the sea, by a common figure. Though they cannot give an account of it

themselves yet there is a world, on which these dark regions border, where we shall see it clearly. Have patience, says death: I will fetch thee shortly to a place where even this wisdom shall be found. When the veil of flesh is rent, and the interposing clouds are scattered, we shall know what God doth, though we know not now.

23. God - God alone. The way - The methods which he takes in the management of all affairs, together with its grounds and ends in them. The place - Where it dwells, which is only in his own mind.

24. For - He, and he only knows it, because his providence, is infinite and universal, reaching to all places, and times, past, present, and to come; whereas the most knowing men have narrow understandings, and the wisdom, and justice, and beauty of God's works are not fully seen 'till all the parts of them be laid together.

25. Winds - God manageth them all by weight, appointing to every wind that blows, its season, its proportion, its bounds, when, and where, and how much, and how long each shall blow. He only doth all these things, and he only knows why he doth them. He instanceth in some few of God's works, and those which seem to be most trivial, and uncertain, that thereby he might more strongly imply that God doth the same in other things which are more considerable, that he doth all things in the most exact order, and weight, and measure. The waters - Namely, the rain-waters, which God layeth up in his store-houses, the clouds, and thence draws them forth, and sends them down upon the earth in such times and proportions as he thinks fit. Measure - For liquid things are examined by measure, as other things are by weight: and here is both weight and measure to signify with what perfect wisdom God governs the world.

26. When - At the first creation, when he settled that course and order which should be continued. A decree - An appointment and as it were a statute law, that it should fall upon the earth, in such times, and places, and proportions.

27. It - Wisdom, which is the subject of the present discourse. This God saw within himself; he looked upon it in his own mind, as the rule by which he would proceed in the creation and government of all things. Declare - Or reveal it. Prepared - He had it in readiness for doing all his works, as if he had been for a long time preparing materials for them. So it is a speech of God after the manner of men. Searched - Not properly; for so searching implies ignorance, and requires time and industry, all which is repugnant to the Divine perfections; but figuratively, he did, and doth, all things with that absolute and perfect wisdom, so exactly, and perfectly, as if he had bestowed a long time in searching, to find them out.

28. Man - Unto Adam in the day in which he was created. And in him, to all his posterity. Said - God spake it, at first to the mind of man, in which he wrote this with his own finger, and afterwards by the holy patriarchs, and prophets, and other teachers, whom he sent into the world to teach men true wisdom. Behold - Which expression denotes the great importance of this doctrine, and withal man's backwardness to apprehend it. The fear of the Lord - True religion. Wisdom - In man's wisdom, because that, and that only, is his duty, and safety, and happiness, both for this life and for the next. Evil - From sin, which is called evil eminently, as being the chief evil, and the cause of all other evils. Religion consists of two branches, doing good, and forsaking evil; the former is expressed in the former clause of this verse, and the latter in these words; and this is the best kind of knowledge or wisdom to which man can attain in this life. The design of Job in this close of his discourse, is not to reprove the boldness of his friends, in prying into God's secrets, and passing such a rash censure upon him, and upon God's carriage towards him; but also to vindicate himself

from the imputation of hypocrisy, which they fastened upon him, by shewing that he had ever esteemed it to be his best wisdom, to fear God, and to depart from evil.

## XXIX

Job, after pausing a little while, shews, what comfort he formerly had in his house and family, ver. 1-6. What honour and power he had in his country, ver. 7-10. What good he did as a magistrate, ver. 11-17. And what a prospect he had of the continuance of his prosperity, ver. 18-25

2. Preserved - From all those miseries which now I feel.

3. Darkness - I passed safely through many difficulties, and dangers, and common calamities.

7. Seat - When I caused the seat of justice to be set for me. By this, and several other expressions, it appears that Job was a magistrate. Street - In that open place, near the gate, where the people assembled for the administration of justice.

10. Cleaved - It lay as still as if he had done so.

11. Witness - Gave testimony to my pious, and just, and blameless conversation.

14. Put on, &c. - Perhaps he did not wear these: but his steady justice was to him instead of all those ornaments.

18. Multiply - See how apt even good men are, to set death at a distance from them!

20. Glory - My reputation was growing every day. Bow - My strength which is signified by a bow, Gen. xlix, 24; 1 Sam. ii, 4, because in ancient times the bow and arrows were the principal instruments of war.

22. Dropped - As the rain, which when it comes down gently upon the earth, is most acceptable and beneficial to it.

24. Laughed - Carried myself so familiarly with them, that they could scarce believe their eyes and ears. Cast not down - They were cautious not to give me any occasion to change my countenance towards them.

25. I chose - They sought to me for advice in all difficult cases, and I directed them what methods they should take. Sat - As a prince or judge, while they stood waiting for my counsel. A king - Whose presence puts life, and courage, into the whole army. As one - As I was ready to comfort any afflicted persons, so my consolations were always welcome to them.

## XXX

Job's honour is turned into contempt, ver. 1-14. His prosperity, into fears, pains, and a sense of the wrath of God, ver. 15-22. He looks for nothing but death, ver. 23. And rest therein, ver. 24. Reflects on his former sympathy with the afflicted, ver. 25. And describes his own present calamities, ver. 26-31.

1. Younger - Whom both universal custom, and the light of nature, taught to reverence their elders and betters. Whose fathers - Whose condition was so mean, that in the opinion, of the world, they were unworthy to be my shepherds the companions of my dogs which watch my flocks.

3. Solitary - Although want commonly drives persons to places of resort for relief, yet they were so conscious of their own guilt, that they shunned company, and for fear or shame fled into, and lived in desolate places.

4. Who cut - Bitter herbs, which shews their extreme necessity. Juniper - Possibly the word may signify some other plant, for the Hebrew themselves are at a loss for the signification of the names of plants.

7. Brayed - Like the wild asses, for hunger or thirst. Thorns - Under which they hide themselves, that they might not be discovered when they are sought out for justice.

10. Spit - Not literally, for they kept far from him, but figuratively, they use all manner of reproachful expressions, even to my face. Herein, also we see a type of Christ, who was thus made a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

11. He - God. Cord - Hath slackened the string of my bow, and so rendered my bow and arrows useless; he hath deprived me of my strength or defense. Let loose - They cast off all former restraints of humanity, or modesty, and do those things before mine eyes, which formerly they trembled lest they should come to my ears.

12. Right hand - This was the place of adversaries or accusers in courts of justice. The youth - Hebrew. young striplings, who formerly hid themselves from my presence, chap. xxix, 8. Push - Metaphorically, they endeavour to overwhelm me. Ways - Cause- ways, or banks: so it is a metaphor from soldiers, who cast up banks, against the city which they besiege. Destruction - To destroy me.

13. Mar - As I am in great misery, so they endeavour to stop all my ways out of it. Set forward - Increasing it by their invectives, and censures. Even they - Who are themselves in a forlorn and miserable condition.

14. Waste place - In the waste place; in that part of the bank which was broken down. They rolled - As the waters, come rolling in at the breach.

15. Terrors - If he endeavoured to shake them off, they turned furiously upon him: if he endeavoured to out run them, they pursued his soul, as swiftly and violently as the wind.

20. I stand - I pray importunately and continually.

21. Turned - As if thou hadst changed thy very nature, which is kind, and merciful, and gracious.

22. Thou - Thou exposest me, to all sorts of storms and calamities; so that I am like chaff or stubble lifted up to the wind, and violently tossed hither and thither in the air. Substance - By which, my body is almost consumed, and my heart is melted within me.

23. House appointed - The grave is a narrow, dark, cold house, but there we shall rest and be safe. It is our home, for it is our mother's lap, and in it we are gathered to our fathers. It is an house appointed for us, by him that has appointed the bounds of all our habitations. And it is appointed for all living. It is the common receptacle for rich and poor: we must all be brought thither, and that shortly.

24. To the grave - The hand of God's wrath will not follow me beyond death; I shall then be safe and easy: Tho' men cry in his destruction: tho' most men cry and are affrighted, while they are dying, while the body is sinking into destruction; yet I desire it, I have nothing to fear therein, since I know that my redeemer liveth.

25. Did not I - Have I now judgment without mercy, because I afforded no mercy to others in misery? No; my conscience acquits me from this inhumanity: I did mourn over others in their miseries.

26. Upon me - Yet trouble came upon myself, when I expected it not.

27. Affliction - Came upon me suddenly, and unexpectedly, when I promised myself peace and prosperity.

28. Without the sun - Hebrew. black, not by the sun. My very countenance became black, tho' not by the sun, but by the force of my disease.

29. A brother - By imitation of their cries: persons of like qualities are often called brethren. Dragon - Which howl and wail mournfully in the deserts.

## XXXI

Job's protestation of his innocence, with regard to wantonness, ver. 1-4. Fraud and injustice, ver. 5-8. Adultery, ver. 9-12. Haughtiness and severity toward his servants, ver. 13-15. Unmercifulness to the poor, ver. 16-23. Confidence in his wealth, ver. 24, 25. Idolatry, ver. 26-28. Revenge, ver. 29-31. Neglect of poor strangers, ver. 32 Hypocrisy, or not reproving others, ver. 33, 34. He wishes God would answer and that his words might be recorded, ver. 35-37. Protests his innocence, as to oppression, ver. 38-40.

1. I made - So far have I been from any gross wickedness, that I have abstained from the least occasions and appearances of evil.

2. For - What recompence may be expected from God for those who do otherwise. Above - How secretly soever unchaste persons carry the matter, so that men cannot reprove them, yet there is one who stands upon an higher place, whence he seeth in what manner they act.

5. Walked - Dealt with men. Vanity - With lying, or falsehood. Deceit - If when I had an opportunity of enriching myself, by wronging others, I have readily and greedily complied with It.

6. Let me - I desire nothing more than to have my heart and life weighed in just balances, and searched out by the all-seeing God. That God - Or, and he will know; (upon search he will find out: which is spoken of God after the manner of men:) Mine integrity - So this is an appeal to God to be witness of his sincerity.

7. Heart - If I have let my heart loose to covet forbidden things, which mine eyes have seen: commonly sin enters by the eye into the heart. A blot - Any unjust gain.

8. Increase - All my plants, and fruits, and improvements.

10. Then - Not as if Job desired this; but that if God should give up his wife to such wickedness, he should acknowledge his justice in it.

11. This - Adultery. It is - Hebrew. an iniquity of the Judges; which belongs to them to take cognizance of, and to punish, even with death; and that not only by the law of Moses, but even by the law of nature, as appears from the known laws and customs of the Heathen nations.

12. Destruction - Lust is a fire in the soul; it consumes all that is good there, the convictions, the comforts; and lays the conscience waste. It consumes the body, consumes the substance, roots

out all the increase. It kindles the fire of God's wrath, which if not quenched by the blood of Christ, will burn to the lowest hell.

16. If I - Denied them what they desired of me. To fail - With tedious expectation of my justice or charity. Job is most large upon this head, because in this matter Eliphaz had most particularly accused him.

18. Youth - As soon as I was capable of managing mine own affairs. With me - Under my care. A father - With all the diligence and tenderness of a father. Her - The widow mentioned ver. 16. From - From my tender years; ever since I was capable of discerning good and evil.

19. Perish - When it was in my power to help them.

21. When - When I saw I could influence the Judges to do what I pleased.

23. For - I stood in awe of God and of his judgments. I could not - I knew myself unable either to oppose his power, or to bear his wrath. Even good men have need to restrain themselves from sin, with the fear of Destruction from God. Even when salvation from God is a comfort to us, yet destruction from God should be a terror to us. Adam in innocency was awed by a threatning.

26. I - This place speaks of the worship of the host of heaven, and especially of the sun and moon, the most eminent and glorious of that number, which was the most ancient kind of idolatry, and most frequent in the eastern countries. Shined - In its full strength and glory.

27. Kissed - In token of worship, whereof this was a sign.

28. The judge - The civil magistrate; who being advanced and protected by God, is obliged to maintain and vindicate his honour, and consequently to punish idolatry. Denied God - Not directly but by consequence, because this was to rob God of his prerogative, by giving to the creature, that worship which is peculiar to God.

29. Lift up - Hebrew. stirred up myself to rejoice and insult over his misery.

31. If - My domesticks and familiar friends. His flesh - This is farther confirmation of Job's charitable disposition to his enemy. Although all who were daily conversant with him, and were witnesses of his and their carriage, were so zealous in Job's quarrel, that they protested they could eat their flesh, and could not be satisfied without. Yet he restrained both them and himself from executing vengeance upon them.

33. As Adam - As Adam did in Paradise.

34. Did I fear - No: all that knew Job knew him to be a man of resolution, that boldly appeared, spoke and acted, in defense of religion and justice. He durst not keep silence, or stay within, when called to speak or act for God. He was not deterred by the number, or quality, or insults of the injurious, from reproving them, and doing justice to the injured.

35. Had written - Had given me his charge written in a book or paper, as the manner was in judicial proceedings. This shews that Job did not live, before letters were in use. And undoubtedly the first letters were those wrote on the two tables, by the finger of God. He wishes, his friends, who charged him with hypocrisy, would draw up the charge in writing.

36. Take it - As a trophy or badge of honour.

37. Him - My judge, or adversary. My steps - The whole course of my life. A prince - With undaunted courage and confidence.

38. Cry - Because I have gotten it by fraud or violence.

39. Without money - Either without paying the price for the land, or by defrauding my workmen of their wages. Life - Killing them that I might have undisturbed possession of it, as Ahab did Naboth.

## XXXII

Some account of Elihu, and his sentiments concerning the dispute between Job and his friends, ver. 1-5. He excuses his own youth, ver. 6-10. and pleads, that he had heard all they had to say, ver. 11-13. That he had something new to offer, ver. 14-17. Could not refrain from speaking, ver. 18-20. And would speak impartially, ver. 21, 22.

1. Because - So they said: but they could not answer him.

2. The Buzite - Of the posterity of Buz, Nahor's son, Gen. xxii, 21. Ram - Or, of Aram; for Ram and Aram are used promiscuously; compare

2 Kings viii, 28; 2 Chron. xxii, 5. His pedigree is thus particularly described, partly for his honour, as being both a wise and good man, and principally to evidence the truth of this history. He justified - Himself not without reflection upon God, as dealing severely with him, he took more care to maintain his own innocency, than God's glory. The word Elihu signifies, my God is he. They had all tried in vain to convince Job: but my God is he who both can and will do it.

3. No answer - To Job's arguments as to the main cause. Condemned - As a bad man.

4. 'Till Job - And his three friends.

6. Afraid - Of being thought forward and presumptuous.

8. Spirit - The spirit of God. Giveth - To whom he pleaseth.

9. Judgment - What is just and right.

12. Convinced - By solid and satisfactory answers.

13. Left - God thus left you to your own weakness, lest you should ascribe the conquering or silencing of Job to your own wisdom. God - This is alleged by Elihu, in the person of Job's three friends; the sense is, the judgments which are upon Job, have not been brought upon him by man originally, but by the hand of God, for his gross, though secret sins: but, saith Elihu, this argument doth not satisfy me, and therefore bear with me if I seek for better.

19. Bottles - Bottles of new wine.

22. I know not - The more closely we eye the majesty of God as our maker, the more we dread his wrath and justice, the less danger shall we be in of a sinful fearing or flattering of men.

## XXXIII

Elihu offers himself to Job as the person he had so often wished for, ver. 1-7. He charges him with reflecting upon God, ver. 8-11. He aggravates this by shewing him God's sovereign power over man, and the various means he uses to do him good, ver. 12-14. Particularly dreams, ver. 15-18. And sickness, ver. 19- 30. He requests Job to answer him, or let him go on, ver. 31-33

3. My words - I will not speak passionately or partially, but from a sincere desire to do thee good. Clearly - What I speak will be plain, not hard to be understood.

4. Life - I am thy fellow creature, and am ready to discourse with thee upon even terms, according to thy desire.

6. Behold - I will plead with thee in God's name and stead, which thou hast often wished, and I am God's creature like thyself.

9. Clean - Not absolutely, for he often confesses himself to be a sinner, but no such transgression, as might give God just occasion to punish him so severely, as is implied, where he blames God for finding occasions against him, implying that he had given him none by his sins. And thus far Elihu's charge was just, and herein it differs from the charge of Job's three friends, who often accuse him, for asserting his own innocency; although they did it, because they thought him an hypocrite, whereas Elihu does it upon other grounds, even because Job's justification of himself was accompanied with reflections upon God.

11. Marketh - He narrowly prys into all my actions, that he may find matter against me.

12. Not just - Thou art in the wrong. Greater - Not only in power and majesty, but also in justice, and wisdom, and goodness, and therefore thou dost foolishly, in censuring his judgments, thou castest off that awe and reverence which thou shouldest constantly maintain towards thy sovereign Lord.

13. He - Useth not to give an account to his creatures of the grounds and reasons of his judgments or dispensations as being the supreme governor of all persons and things, in whose will it becometh all men to acquiesce.

14. Yet - Although he doth not give men an account of his matters, yet he doth that which is sufficient for them. Twice - When once speaking doth not awaken men, God is graciously pleased to give them another admonition: though he will not gratify men's curiosity in enquiring into his hidden judgments, yet he will acquaint them with their duty. God speaks to us by conscience, by providence, and by ministers, of all which Elihu here treats at large, to shew Job, that God was now telling him his mind, and endeavouring to do him good. He shews first, how God admonishes men by their own consciences.

16. Sealeth - He imprints those instructions upon their minds.

17. Pride - And God by this means is said to hide pride from man, because by these glorious representations of his Divine majesty to man, he takes him off from the admiration of his own excellency, and brings him to a sight of his own weakness, and to an humble and ready submission to his will.

18. Keepeth - By his gracious admonitions whereby he leads him to repentance.

19. Pain - The second way whereby God instructs men and excites them to repentance.

22. The destroyers - The pangs of death, here called the destroyers, are just ready to seize him.

23. A messenger - A prophet or teacher. To expound the providence, and point out the design of God therein. One, &c. - A person rightly qualified for this great and hard work, such as there are but very few. To shew - To direct him to the right way how he may please God, and procure that mercy which he thirsts after; which is not by quarrelling with God, but by an humble confession. and supplication for mercy through Christ the redeemer.

24. He - God. A ransom - Although I might justly destroy him, yet I will spare him, for I have found out a way of ransoming sinners from death, which is the death of my son, the redeemer of the world, and with respect to which I will pardon them that repent and sue for mercy. Observe how God glories in the invention! I have found, I have found a ransom; a ransom for poor, undone sinners! I, even I am he that hath done it.

26. Render - He will deal with him as with one reconciled to him through the mediator, and turning from sin to righteousness.

28. Life - His life which was endangered, shall be restored and continued. Yea, farther, God shall Deliver his soul from going into the pit of hell: and his life shall see the light, all good, in the vision and fruition of God.

29. Lo - All these ways God uses to convince, and save sinners.

30. To bring - That he may save men from being forever miserable, and make them forever happy. "Lord, what is man, that thou shouldest thus visit him? This should engage us, to comply with God's designs, to work with him for our own good, and not to counter-work him. And this will render those that perish inexcusable, that, so much was done to save them, and they would not he healed." So Mr. Henry. Excellent words! But how much did God do to save them? Did he ever do any thing to save them? Did he ever design to save them? If not, how does that which was never done, no nor designed, "render them inexcusable?"

## XXXIV

Elihu proceeding bespeaks the attention of the company, ver. 1-4. Charges Job with other indecent expressions, ver. 5-9. Shews God's justice, sovereignty, power, omniscience, ver. 10-25. His severity against sinners, ver. 26-28. His over-ruling providence, ver. 29, 30. Teaches Job what he ought to say, ver. 31, 32. Appeals to his own conscience, and concludes with reproving him for murmuring, ver. 33-37.

2. Ear - The ear, is put for the mind to which things are conveyed by it.

4. Let us - Not contend for victory, but for truth and equity. Know - Let us shew one another who hath the best cause.

5. Said - I am so far righteous, that I have not deserved, such hard usage from God. Had taken - So Job had said, chap. xxvii, 2, he denies me that which is just and equal, to give me a fair hearing.

6. Should I lie - So Job had said in effect, chap. xxvii, 4, 5, 6, should I falsely accuse myself of sins of which I am not guilty? Without transgression - Without any such crying, sin, as might reasonably bring down such terrible judgments upon my head.

7. Like water - Abundantly and greedily: who doth so break forth into scornful expressions, not only against his friends, but in some sort against God himself.

8. Who goeth - Although I dare not say, that he is a wicked man, yet in this matter he speaks and acts like one of them.

9. He said - Not in express terms, but by consequence; because he said that good men were no less, nay, sometimes more miserable here than the wicked.

12. Pervert - As Job hath affirmed.

13. Who - Who or where is his superior that made the world, and, then delivered the government of it to God? God himself is the sole creator, the absolute Lord of all, and therefore cannot do unjustly: because the creator and Lord of the world must needs have all possible perfections in

himself, and amongst others, perfect justice. Disposed - Or, committed, to him, to be governed by him, in the name, of his Lord, to whom he must give an account.

15. All - The design of this and the foregoing verse is the same with that of ver. 13, namely, to declare God's absolute and uncontrollable sovereignty over all men.

17. Shall he - That is unrighteous. Govern - Elihu's argument is the same with that of Abraham, Gen. xviii, 25, and that of St. Paul, Rom. iii, 5, 6. If God be unrighteous, how shall he judge or govern the world? And the argument is undeniable: if God were unjust, there would be nothing but injustice and confusion in the world, whereas we see there is a great deal of justice administered in the world, and all this must proceed from him who is the fountain of all justice, and rule, and authority. And he that makes men just, shall he be unjust? Most just - God, who hath given so many clear and unquestionable evidences of his justice, in giving just and holy laws, in encouraging and rewarding righteous persons in this life, and inflicting dreadful judgments upon tyrants and oppressors.

18. Wicked - Though a king may be wicked, yet his subjects neither may nor dare call him so.

21. For - God doth not destroy either prince or people unjustly, no nor out of his mere pleasure, but for their sins, which he sees exactly, although they use all possible arts to hide them.

26. As - Because they are wicked men. In the open light - In publick view for their greater shame, and for the greater glory of his justice.

28. Cry of the poor - Their case is bad, who have the prayers and tears of the poor against them: for these will draw down vengeance sooner or later, on the heads of their oppressors.

29. Whether - God can carry on his work either of mercy or justice, as irresistible upon an whole nation as upon one particular person.

30. Reign not - May not continue his tyranny, lest the people be ensnared, lest the people should be longer kept in the the snares of oppression; God doth this to free poor oppressed people from the snares which ungodly men lay for them.

32. That - The secret sins which I cannot discover, manifest thou to me.

33. Should it be - Doth God need thy advice how to govern the world, and whom, and when to reward or punish? Refuse - To submit as is expressed, ver. 32. Therefore - If thou canst say any thing for thyself, I am ready to hear thy defense.

34. Let - I am content that any wise man should judge of my words, and let such consider what I say.

36. End - Throughly and exactly, 'till the cause be brought to an issue. Wicked men - On their behalf; he hath put arguments into their mouths against God and his providence.

37. Addeth - He sinned before, by impatience under his afflictions, now he is grown obstinate, and instead of humbling himself for his sins, justifies himself, and accuses the blessed God. Clapped - Insulting and triumphing. Against God - In effect, though not directly.

## XXXV

Our righteousness profits ourselves, not God, ver. 1-7. Our wickedness hurts not him, but other men, whom God would help, if they cried to him sincerely, ver. 8-13. Why he delayed to help Job, ver. 14-16.

2. Thou saidst - Not that Job said this in express terms, but he said those things from which this might seem to follow, as that God had punished him more than he deserved.

3. Thou saidst - Another imputation upon God. Unto thee - Unto me; such changes of persons being frequent in the Hebrew language. What profit, &c. - God does not reward so much as I deserve. But it was not fair to charge this upon Job, which he had neither directly nor indirectly affirmed.

5. Clouds, &c. - They are far above us, and God is far above them. How much then is he out of the reach either of our sins or our services?

9. Cry - Thus one man's wickedness may hurt another.

10. None - Few or none of the great numbers of oppressed persons. God - They cry out to men, but they seek not God, and therefore if God do not hear their cries it is not unjust. Maker - Who alone made me, and who only can deliver me. Who when our condition is ever so dark and sad, can turn our darkness into light, can quickly put a new song in our mouth, a thanksgiving unto our God.

11. Who - This is an aggravation of mens neglect of God in their misery. God hath given men, what he hath denied to beasts, wisdom to know God and themselves. Therefore they are inexcusable, for not using that wisdom, by calling on God in the time of trouble.

12. Because - God doth not answer their cries, because they are both evil, wicked and impenitent, and proud, unhumbled for those sins for which God brought these miseries upon them.

13. Vanity - Vain persons, that have no wisdom or piety in them.

14. See him - Thou canst not understand his dealings with thee. Here Elihu answers another objection of Job's: and tells him that though God may for a season delay to answer, yet he will certainly do him right. Judgment - Justice is at his tribunal, and in all his ways and administrations. Trust - Instead of murmuring, repent of what is past, humble thyself under God's hand, wait patiently in his way, 'till deliverance come; for it will certainly come if thou dost not hinder it.

15. Because - Because Job doth not acknowledge God's justice and his own sins. He - God. Anger - Hath laid grievous afflictions upon him. He - Job is not sensible of it, so as to be humbled under God's hand.

## XXXVI

Elihu desires a farther hearing, ver. 1-4. Describes the methods of providence, ver. 5-15. Warns and counsels Job, ver. 16-21. Shews God's sovereignty and omnipotence, ver. 22-33.

3. Afar - From remote times, and places, and things. I will not confine my discourse to thy particular case, but wilt justify God by declaring his great and glorious works of creation and providence both in the heaven and in the earth, and the manner of his dealing with men in other parts and ages of the world. Ascribe - I will clear and maintain this truth, that God is righteous in all his ways.

4. He, &c. - Thou hast to do with a God of perfect knowledge, by whom all thy words and actions are weighed.

5. Despiseth - His greatness doth not make him (as it doth men) despise, or oppress the meanest. Wisdom - His strength is guided by wisdom, and therefore cannot do any thing unbecoming God, or unjust to his creatures.

6. But - He will certainly in his time deliver his oppressed ones.

7. He - Never ceases to care for and watch over them. Exalted - They continue to be exalted; they are not cast down from their dignity, as the wicked commonly are.

8. If - Through the vicissitude of worldly affairs, they are brought from their throne into a prison, as sometimes hath been done.

9. Work - Their evil works, by these afflictions he brings them to a sight of their sins. Exceeded - That they have greatly sinned by abusing their power and prosperity; which even good men are too prone to do.

10. Openeth - He inclines them to hearken to what God speaks by the rod.

13. Cry not - Unto God for help. Bindeth - With the cords of affliction.

14. Die - They provoke God to cut them off before their time. Unclean - Or, Sodomites; to whose destruction, he may allude. They shall die by some exemplary stroke of Divine vengeance. Yea, and after death, their life is among the unclean, the unclean spirits, the devil and his angels, for ever excluded from the new Jerusalem, into which no unclean thing shall enter.

15. Openeth - Causeth them to hear, and understand, and do, the will of God.

16. He would - If thou hadst opened thine ear to God's counsels. Into - A state of ease and freedom.

17. The judgment - Or, the sentence, thou hast justified the hard speeches which wicked men utter against God. Therefore - Therefore the just judgment of God takes hold on thee. Thou hast maintained their cause against God, and God passes against thee the sentence of condemnation due to wicked men.

18. Wrath - Conceived by God against thee. Then - If once God's wrath take hold of thee, no ransom will be accepted for thee.

19. Thy riches - If thou hadst as much of them as ever. Forces - The strongest forces.

20. The night - The night of death, which Job had often desired, for then, thou art irrecoverably gone: take heed of thy foolish and often repeated desire of death, lest God inflict it upon thee in anger.

21. Chosen - Thou hast chosen rather to quarrel with God, and censure his judgments, than quietly to submit to them.

22. Behold - God is omnipotent; and therefore can, either punish thee far worse, or deliver thee, if thou dost repent. He is also infinitely wise; and as none can work like him, so none can teach like him. Therefore do not presume to teach him how to govern the world. None teacheth with such authority and convincing evidence, with such condescension and compassion, with such power and efficacy as God doth, he teaches by the bible, and that is the best book; by his son, and he is the best master.

24. Remember - Call to mind this thy duty. Magnify - Every work which he doth; do not condemn any of his providential works, but adore them as done with admirable wisdom, and justice. Behold - With admiration and astonishment.

25. It - The power, and wisdom, and greatness of God are so manifest in all his works, that all who are not stupid, must see and acknowledge it. Afar off - The works of God are so great and

conspicuous, that they may be seen at a great distance. Hence Elihu proceeds to give some instances, in the works of nature and common providence. His general aim is to shew,

1. That God is the first cause and supreme director of all the creatures; whom therefore we ought with all humility and reverence to adore,
2. That it is presumption in us to prescribe to him in his special providence toward men, when the operations even of common providence about the meteors, are so mysterious and unaccountable.

26. Neither - He is eternal, as in his being, so in all his counsels; which therefore must be infinitely above the comprehension of short-lived men.

27. For - Having affirmed that God's works are incomprehensibly great and glorious, he now proves it from the most common works of nature and providence. And hence he leaves it to Job to consider how much more deep and inconceivable the secret counsels of God must be. Water - He orders matters so wisely, that the waters which are in the clouds, do not fall down at once in spouts, which would be pernicious to the earth and to mankind; but by degrees, and in drops. According - According to the proportion of vapors which the heat of the sun hath drawn up by the earth or sea. So it notes that great work of God by which the rain is first made of vapors, and afterwards resolved into vapors, or into the matter of succeeding vapors, by a constant rotation.

29. Understand - Whence it comes to pass, that a small cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, suddenly spreads over the whole heavens: how the clouds come to be suddenly gathered, and so condensed as to bring forth thunder and lightning. Noise - The thunder produced in the clouds, which are often called God's tent or tabernacle.

30. Light - The lightning; fitly God's light, because God only can light it. It - Upon the cloud, which is in a manner the candlestick in which God sets up this light. The sea - The lightning spreads far and wide over all the parts of the sea, and pierceth deep, reaching even to the bottom of it.

31. Judgeth - By thunder and lightning, and rain from the clouds, he executes his judgments against ungodly people. Meat - Giveth meat. By the same clouds, he provides plentiful showers dropping fatness on the earth.

32. Clouds - With thick and black clouds spread over the whole heavens. Light - The sun. The cloud - Which God interposes as a veil between the sun and earth.

33. The noise - The thunder gives notice of the approaching rain. Also - And as the thunder, so also the cattle sheweth, concerning the vapor, concerning the coming of the rain, by a strange instinct, seeking for shelter, when a change of weather is near.

## XXXVII

Elihu observes the hand of God, in thunder and lighting, ver. 1-5. In frost and snow, rain and wind, ver. 6-13. Challenges Job to account for these, ver. 14-22. Concludes, that God is great and greatly to be feared, ver. 23,

2. Hear - It is probable that while Elihu was speaking it thundered, and that tempest was begun, wherewith God ushered in his speech. And this might occasion his return to that subject of which

he had discoursed before. Voice - The thunder is called God's voice. Because by it God speaks to the children of men, to fear before him. Mouth - That is produced by God's word or command, which is often signified by his mouth.

3. Directeth - His voice: which he guideth like an arrow to the mark, that it may do that work for which he sends it.

4. After - After the lightning, which is seen before the thunder is hard. Them - The lightnings spoken of in the beginning of the verse.

6. Strength - Those storms of rain which come with great force and irresistible violence.

7. Sealeth - By these snows and rains he drives men out of the fields, and seals or binds up their hands from their work. That - They may seriously contemplate on these, and other great and glorious works of God.

9. Cold - Freezing winds.

10. The waters - The waters which had freely spread themselves before, are congealed and bound up in crystal fetters.

11. Watering - The earth. They spend themselves and are exhausted watering the earth, until they are weary. Wearieth - Them with much water, and making them to go long journeys to water remote parts, and at last to empty themselves there: all which things make men weary; and therefore are here said to make the clouds weary by a common figure. Scattereth - As for the white and lightsome clouds, he scatters and dissolves them by the wind or sun.

12. Turned - The clouds are carried about to this or that place. Not by chance (though nothing seems to be more casual than the motions of the clouds) but by his order and governance.

13. Correction - To scourge or correct men by immoderate showers. Earth - The whole earth, which is said to be the Lord's, Psalm xxiv, 1; l, 12, and so this may denote a general judgment by excessive rains inflicted upon the earth, and all its inhabitants, even the universal deluge, which came in great measure out of the clouds. Mercy - For the benefit of mankind and for the cooling of the air and improving the fruits of the earth.

14. Consider - If there be so much matter of wonder in the most obvious works of God, how wonderful must his secret counsels be?

15. Them - The things before mentioned, the clouds, rain, snow, and other meteors. Did God acquaint thee with his counsels in the producing and ordering of them? His cloud - Probably the rainbow, seated in a cloud, which may well be called God's cloud, because therein God puts his bow, Gen. ix, 13.

16. Balancings - How God doth as it were weigh the clouds in balances, so that although they are full of water, yet they are kept up by the thin air.

17. Quieteth - The air about the earth. From the south - By the sun's coming into the southern parts, which makes the air quiet and warm.

18. With him - Wast thou his assistant in spreading out the sky like a canopy over the earth? Strong - Which though it be very thin and transparent, yet is also firm and compact and steadfast. Looking glass - Made of brass and steel, as the manner then was. Smooth and polished, without the least flaw. In this, as in a glass, we may behold the glory of God and the wisdom of his handy-work.

19. Teach us - If thou canst. Say unto him - Of these things. Order - To maintain discourse with him, both because of the darkness of the matter, God's counsels being a great depth; and because of the darkness of our minds.

20. Shall - I send a challenge to God, or a message that I am ready to debate with him concerning his proceedings? Speak - If a man should be so bold to enter the lists with God. Swallowed up - With the sense of his infinite majesty.

21. Light - The sun; which is emphatically called light, and here the bright light: which men cannot behold or gaze on, when the sky is very clear: and therefore it is not strange if we cannot see God, or discern his counsels and ways. Them - The sky by driving away those clouds which darkened it.

22. North - From the northern winds which scatter the clouds, and clear the sky. Elihu concludes with some short, but great sayings, concerning the glory of God. He speaks abruptly and in haste, because it should seem, he perceived God was approaching, and presumed he was about to take the work into his own hands.

23. Find - We cannot comprehend him: his power, wisdom, justice, and his counsels proceeding from them are past our finding out. Power - Therefore as he doth not need any unrighteous action to advance himself, so he cannot do it, because all such things are acts of weakness. Judgment - In the just administration of judgment, he never did, nor can exercise that power unjustly, as Job seemed to insinuate. Afflict - Without just cause.

24. Fear - Fear or reverence him, and humbly submit to him, and not presume to quarrel or dispute with him. Wise of heart - Wise in their own eyes.

## XXXVIII

God begins with an awakening challenge, ver. 1-3. Proceeds to several proofs of Job's inability to contend with him, because of his ignorance and weakness: for he knew nothing of the founding of the earth, ver. 4-7. The limiting of the sea, ver. 8- 11. Of the morning light, ver. 12-15. The recesses of the sea and earth, ver. 16-21. Of the treasures in the clouds, ver. 22-27. He could do nothing toward the making of his own soul, the producing of rain, frost, lightning, or the directing of the stars and their influences, ver. 28-38. He could not provide for the lions or the ravens, ver. 39-41. How then should he direct God's secret counsels? Here God takes up the argument, begun by Elihu, and prosecutes it in inimitable words, exceeding his, and all other mens in the loftiness of the style, as much as thunder does a whisper.

1. Lord - The eternal word, Jehovah, the same who spake from mount Sinai. Answered - Out of a dark and thick cloud, from which he sent a tempestuous wind, as the harbinger of his presence. In this manner God appears and speaks to awaken Job and his friends, to the more serious attention to his words; and to testify his displeasure both against Job, and them, that all of them might be more deeply humbled and prepared to receive, and retain the instructions which God was about to give them.

2. Counsel - God's counsel. For the great matter of the dispute between Job and his friends, was concerning God's counsel and providence in afflicting Job; which Job had endeavoured to obscure and misrepresent. This first word which God spoke, struck Job to the heart. This he repeats and echoes to, chap. xlii, 3, as the arrow that stuck fast in him.

3. Gird up - As warriors then did for the battle.

4. Where - Thou art but of yesterday; and dost thou presume to judge of my eternal counsels! When - When I settled it as firm upon its own center as if it had been built upon the surest foundations.

5. Measures - Who hath prescribed how long and broad and deep it should be. Line - the measuring line to regulate all its dimensions.

6. Foundations - This strong and durable building hath no foundations but God's power, which hath marvelously established it upon itself. Cornerstone - By which the several walls are joined and fastened together, and in which, next to the foundations, the stability of a building consists. The sense is, who was it that built this goodly fabrick, and established it so firmly that it cannot be moved.

7. Stars - The angels, who may well be called morning-stars, because of their excellent lustre and glory. Sons of God - The angels called the sons of God, because they had their whole being from him, and because they were made partakers of his Divine and glorious image. Shouted - Rejoiced in and blessed God for his works, whereby he intimates, that they neither did advise or any way assist him, nor dislike or censure any of his works, as Job had presumed to do.

8. Doors - Who was it, that set bounds to the vast and raging ocean, and shut it up, as it were with doors within its proper place, that it might not overflow the earth? Break forth - From the womb or bowels of the earth, within which the waters were for the most part contained, and out of which they were by God's command brought forth into the channel which God had appointed for them.

9. The cloud - When I covered it with vapors and clouds which rise out of the sea, and hover above it, and cover it like a garment. Darkness - Black and dark clouds. Swaddling band - Having compared the sea to a new-born infant, he continues the metaphor, and makes the clouds as swaddling-bands, to keep it within its bounds: though indeed neither clouds, nor air, nor sands, nor shores, can bound the sea, but God alone.

10. Break up - Made those hollow places in the earth, which might serve for a cradle to receive and hold this great and goodly infant when it came out of the womb. And set - Fixed its bounds as strongly as if they were fortified with bars and doors.

12. Morning - Didst thou create the sun, and appoint the order and succession of day and night. Since - Since thou wast born: this work was done long before thou wast born. To know - To observe the punctual time when, and the point of the heavens where it should arise; which varies every day.

13. That - That this morning light should in a moment spread itself, from one end of the hemisphere to the other. Shaken - From the face of the earth. And this effect the morning-light hath upon the wicked, because it discovers them, whereas darkness hides them; and because it brings them to condign punishment, the morning being the usual time for executing judgment.

14. It - The earth. Turned - Is changed in its appearance. By the seal - The seal makes a beautiful impression upon the clay, which in itself hath no form, or comeliness. So the earth, which in the darkness of night lies like a confused heap without either form or beauty, when the light arises and shines upon it, appears in excellent order and glory. They - The men and things of the earth, whether natural, as living creatures, herbs and trees; or artificial, as houses or other buildings. Stand - Present themselves to our view. Garment - Wherewith the earth is in a manner clothed and adorned.

15. Withheld - That light which enjoyed by others is withholden from them, either by their own choice, because they chuse darkness rather than light; or by the judgment of God, or the magistrate,

by whom they are cut off from the light of the living. Arms - Their great strength which they used to the oppression of others.

16. Springs - Hebrew. the tears; the several springs out of which the waters of the sea flow as tears do from the eyes. Walked - Hast thou found out the utmost depth of the sea, which in divers places could never be reached by the wisest mariner? And how then canst thou fathom the depths of my counsels?

17. Death - Hast thou seen, or dost thou know the place and state of the dead; the depths and bowels of that earth in which the generality of dead men are buried. Death is a grand secret? We know not when or by what means we shall be brought to death: by what road we must go the way, whence we shall not return. We cannot describe what death is; how the knot is untied between soul and body, or how the spirit goes "To be we know not what, and live we know not how." With what dreadful curiosity does the soul launch out into an untried abyss? We have no correspondence with separate souls, nor any acquaintance with their state. It is an unknown, undiscovered region, to which they are removed. While we are here in a world of sense, we speak of the world of spirits, as blind men do of colours, and when we remove thither, shall be amazed to find how much we were mistaken.

18. Breadth - The whole compass and all the parts of it?

19. Dwelleth - Hath its constant and settled abode. Whether goes the sun when it departs from this hemisphere? Where is the tabernacle and the chamber in which he is supposed to rest? And seeing there was a time when there was nothing but gross darkness upon the face of the earth, what way came light into the world? Which was the place where light dwelt at that time, and whence was it fetched? And whence came that orderly constitution and constant succession of light and darkness? Was this thy work? Or wast thou privy to it, or a counsellor, or assistant in it?

20. Take it - Bring or lead it: and this it refers principally to the light, and to darkness, as the consequent of the other. Bound - Its whole course from the place of its abode whence it is supposed to come, to the end of its journey. Know - Where thou mayst find it, and whence thou mayst fetch it.

22. Treasures - Dost thou know where I have laid up those vast quantities of snow and hail which I draw forth when I see fit?

23. Trouble - When I intend to bring trouble upon any people for their sins.

24. Distributed - In the air, and upon the face of the earth. This is variously distributed in the world, shining in one place and time, when it doth not shine in another, or for a longer time, or with greater brightness and power than it doth in another. All which are the effects of God's infinite wisdom and power, and such as were out of Job's reach to understand. Which - Which light scattereth, raises the east-wind, and causes it to blow hither and thither upon the earth? For as the sun is called by the poets, the father of the winds, because he draws up those exhalations which give matter to the winds, so in particular the east-wind is often observed to rise together with the sun.

25. Overflowing - For the showers of rain which come down orderly, and gradually, as if they were conveyed in pipes or channels; which, without the care of God's providence, would fall confusedly, and overwhelm the earth. Lightning - For lightning and thunder? Who opened a passage for them out of the cloud in which they were imprisoned? And these are joined with the rain, because they are commonly accompanied with great showers of rain.

26. To cause - That the clouds being broken by lightning and thunder might pour down rain. No man - To water those parts by art and industry, as is usual in cultivated places.

27. To bring forth - Hitherto God has put such questions to Job, as were proper to convince him of his ignorance. Now he comes to convince him of his impotence. As it is but little that he can know, and therefore he ought not to arraign the Divine counsels, so it is but little he can do; and therefore he ought not to oppose Divine providence.

28. Father - Is there any man that can beget or produce rain at his pleasure?

31. Bind - Restrain or hinder them. Pleiades - The seven stars, which bring in the spring. Bands - By which it binds up the air and earth, by bringing storms of rain and hail or frost and snow. Orion - This constellation rises in November, and brings in winter. Both summer and winter will have their course? God indeed can change them when he pleases, can make the spring cold, and so bind the influences of Pleiades, and the winter warm, and so loose the bands of Orion; but we cannot.

32. Bring forth - Canst thou make the stars in the southern signs arise and appear? Arcturus - Those in the northern. His sons - The lesser stars, which are placed round about them; and attend upon them, as children upon their parents.

33. Ordinances - The laws which are firmly established concerning their order, motion, or rest, and their powerful influences upon this lower world. Didst thou give these laws? Or dost thou perfectly know them? Canst thou - Manage and over rule their influences.

34. Cover thee - Thy land when it needs rain.

38. Mire - By reason of much rain.

39. Hunt - Is it by thy care that the lions who live in desert places are furnished with necessary provisions? This is another wonderful work of God.

41. Raven - Having mentioned the noblest of brute creatures, he now mentions one of the most contemptible; to shew the care of God's providence over all creatures, both great and small. Their young ones are so soon forsaken by their dams, that if God did not provide for them in a more than ordinary manner, they would be starved to death. And will he that provides for the young ravens, fail to provide for his own children.

## XXXIX

The more fully to convince Job of his ignorance, God here discourses, Of the wild goats and hinds, ver. 1-4. Of the wild ass, ver. 5-8. Of the unicorn, ver. 9-12. Of the peacock and ostrich, ver. 13-18. Of the horse, ver. 19-25. Of the hawk and eagle, ver, 26-30.

4. Young ones - Notwithstanding their great weakness caused by their hard entrance into the world. Grow up - As with corn, that is, as if they were fed with corn. Go forth - Finding sufficient provisions abroad by the care of God's providence.

5. Sent - Who hath given him this disposition that he loves freedom, and hates that subjection which other creatures quietly endure? Loosed - Who keeps him from receiving the bands, and submitting to the service of man.

7. Scorneth - He feareth them not when they pursue him, because he is swift, and can easily escape them. Driver - He will not be brought to receive his yoke, nor to do his drudgery.

8. Mountains - He prefers that mean provision with his freedom, before the fattest pastures with servitude.

9. Unicorn - It is disputed whether this be the Rhinoceros; or a kind of wild bull.

16. Her labour - In laying her eggs is in vain, because she hath not the fear and tender concern for them, which she should have.

17. Deprived - Because God hath not implanted in her that instinct, and affection, which he hath put into other birds and beasts toward their young.

18. Lifteth - To flee from her pursuer: to which end she lifts up her head and body, and spreads her wings. Scorneth - She despises them thro' her swiftness; for though she cannot fly, yet by the aid of her wings she runs so fast, that horse-men cannot reach her.

19. Thunder - A strong metaphor, to denote force and terror.

21. Valley - Battles used to be pitched in valleys, or low grounds, especially horse battles.

23. Quiver - The quiver is here put for the arrows contained in it, which being shot against the horse and rider, make a rattling noise.

24. Swalloweth - He is so full of rage and fury, that he not only champs his bridle, but is ready to tear and devour the very ground on which he goes. Believeth - He is so pleased with the approach of the battle, and the sound of the trumpet calling to it, that he can scarce believe his ears for gladness.

25. Ha, ha - An expression of joy and alacrity declared by his proud neighings. Thunder - The loud and joyful clamour begun by the commanders, and followed by the soldiers when they are ready to join battle.

26. Fly - So strongly, constantly, unweariedly, and swiftly. South - At the approach of winter, when wild hawks fly into warmer countries, as being impatient of cold. The birds of the air are proofs of the wonderful providence of God, as well as the beasts of the earth. God instances in two stately ones.

27. Mount - Flies directly upward 'till she be out of thy sight; which no other bird can do.

29. Her eyes - Her sight is exceeding sharp and strong, so that she is able to look upon the sun with open eyes, and to behold the smallest prey upon the earth or sea, when she is mounted out of our sight.

33. Blood - There are divers eagles who do not feed upon carcases, but many eagles do feed on them. She - In an instant, flying thither with admirable celerity.

## XL

Job humbles himself before God, ver. 1-5. God challenges him to vie with him, in justice, power, majesty, and dominion over the proud, ver. 6-14. And gives an instance of his power in the Behemoth, ver. 15-24.

1. Answered - Having made a little pause to try what Job could answer. This is not said to be spoken out of the whirlwind, and therefore some think God said it in a still, small voice, which wrought more upon Job, (as upon Elijah) than the whirlwind did. Tho' Job had not spoken any

thing, yet God is said to answer him. For he knows mens thoughts, and can return a fit answer to their silence.

2. Reproveth - That boldly censureth his ways or works; it is at his peril.

5. Answer - Speak again; I will contend no more with thee. Twice - Often, the definite number being used indefinitely.

6. Whirlwind - Which was renewed when God renewed his charge upon Job, whom he intended to humble more throughly.

8. Wilt thou - Every word is emphatical, wilt (art thou resolved upon it) thou (thou Job, whom I took to be one of a better mind) also (not only vindicate thyself, but also accuse me) disannul (not only question, but even repeal and make void, as if it were unjust) my judgment? My sentence against thee, and my government and administration of human affairs? Wilt thou make me unrighteous that thou mayst seem to be righteous?

10. Deck - Seeing thou makest thyself equal, yea, superior to me, take to thyself thy great power, come and sit in my throne, and display thy Divine perfections in the sight of the world.

13. Hide - Kill every one of them at one blow. Bind - Condemn or destroy them. He alludes to the manner of covering the faces of condemned persons, and of dead men. In secret - In a secret place, bury them in their graves.

15. Behemoth - Very learned men take the leviathan to be the crocodile, and the behemoth to be the river-horse, which may fitly be joined with the crocodile, both being well known to Job and his friends, as being frequent in the adjacent parts, both amphibious, living and preying both in the water and upon the land. And both creatures of great bulk and strength. Made - As I made thee. Grass - The river-horse comes out of the river upon the land to feed upon corn, and hay, or grass, as an ox doth, to whom also he is not unlike in the form of his head and feet, and in the bigness of his body, whence the Italians call him, the sea-ox.

16. Strength - He hath strength answerable to his bulk, but this strength by God's wise and merciful providence is not an offensive strength, consisting in, or put forth by horns or claws, as it is in ravenous creatures, but only defensive and seated in his loins, as it is in other creatures.

17. Tail - Which though it be but short, yet when it is erected, is exceeding stiff and strong. Thighs - The sinews of his thighs. His thighs and feet are so sinewy and strong, that one of them is able to break or over-turn a large boat.

19. The chief - He is one of the chief of God's works, in regard of its great bulk and strength.

20. Mountains - Though he lives most in the water, yet he often fetches his food from the land, and from the mountains or hills, which are nigh the river Nile. Play - They not only feed securely, but sport themselves by him, being taught by experience that he is gentle and harmless.

22. Brook - Or, of the Nile, of which this word is often used in scripture. His constant residence is in or near this river, or the willows that grow by it.

23. River - A great quantity of water, hyperbolically called a river. Hasteth not - He drinks not with fear and caution; but such is his courage, that he fears no enemy either by water or by land. He drinks as if he designed, to drink up the whole river. He mentions Jordan, as a river well known, in and nigh unto Job's land.

24. Sight - Can any man take him in his eyes? Openly and by force? Surely not. His strength is too great for man to overcome: and therefore men are forced to use wiles and engines to catch him.

## XLI

To convince Job of his wickedness, he is here challenged to subdue and tame the leviathan, ver. 1-10. A particular description of him. ver. 11-34.

1. Leviathan - Several particulars in the following description, agree far better with the crocodile, than the whale. It is highly probable, that this is the creature here spoken of. Cord - Canst thou take him with a hook and a line, as anglers take ordinary fishes.

2. Thorn - Or, with an iron hook, or instrument as sharp as a thorn; wherewith thou usest to carry little fishes.

3. Supplications - Doth he dread thine anger or power? Or will he earnestly beg thy favour? It is a metaphor from men in distress, who use these means to them to whose power they are subject.

7. Fill - A whale's you may: but the skin of a crocodile is so hard that an iron or spear will not pierce it.

8. Lay - Seize upon him, if thou darest. Battle - But ere thou attempt it consider what thou art doing, and with whom, thou art going to fight. Do no more - Proceed no farther, draw back thy hand.

9. Hope - The hope of taking or conquering him.

10. Stand - To the battle. Me - To contend with me who created him?

11. Prevented - Hath laid the first obligation upon me, for which I am indebted to him. Who can be before-hand with me in kindnesses, since all things under heaven are mine.

13. Discover - Or, uncover, or take off from him. Face - The upper or outward part of his garment, or, the garment itself: the word face being often redundant. And by the garment is meant the skin which covers the whole body; who dare attempt to touch his very skin? Much less to give him a wound. His double bridle - His fast jaws, which have some resemblance to a double bridle: whence the Greeks call those parts of the face which reach to the jaws on both sides, the bridles.

14. Doors - His mouth. If it be open, none dare enter within, and if it be shut, none dare open it.

15. Shut - Closely compacted together, as things that are fastened together by a seal. This likewise is true of the crocodile, but the skin of the whale is smooth and entire without any scales at all.

18. Sneesings - This the crocodile is said frequently to do. Eyes - To which they seem very fitly compared, because the eyes of the crocodile are dull and dark under the water, but as soon as they appear above water, cast a bright and clear light; like the morning light, suddenly breaking forth after the dark night.

19. Lamps - This also better agrees with the crocodile, which breathes like the river-horse, of which ancient authors affirm, that his nostrils are very large, and he breathes forth a fiery smoke like that of a furnace.

21. Kindleth coals - An hyperbolical expression, denoting extraordinary heat.

22. And sorrow - Sorrow is his companion and harbinger, which attends upon him wheresoever he goes. So anger and fear are said by the poets to accompany the God of war.

24. Nether mill-stone - Which being to bear the weight of the upper, ought to be the harder and stronger of the two.

25. Raiseth - Upon the top of the waters. Mighty - Even the stout- hearted. Breakings - By reason of their great danger and distress; which is expressed by this very word, Psalm lx, 2 Jonah ii, 4. Purify - Those who ordinarily live in the neglect of God, they cry unto God in their trouble, and endeavour to purge their consciences from the guilt of their sins.

26. Hold - Hebrew. cannot stand, cannot endure the stroke, but will be broken by it. The crocodile's skin, no sword, nor dart, nor musquet bullet can pierce.

28. Turned - Hurt him no more than a blow with a little stubble.

30. Stones - His skin is so impenetrable, that the sharpest stones or shells are as easy unto him as the mire.

31. Boil - To swell, and foam, and froth by his strong and vehement motion, as any liquor does when it is boiled in a pot, especially boiling ointment. The sea - The great river Nile, is called a sea, both in scripture, as Isaiah xi, 15, and in other authors, as Euphrates is called the sea of Babylon, Isaiah xxi, 1 Jer. li, 36. Lakes also are most frequently called seas both in the Old and New Testament: and in such lakes the crocodiles are as well as in the Nile.

32. Shine - By the white froth or foam upon the waters. The same may be observed in the wake of a ship by night.

34. King, &c. - He can tame both the behemoth and leviathan, as strong and stout-hearted as they are. This discourse concerning them was brought in, to prove that it is God only, who can look upon proud men and abase them, bring them low, and hide them in the dust, he it is that beholdeth all high things, and wherein men dealt proudly, he is above them. He is king over all the children of pride, brutal or rational, and makes them either bend or break before him.

## XLII

Job throughly humbles himself before God, ver. 1-6. God reproves his friends, for whom Job intercedes, and God accepts them, ver. 7-9. God blesses and restores Job to his prosperity, ver. 10-15. His age and death, ver. 16, 17

2. Thou canst, &c. - Job here subscribes to God's unlimited power, knowledge and dominion, to prove which was the scope of God's discourse out of the whirlwind. And his judgment being convinced of these, his conscience also was convinced, of his own folly in speaking so irreverently concerning him. No thought can be withholden from thee - No thought of ours can be withholden from thy knowledge. And there is no thought of thine, which thou canst be hindered from bringing into execution.

3. Who - What am I that I should be guilty of such madness! Therefore - Because my mind was without knowledge. Knew not - I have spoken foolishly and unadvisedly of all things far above my reach.

4. Hear - Hear and accept my humble confession. Inquire - I will no more dispute the matter with thee, but beg information from thee. The words which God had uttered to Job by way of challenge, Job returns to him in way of submission.

5. Seeth thee - The knowledge which I had of thy nature, perfections and counsels, was hitherto grounded chiefly, upon the instructions of men; but now it is clear and certain, as being immediately inspired into my mind by this thy glorious apparition and Revelation, and by the operation of thy Holy Spirit; which makes these things as evident to me, as if I saw them with my bodily eyes. When the mind is enlightened by the spirit of God, our knowledge of Divine things as far exceeds what we had before, as knowledge by ocular demonstration, exceeds, that by common fame.

7. Eliphaz - As the eldest of the three, and because he spoke first, and by his example led the rest into the same miscarriages. Two friends - Elihu is not here reproved, because he dealt more mercifully with Job, and did not condemn his person, but only rebuked his sinful expressions. Ye have not, &c. - This is not to be understood absolutely, but comparatively. Job was not so much to be blamed as they, because his opinion concerning the methods of God's providence, and the indifferency of its dispensations towards good and bad men was truer than theirs, which was, that God did always reward good men and punish sinners in this life.

8. My servant - Whom though you condemned as an hypocrite, I own for my faithful servant. Offer - By the hand of Job, whom I hereby constitute your priest to pray and sacrifice for you. Lest I deal - Lest my just judgment take hold of you for your false and foolish speeches.

9. Accepted Job - And as Job prayed and offered sacrifice for those who had grieved and wounded his spirit, so Christ prayed and died for his persecutors, and ever lives, making intercession for transgressors.

10. Captivity - All his bodily distempers were thoroughly healed, and probably in a moment. His mind was calmed, his peace returned, and the consolations of God were not small with him. Prayed - Whereby he manifests his obedience to God and his true love to them.

11. Then - When Job had humbled himself, and God was reconciled to him. Sisters - His kindred. Eat - Feasted with him, to congratulate with him God's great and glorious favour. Bemoaned - They declared the sense which they had of his calamities while they were upon him, although they had hitherto wanted opportunity to express it.

12. Blessed - Not only with spiritual, but also with temporal blessings. Just double to what they were, chap. i, 3. This is a remarkable instance of the extent of the Divine providence, to things that seem minute as this, the exact number of a man's cattle; as also of the harmony of providence, and the reference of one event to another: for known unto God are all his works, from the beginning to the end.

14. Jemima - The day, either because of her eminent beauty, or because she was born in the day of his prosperity, after a dark night of affliction. Kezia is the name of a spice of a very fragrant smell, commonly called Cassia. Keren-happuch signifies plenty restored.

15. So fair - In the Old Testament we often find women praised for their beauty, but never in the New, because the beauty of holiness is brought to a much clearer light by the gospel.

16. After this, &c. - Some conjecture, that he was seventy when his trouble came. If so his age was doubled, as his other possessions.

17. Full of days - So coming to his grave, as Eliphaz had spoken, like a ripe shock of corn in its season.

# NOTES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS

WE have now before us one of the choicest parts of the Old Testament, wherein there is so much of Christ and his gospel, as well as of God and his law, that it has been called the summary of both Testaments. The history of Israel; which we were long upon, instructed us in the knowledge of God. The book of Job gave us profitable disputations, concerning God and his providence. But this book brings us into the sanctuary, draws us off from converse with men, with the philosophers or disputers of this world, and directs us into communion with God. It is called, the Psalms, in Hebrew Tehillim, which properly signifies Psalms of praise, because many of them are such; but Psalms is a more general word, meaning all poetical compositions, fitted to be sung. St. Peter styles it, The book of Psalms. It is a collection of Psalms, of all the Psalms that were divinely inspired, composed at several times, on several occasions, and here put together, without any dependence on each other. Thus they were preserved from being scattered and lost, and kept in readiness for the service of the church. One of these is expressly said to be the prayer of Moses. That some of them were penned by Asaph, is intimated, 2 Chron. xxix, 30, where they are said to praise the Lord, in the words of David and Asaph, who is there called a seer or prophet. And some of the Psalms seem to have been penned long after, at the time of the captivity in Babylon. But the far greater part were wrote by David, who was raised up for establishing the ordinance of singing Psalms in the church of God, as Moses and Aaron were for settling the ordinance of sacrifice. Theirs indeed is superseded, but this will remain, 'till it be swallowed up in the songs of eternity. There is little in the book of Psalms of the ceremonial law. But the moral law is all along magnified, and made honourable. And Christ the foundation, corner and top-stone of all religion, is here clearly spoken of; both his sufferings, with the glory that should follow, and the, kingdom he would set up in the world.

## 1

This psalm was put first as a preface to all the rest, as a powerful persuasive to the serious study of the whole book, and of the rest of the holy scripture, taken from that blessedness which attends upon the study and practice of it. It shews us, the holiness and happiness of a good man, ver. 1-3 The sinfulness and misery of a wicked man, ver. 4, 5. The ground and reason of both, ver. 6.

1. Blessed - The Hebrew words are very emphatical: O the blessedness of that man! Counsel - That doth not lead his life according to their counsel, or manner of living. Standeth - Which notes a more settled abode in it. Way - In their manner of conversation. Seat - Which notes a constant and resolved perseverance in their wicked courses. Scornful - Of those who make a mock of sin, and scoff at goodness and goodmen. Divers observe a gradation in this verse; the following clause still exceeding the former, for standing is more than walking, and sitting more than standing; and sinners in scripture use, are worse than the ungodly, and the scornful are the worst of sinners.

2. Day and night - Not seldom and slightly, but diligently, and constantly.

3. Whither - His happiness is not short and transitory, but, like those trees which are continually green and flourishing.

4. Ungodly - Their condition is far different. Chaff - They are restless and unquiet: their seeming felicity, hath no firm foundation, but quickly vanishes and flees away as chaff before the wind.

5. Not stand - Not endure the trial. Judgment - In the great and general judgment of the world.

6. Knoweth - He approves, loves, and delights in them, and therefore will recompence them. Perish - All their designs and courses shall come to nothing, and they shall perish with them.

**2**

There is nothing in this psalm which is not applicable to Christ, but some things which are not all applicable to David. Threatenings denounced against the adversaries of Christ's kingdom, ver. 1-6. Promises made to Christ, ver. 7-9. Counsel given to all, to submit to him, ver. 10-12.

1. Heathen - Who did so against David, 2 Sam. v, 6, 17; 1 Chron. xiv, 8, and against Christ, Luke xviii, 32 Acts iv, 25, &c.

2. The kings - Herod, and Pilate and others with or after them. Earth - So called in way of contempt and to shew their madness in opposing the God of heaven. Set - The word denotes the combination of their counsels and forces. Anointed - Against the king whom God hath chosen and exalted.

3. And cast - The same thing expressed with more emphasis. Let us not only break off their yoke and the cords by which it is fastened upon us, but let us cast them far away.

4. Sitteth - As the king of the whole world. Heavens - As an evidence both of God's clear and certain knowledge of all things that are done below, and of his sovereign and irresistible power. Laugh - Shall despise them and all their crafty devices.

6. Yet - Notwithstanding all their artifices and combinations. My king - Who ruleth in my stead, and according to my will, and for my glory. Zion - Over my church and people. Zion strictly taken, was an hill on the north part of Jerusalem, where there was a strong fort, called the city of David, but in a more large sense it is put for the city of Jerusalem, for the temple of Jerusalem, built upon the hill of Moriah, which was either a part of mount Sion, or adjoining to it; for the church of the Jews, and for the Christian church.

7. The decree - The will and appointment of God concerning this. My son - Which tho' it may in some sort be said to, or of David, yet much more properly belongs to Christ, who is commonly known by this title both in the Old and New Testament, and to whom this title is expressly appropriated by the holy ghost, who is the best interpreter of his own words, Acts xiii, 33 Heb. i, 5. This day - This may be understood either,

1. Of his eternal generation. This day, from all eternity, which is well described by this day, because in eternity there is no succession, no [yesterday,] no [tomorrow,] but it is all as one continued day or moment without change or flux; or,
2. Of the manifestation of Christ's eternal son-ship in time; which was done both in his birth and life, when his being the son of God was demonstrated by the

testimony of the angel, Luke i, 32, and of God the Father, Matt. iii, 17; xvii, 5, and by his own words and works; and in his resurrection, which seems to be here mainly intended, of which day this very place is expounded, Acts xiii, 33. When Christ was in a most solemn manner declared to be the son of God with power, Rom. i, 4.

8. Earth - Not only the Jewish nation, but the whole world.

9. Them - Those that will not quietly submit to thee, shall be crushed and destroyed by thee. This was in part fulfilled, when the Jews who persisted in unbelief, were destroyed by the Roman power: And in the destruction of the Pagan power, when the Christian religion came to be established. But it will not be compleatly fulfilled, 'till all opposing power and principality be put down.

10. Now - While you have time for repentance and submission.

11. Fear - With an awful sense of his great and glorious majesty. Rejoice - Do not esteem his yoke your dishonour and grievance; but rejoice in this inestimable grace and benefit. Trembling - This is added to warn them of taking heed that they do not turn this grace of God into wantonness.

12. Kiss - In token of your subjection and adoration; whereof this was a sign among the eastern nations. The son - The son of God. Ye perish - Be taken out of the way by death or destruction. Wrath - The least degree of his anger is terrible.

**3**

David complains to God of his enemies, ver. 1, 2. Comforts himself in God, and the experience of his goodness, ver. 3-6. Triumphs in the salvation of God, ver. 7, 8 A psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

2. My soul - Of me: the soul being commonly put for the person. In God - God hath utterly forsaken him. Selah - This word is no where used but in this poetical book, and in the song of Habakkuk. Probably it was a musical note, directing the singer either to lift up his voice, to make a pause, or to lengthen the tune. But withal, it is generally placed at some remarkable passage; which gives occasion to think that it served also to quicken the attention of the singer and hearer.

3. A shield - My defense. My glory - Thou hast formerly given, and wilt farther give occasion of glorying in thy power and favour. Lifter up - Thou wilt restore me to my former power and dignity.

4. His hill - Out of heaven, so called, chap. xv, 1.

5. Slept - Securely, casting all my cares upon God. Awaked - After a sweet and undisturbed sleep.

7. Cheek bone - Which implies contempt and reproach. Teeth - Their strength and the instruments of their cruelty. He compares them to wild beasts.

**4**

David prays, reproves the wicked, and testifies the happiness of the righteous, ver. 1-3. Exhorts them to consider and serve God, ver. 4-5. Declares his own experience of the grace of God, ver. 6-8. To the chief musician on Neginoth, A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Chief musician - The director of the musick of the temple. Neginoth - Or, on stringed instruments, as this word is translated, Hab. iii, 19.

1. O God - The witness and defender of my righteous cause.

2. My glory - By his glory probably he means that honour which God had conferred upon him. Vanity - Wickedness. Lying - Those calumnies which they raised against him, to make him odious to all the people.

3. Godly - Me, whom, though you traduce as an hypocrite, God hath pronounced to be a man after his own heart, 1 Sam. xiii, 14. For himself - In his stead, or to be his vicegerent, as all kings are, and especially the kings of God's own people.

4. In awe - Be afraid, if not of me, yet of God, who hath engaged in my cause. Sin not - By prosecuting your rebellion against God's authority. On your bed - Calmly consider these things in the silent night, when you are at leisure from distracting business. Be still - Compose your tumultuous minds.

5. Offer - Unto God, that he may be reconciled to you. Righteousness - Righteous sacrifices; which requires that the persons offering them be righteous and do righteous things, and offer them with an honest mind, with faith and true repentance. Without which, he intimates, that all their sacrifices were of no esteem with God, and would be wholly unprofitable to them.

6. Many - Of my followers, who are weary of waiting upon God. Who - Who will put an end to our troubles, and give us tranquility. Lift up - Upon me and my friends. Give us an assurance of thy love, and evidence it by thy powerful assistance.

7. Thou hast - Whatsoever thou shalt do with me for the future, I have at present unspeakable satisfaction in the testimonies of thy love to my soul; more than worldly persons have in the time of a plentiful harvest.

8. In peace - In tranquility of mind, resting securely upon God's promises.

**5**

David beseeches God to hear his prayer, ver. 1-3. Assures himself of God's justice against his enemies, ver. 4-6. Declares his resolution: to serve God, ver. 7. Prays for himself and the people of God, and against his enemies, ver. 8-12. To the chief musician upon Nehiloth, A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Nehiloth - This is no where else used in scripture. It is thought to signify a wind-instrument, as Neginoth signified stringed instruments.

1. Meditation - My prayer accompanied with deep thoughts and fervent affections of soul.

3. Morning - Every morning. As soon as I wake, I am still with thee, as he saith, chap. 1xxxix, 18. The first thing that I do is to pray to thee.

4. Surely - Thou dost not approve of, nor delight in them, or in their prayers. Dwelt - Have any fellowship with thee.

7. Come - With holy boldness and confidence. Mercy - Trusting only in thy great mercy. Fear - With an holy dread and reverence of thy majesty. Towards - Looking towards it, when I cannot come to it.

8. Righteousness - In thy righteous laws. Because - That I may give them no occasion of slandering me, or religion for my sake. The way - The way wherein thou wouldst have to one walk. Plain - That I may clearly discern it, and readily walk in it.

9. Throat - Wide opened ready to devour all that come within their reach. A metaphor from wild beasts gaping for the prey.

10. Destroy - Condemn and punish them. Cast - Out of thy land, and from among thy people.

**6**

David being sick both in body and mind, because he had offended God, presents his misery before him, ver. 1-3. Begs the return of his favour, ver. 4-7. Assures himself of an answer of peace, ver. 8-10. To the chief musician on Neginoth, upon Sheminith, A psalm of David Title of the psalm. Upon Sheminith - Or, upon the eighth. It is thought to be the loftiest note, as Alamoth is the lowest; but this is only conjecture; the Jews themselves have no certain knowledge of their own ancient musick.

2. Bones - My inmost parts.

5. In death - Among the dead. Remembrance - He speaks of the remembrance or celebration of God's grace in the land of the living, to the edification of God's church, and the propagation of true religion among men; which is not done in the other life.

6. With my tears - It well becomes the greatest spirits to be tender, and to relent under the tokens of God's displeasure. David who could face Goliath himself, melts into tears at the remembrance of sin, and under the apprehension of Divine wrath, and it is no diminution to his character.

8. Hath heard - By the workings of God's grace upon his heart, he knew his prayer was accepted. His tears had a voice, in the ears of the God of mercy. Silent tears are no speechless ones. Our tears are cries to God.

10. Ashamed - Of their vain confidence. Return - Repent of their sins and return to their obedience.

**7**

David prays for deliverance from his enemies, ver. 1, 2. Appeals to God for his innocence, ver. 3-5. Prays to him to judge his cause, ver. 6-9. Expresses his confidence in God, ver. 10-17. Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite Title of the psalm. Shiggaion - This seems to be the name of a kind of song, or instrument, which then was well known, but now is only matter of conjecture. Words - The false report raised by him. Cush - Probably some eminent commander or courtier under Saul.

2. Lest - Mine enemy. Tear - Out of my body.

3. Hands - Which Cush and others falsely lay to my charge. Iniquity - In my actions.

4. Deliver - When it was in my power to destroy him, as 1 Sam. xxiv, 2-6.

6. Lift up - Glorify thyself, and shew thyself to be above them. Commanded - To execute that righteous sentence, which thou hast commanded, appointed, and declared by thy prophet Samuel.

7. Compass - They will come from all parts to worship thee, and offer to thee praises and sacrifices. High - To thy tribunal, to sit there and judge my cause. An allusion to earthly tribunals, which generally are set up on high above the people.

9. O - Put a stop to their wicked practices.

11. Every day - Even then, when his providence seems to favour them, and they are most secure and confident.

12. He will - God will hasten, and speedily execute his judgments upon him.

13. Him - For the wicked. Ordaineth - Designs or fits for this very use. Of all sinners, persecutors are set up as the fairest marks of Divine wrath. They set God at defiance but cannot set themselves out of the reach of his judgments.

14. Travelleth - This metaphor denotes his deep design, and vigourous endeavours for doing mischief, and his restlessness and pain 'till he have accomplished it.

## 8

David extols the majesty, power, and providence of God, ver. 1, 2. And his loving-kindness to mankind, ver. 3-5. In giving him dominion over this lower world, ver. 6-9. To the chief musician upon Gittith, A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Gittith - This also is supposed to be the name of a tune, or instrument.

1. In - Not only in Israel, but among all nations. Which shews that this psalm speaks of the Messiah, and the times of the New Testament. Heavens - Where thy throne of glory is established, where the blessed angels celebrate thy praises, where Christ sitteth at thy right hand in glorious majesty, from whence he poureth down excellent gifts upon babes.

2. Babes - Weak and foolish, and contemptible persons, who are frequently called babes or children. Such are very unfit to grapple with an enemy: and therefore when such persons conquer the most powerful and malicious enemies, it must needs confound them, and advance the glory of

God: as indeed it did, when such mean persons as the apostles, and disciples of Christ, maintained and propagated the gospel, in spite of all the wit, power, and rage of their enemies. Ordained - Perfectly or firmly settled strength; that is, the praise of his strength or power, Matt. xxi, 16, it is rendered praise. Still - Silence and confound them. Avenger - The devil, and all who are his vassals and espouse his quarrel.

3. The moon - Either the sun is included under this general title: or he omitted it, because he made this psalm by night. Ordained - Placed in that excellent and unalterable order, and directed to their several motions.

4. What is man - How mean and inconsiderable a thing is man, if compared with thy glorious majesty. Man - Hebrew. infirm, or miserable man. By which it is apparent that he speaks of man, not according to the state of his creation, but as fallen into a state of sin and misery, and mortality. Mindful - Carest for him, and conferest such high favours upon him. The son - Hebrew. the son of Adam, that great apostate from God, the sinful son of a sinful father, his son by likeness of disposition and manners, no less than by procreation. All which tends to magnify the following mercy. Visitest - Not in anger, as that word is sometimes used, but with thy grace and mercy.

5. For - Thou hast in Christ mercifully restored man to his primitive estate, wherein he was but one remove below the angels; from which he was fallen by sin. Crowned - Man, fallen and lost man: who is actually restored to glory and dominion in Christ his head and representative, who received this crown and dominion for man's good, and in his stead; which he will in due time communicate to his members. And so the two expositions of this place concerning mankind and concerning Christ, may be reconciled. For he speaks of that honourable estate conferred first upon Christ, and then by his hands upon mankind. But the words more literally rendered are, Thou madest him a little less than God. And hence some have inferred, that man in his original state was the highest of all creatures.

## 9

David praises God for giving him victory over his enemies, ver. 1-6. Triumphs in confidence that God would judge the world and protect his people, ver. 7-10. Calls others to praise him, ver. 11, 12. Prays for help, and praises God, ver. 13-20. To the chief musician upon Muth-labben, A psalm of David Title of the psalm. Muth-labben - This also seems to be a title of some tune, or instrument: of which we may be content to be ignorant, as the Jewish doctors are.

3. Turned back - Put to flight.

7. But - Though cities and people may perish, yet the Lord abides for ever. Which is sufficient for the terror of his enemies, and the comfort of his church.

10. Thy name - Thy infinite power and wisdom, and faithfulness and goodness. The name of God is frequently put for God. Put their trust - The experience of thy faithfulness to thy people in all ages, is a just ground for their confidence.

11. Zion - Whose special and gracious presence is there. People - To the heathen nations.

12. Blood - The bloodshed of his innocent and holy ones: which though he may not seem to regard for a season, yet he will certainly call the authors of it to a severe account. Them - The humble, as it follows, or the oppressed, ver. 9, that trust in him, and seek to him, ver. 10, whom he seemed to have forgotten.

14. Gates - In the great assemblies. These gates he elegantly opposes to the former. Of - Of the people who live or meet together in Zion. For cities are as it were mothers to their people, and the people are commonly called their daughters. So the names of the daughters of Egypt, Jer. xlvi, 11, and of Edom, Lam. iv, 21, 22, and of Tyre, chap. xlv, 12, are put for the people of those places.

16. Higgaion - This is either a musical term, or a note of attention, intimating that the matter deserves deep meditation, or consideration, as the word signifies.

17. Forget - That do not regard God, nor his precepts, nor his threatenings and judgments.

## 10

David complains of and describes the wicked, ver. 1-15. Prays to God to appear against them, and rejoices in the prospect of it, ver. 12-18.

3. Boasteth - He glorieth in his very sins which are his shame, and especially in the satisfaction of his desires.

4. Countenance - So called, because though pride be properly seated in the heart, yet it is manifest in the countenance.

5. Judgments - Thy threatenings denounced against, and punishments inflicted upon sinners. Are far - He doth not regard or fear them: yea he despises them, being confident that he can blow them away with a breath. This is a gesture of contempt or disdain, both in scripture, and other authors.

7. Tongue - Under his fair and plausible speeches, mischief is hid and covered. Vanity - Or, injury, the vexation or oppression of other men.

8. Sitteth - Not within the villages, but in the ways bordering upon them, or leading to them, as robbers use to do. Are set - Hebrew. Are hid. He watches and looks out of his lurking-place. He alludes still to the practices of robbers.

10. Croucheth - Like a lion (for he continues the same metaphor) which lies close upon the ground, partly that he may not be discovered, and partly that he may more suddenly and surely lay hold on his prey.

13. Contemn - Why dost thou by giving them impunity, suffer and occasion them to despise thee?

14. Requite - Hebrew. to give (to restore or pay the mischief which they have done to others) with thy hand, by thy own extraordinary providence, because the oppressed were destitute of all other succors. Fatherless - Of such as have no friend or helper, one kind of them being put for all.

15. Seek - Search for it, and punish these wicked atheists. 'Till - No such wickedness be left in the world, or at least in the church.

16. Is king - To whom it belongs to protect his subjects. Therefore his peoples case is never desperate, seeing he ever lives to help them. The heathen - The Canaanites; whom God, as king of the world, expelled, and gave their land to his people. By which great example he confirms his faith and hope for the future. His land - Out of Canaan, which God calls his land, because he gave it to them, and fixed his presence and dwelling in it.

17. Prepare - By thy grace and good spirit, that they may so pray as thou wilt hear.

18. To judge - To give sentence for them, and against their enemies. The man - Earthly and mortal men, who yet presume to contend with thee their maker.

**11**

David encourages himself in God, against the attempts of his enemies, ver. 1-3. Asserts the dominion and providence of God, ver. 4-7 To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

1. Ye - Mine enemies.

2. For lo - David having directed his speech to his enemies, now turns it to God, and pours out before him his complaints. Ready - They lay designs for my destruction and make all things ready to execute them.

3. Foundations - Piety, justice, fidelity, and mercy, which are the pillars or foundations of a state or kingdom. What - The condition of all righteous men will be desperate.

4. Temple - In heaven; which is mentioned as an evidence of his glorious majesty, of his sovereign power and dominion over all men and things, and of his accurate inspection into all men and their actions. Throne - Where he sits to examine all causes, and to give righteous sentence according to every man's works. Try - He throughly discerns all men, their most inward and secret actions: and therefore he sees and will reward my innocency, notwithstanding all the calumnies of mine enemies; and withal he sees all their secret designs, and will discover and defeat them.

5. Trieth - He chastens even righteous persons, yet still he loves them, and therefore will in due time deliver them. But as for the wicked, God hates them, and will severely punish them.

6. Rain - Send them plentifully, swiftly, and suddenly, as rain commonly falls from heaven. Snares - Grievous plagues or judgments, which are called snares, because wicked men are often surprized with them when they least expect them. And because they cannot escape them, or get out of them; but are held fast and destroyed by them. Horrible tempests - Dreadful judgments so called, in allusion to the destruction of Sodom by these means. But this he seems to speak not so much of present calamities, as of eternal punishments. This - Is their portion, and as it were the meat and drink appointed them by God.

**12**

David begs help of God, having no man whom he could trust, ver. 1, 2. Describes the wicked and assures himself, that God would punish them, and preserve the just, ver. 3-8. To the chief musician upon Sheminith, A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Sheminith - The same title is prefixed to chap. vi, 1.

4. Prevail - By raising and spreading evil reports concerning him. Our own - At our own disposal to speak what we please, who can control or restrain us?

5. Puffeth - From him that despises him, and hopes to destroy him with a puff of breath.

6. Pure - Without the least mixture of falsehood; and therefore shall infallibly be fulfilled.

7. Thou shalt keep them - Thy words or promises: these thou wilt observe and keep, both now, and from this generation for ever. 8. Walk - They fill all places, and go about boldly and securely.

**13**

David complains to God, ver. 1, 2. Prays for help, ver. 3, 4. Rejoices in hope, ver. 5, 6. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

2. How long - Shall I be in such perplexities, not knowing what course to take?

3. Lighten - Revive and comfort, and deliver me from the darkness of death, which is ready to come upon me.

6. I will sing - It is a common thing for David and other prophets to speak of future deliverances as if they were already come, that so they may signify both the infallible certainty of the thing, and their firm assurance thereof.

**14**

The atheism and corruption of mankind, ver. 1-3. An expostulation with sinners, ver. 4-6. A prayer for the salvation of God, ver. 7. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

1. The fool - The wicked man. Good - That is, actions really good or pleasing to God.

2. Looked - God knoweth all things without any enquiry: but he speaks after the manner of men. Upon - Upon the whole Israelitish nation, and upon all mankind for he speaks of all except his people, and the righteous ones, who are opposed to these, ver. 4, 5.

3. Gone - From God, and from the rule which he hath given them. Filthy - Loathsome and abominable to God.

4. Bread - With as little remorse, and with as much greediness. Call not - They are guilty not only of gross injustice towards men, but also of horrid impiety and contempt of God.

5. There - Upon the spot, where they practiced these insolences, God struck them with a panick fear. For - God is on their side, and therefore their enemies have cause to tremble.

6. Because - This was the ground of their contempt, that he lived by faith in God's promise and providence.

7. O that - These words immediately concern the deliverance of Israel out of that sinful state, in which they now were; which having described, he concludes, with a prayer to God to help them out of Zion, where the ark then was, but principally they design the spiritual redemption and salvation of all God's Israel by the Messiah. The captivity - His captive people. The children of Jacob, as Aaron is named for his sons, 1 Chron. xii, 27.

## 15

The scope of this short, but excellent psalm, is to shew us the way to heaven. Here is a question proposed, ver. 1. The answer to it, ver. 2-5. A psalm of David.

1. Who - Who shall so dwell in thy church here, as to dwell with thee for ever in heaven?

2. Uprightly - Loving, and serving God, and loving his neighbour not in word only, but in truth; and this constantly. Worketh - Makes it his business to do justly, to give to every one his due, first to God, and then to men. Speaketh - His words and professions to God and men, agree with the thoughts and purposes of his heart.

3. He - He that doth not speak evil of his neighbour. neighbour - That is, any man. Nor taketh - Into his mouth, doth not raise it, neither spread or propagate it; or believe it without sufficient reason.

4. Vile - An ungodly man. honoureth - He highly esteems and loves them, though they be mean as to their worldly condition, and though they may differ from him in some opinions or practices of lesser moment. Sweareth - A promissory oath. Hurt - To his own damage. As if a man solemnly swear, that he will sell him such an estate at a price below the full worth; or that, he will give a poor man such a sum of money, which afterwards he finds inconvenient to him. Changeth not - His purpose, but continues firm and resolved to perform his promise.

5. To usury - In such a manner as is contrary to God's law: of which see otherwise, Exod. xxii, 25 Levit xxv, 36, 37, &c. Reward - Or, a bribe for him who hath a bad cause. Moved - He shall abide with God here, and when he dies be for ever with the Lord.

## 16

David professes his trust in God, his adherence to him and love of his people, ver. 1-3. His satisfaction in God, ver. 4-7. He speaks in the person of Christ, of Gods presence with him, of his

resurrection and the glory that should follow, ver. 8-11. Michtam of David. Title of the psalm. Michtam - This seems to be a title belonging to the musick or the song, which, with the rest, is now lost and unknown. As David was both a member, and an eminent type, of Christ, he speaks of himself sometimes in the one and sometimes in the other capacity: and therefore having spoken of himself as a member of Christ, in the former part of the psalm, he proceeds to consider himself as a type of Christ, and being inspired by the holy Ghost: towards the close he speaks such things, as though they might be accommodated to himself in a very imperfect sense, yet could not properly, belong to any but to Christ, to whom therefore they are justly appropriated in the New Testament.

2. To thee - Thou dost not need me or my service, nor art capable of any advantage from it.

3. But - I bear a singular respect and love to all saints, for thy sake, whose friends and servants they are, and whose image they bear. This more properly agrees to David, than to Christ, whose goodness was principally designed for, and imparted to sinners.

4. Sorrows - Having shewed his affection to the servants of the true God, he now declares what an abhorrency he has for those that worship idols. Offerings - In which the Gentiles used sometimes to drink part of the blood of their sacrifices. Names - Of those other gods mentioned before.

5. The Lord - I rejoice in God as my portion, and desire no better, no other felicity. Cup - The portion which is put into my cup, as the ancient manner was in feasts, where each had his portion of meat, and of wine allotted to him. Lot - My inheritance divided to me by lot, as the custom then was.

6. Lines - My portion, which was measured with lines. Are fallen - In a land flowing with milk and honey, and above all, blessed with the presence and knowledge of God.

7. The Lord - Hath inspired that wisdom into me, by which I have chosen the Lord for my portion, and am so fully satisfied with him. Reins - My inward thoughts and affections, being inspired and moved by the Holy Spirit. Instruct - Direct me how to please God, and put my whole trust in him. Night - Even when others are asleep, my mind is working upon God, and improving the silence and solitude of holy meditations.

8. I have set - I have always presented him to my mind, as my witness and judge, as my patron and protector. Hitherto David seems to have spoken with respect to himself, but now he is transported by the spirit of prophecy, and carried above himself, to speak as a type of Christ, in whom this and the following verses were truly accomplished. Christ as man did always set his father's will and glory before him. Right-hand - To strengthen, protect, assist, and comfort me: as this assistance of God was necessary to Christ as man. Moved - Though the archers shoot grievously at me, and both men and devils seek my destruction, and God sets himself against me as an enemy, yet I am assured he will deliver me out of all my distresses.

9. My glory - My tongue, which is a man's glory and privilege, above all other living creatures. Rejoiceth - Declares my inward joy. For this word signifies not so much eternal joy, as the outward demonstrations of it. My flesh - My body shall quietly rest in the grave. Shall rest - in confident assurance of its incorruption there, and of its resurrection to an immortal life: the flesh or body is in itself, but a dead lump of clay; yet hope is here ascribed to it figuratively, as it is to the brute creatures, Rom. viii, 19.

10. Hell - In the state of the dead. Holy one - Me thy holy son, whom thou hast sanctified and sent into the world. It is peculiar to Christ, to be called the holy one of God. To see - To be corrupted or putrefied in the grave, as the bodies of others are.

11. Life - Thou wilt raise me from the grave, and conduct me to the place and state of everlasting felicity. Presence - In that heavenly paradise, where thou art gloriously present, where thou dost clearly and fully discover the light of thy countenance; whereas in this life thou hidest thy face and shewest us only thy back-parts. Right-hand - Which he mentions as a place of the greatest honour, the place where the saints are placed at the last day, and where Christ himself is said to sit, chap. cx, 1. Pleasures - All our joys are empty and defective: But in heaven there is fulness of joy. Our pleasures here are transient and momentary; but those at God's right hand are pleasures for evermore. For they are the pleasures of immortal souls, in the enjoyment of an eternal God.

## 17

David appealing to God for his integrity, begs for defense against his enemies, ver. 1-9. Describes their wickedness, ver. 10- 12. Prays for deliverance from them, and rests in hope, ver. 13-15. A prayer of David.

1. The right - Regard my righteous cause.

2. Sentence - Judgment on my behalf. Come - From thy tribunal.

3. Proved - Or, searched or tried it, by many temptations and afflictions. Night - When mens minds being freed from the distraction of business, and from the society of men, they act more vigourously and freely, according to their several inclinations. Tried - As gold-smiths do metals. Nothing - Nothing of unrighteousness. Purposed - I have resolved, upon deliberation, as the word implies. Mouth - I am so far from practicing against Saul's life, as they charge me, that I will not wrong him so much as in a word.

4. Concerning - Observing the works of the men of this age, how wicked they are, I was resolved to take more care in ordering my own actions. By - By the help of thy blessed word. Paths - The customs and practices. Destroyer - Or, of the violent man: such as Saul, and his courtiers and soldiers.

7. By - By thy great power.

10. They - They live in splendour and prosperity.

11. Steps - In all our ways. We go from place to place, to rocks, and caves, and woods; but wheresoever we go they are at hand, and ready to surround us. Eyes - They keep their eyes fixed upon us. Bowing - Couching down upon the earth, that they may watch the fittest opportunity to surprize us.

13. Sword - Thy instrument to execute vengeance upon thine enemies. Do not punish me with this rod: let me fall into thy hands, and not into the hands of men.

14. Thy hand - Wherewith thou dost correct me. World - Who set their hearts upon this world, and neither have, nor desire any other portion. Belly - Mind or appetite, as that word is used, Job

xx, 20. Prov. xx, 30. Treasure - With extraordinary wealth and glory. Children - When many of thy faithful servants are barren, these are blessed with a numerous posterity.

15. I will - I do not place my portion in earthly treasures, but in beholding God's face, in the enjoyment of God's presence and favour; which is enjoyed in part in this life, but not fully. Satisfied - The time is coming, wherein I shall be abundantly satisfied with beholding thy face. Awake - When I arise from he dead. Likeness - With the image of God stamped upon my glorified soul.

## 18

David triumphs in God, ver. 1-3. Praises God for his past deliverances, ver. 4-19. Takes the comfort of his integrity, which God had thereby cleared up, ver. 20-28. Gives God the glory of all his victories, ver. 29-42. Express his hope of what God would do farther, ver. 43-50. This psalm with some few and small variations, is written, 2 Sam. xxii, 1-51. It was composed by David towards the end of his life, upon the occasion here mentioned. To the chief musician, A psalm of David, the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of this song, in the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul, and he said: Title of the psalm. Servant - Who esteems it a greater honour to be thy servant, than to be king of Israel. Saul - After the death of Saul, and the conquest of all his succeeding enemies, and his own firm establishment in his kingdom.

1. Love - Most affectionately, and with my whole soul; as the Hebrew word signifies.

2. Rock - To which I flee for refuge, as the Israelites did to their rocks. Horn - It is a metaphor from those beasts whose strength lies in their horns.

4. Death - Dangerous and deadly troubles. Floods - Their multitude, and strength, and violent assaults, breaking in upon me like a flood.

5. Sorrows - Which brought me to the brink of the grave. Death - Had almost taken hold of me, before I was aware.

6. Temple - Out of his heavenly habitation.

7. Then - Then God appeared on my behalf in a glorious manner, to the terror and confusion of all mine enemies, which is here compared to an earthquake.

8. There went, &c. - All these seem to be figurative expressions, denoting the greatness of his anger.

9. Bowed - By producing thick and dark clouds, whereby the heavens seem to come down to the earth. Came - Not by change of place, but by the manifestation of his presence and power on my behalf.

10. Cherub - Or, upon the cherubim, upon the angels, who are also called God's chariots, chap. lxviii, 17, upon which he is said to sit and ride. All which is not to be understood grossly, but only to denote God's using the ministry of angels, in raising such storms and tempests. Fly - As swiftly as the wind.

11. Darkness - He covered himself with dark clouds. Waters - Watery vapors.

12. At - His glorious and powerful appearance. Passed - Or, passed away, vanished, being dissolved into showers.

14. Arrows - Lightnings. Them - Mine enemies.

15. Discovered - By mighty earthquakes, which overturned the earth, and made its lower parts visible.

18. Prevented - They had almost surprized me.

19. Brought - Out of my straits and difficulties, into a state of freedom and comfort. So he ascribes all his mercies to God's good pleasure, as the first spring of them.

20. Righteousness - Just cause. The innocency of my actions towards Saul, from whose blood I kept my hands pure.

22. Judgments - I diligently studied and considered them.

24. Iniquity - From that sin which I was most inclined or tempted to.

25. Upright - Thou metest to every one the same measure, which he meteth out to others; and therefore thou wilt perform mercy and truth, to those who are merciful and true to others.

26. Pure - Free from the least mixture or appearance of unrighteousness, or unfaithfulness. Froward - Thou wilt cross him and walk contrary to him.

28. Lightest - Given me safety, and comfort, and glory, and posterity also.

29. Troop - Broken through the armed troops of mine enemies. Wall - I have scaled the walls of their strongest cites.

30. Perfect - His providence, though it may sometimes be dark, yet is always wise and just, and unblameable. Tried - The truth of God's promises is approved by innumerable experiences.

31. Who - Our Lord is the only God, and therefore there is none, that can hinder him from accomplishing his own work.

32. Perfect - Perfectly plain and smooth, and clear from impediments.

33. High-places - Confirms me in that high estate into which he hath advanced me.

35. Salvation - Thy protection, which hath been to me like a shield. Held - Kept me from, falling into those mischiefs, which mine enemies designed. Gentleness - Thy clemency, whereby thou hast pardoned my sins; thy grace and benignity.

36. Slipt - As they are apt to do in narrow and uneven ways.

43. People - From contentions, and seditions, under Saul, and Ishbosheth, and Absalom. Heathens - Of the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Syrians, and others. Not known - Even barbarous and remote nations.

44. Hear - As soon as they understand my will and pleasure, they shall instantly comply with it.

45. Close places - Out of their strong holds, where they shall lurk for fear of me.

46. The Lord - He and he only is the true living God.

48. Violent man - From Saul: whom for honour's sake he forbears to mention.

49. Heathen - David is here transported beyond himself, and speaks this in special relation to Christ who was to be his seed, and of whom he was an eminent type, and by whom alone this was done. And therefore this is justly applied to him, and to his calling of the Gentiles, Rom. xv, 9.

50. His king - To the king whom God himself chose and anointed, and to all his posterity; and especially to the Messiah, who is called David's seed, Acts xiii, 23 Rom. i, 3.

**19**

The book of the creatures shews us the power and Godhead of the Creator, ver. 1-6. The book of the scriptures shews us his will; the excellency thereof, ver. 7-11. A prayer against sin, ver. 12, 14. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

1. The heavens - They are as a legible book, wherein he that runs may read it. The glory - His eternal power and Godhead, his infinite wisdom and goodness. Firmament - Or, the expansion, all the vast space extended from the earth to the highest heavens, with all its goodly furniture.

2. Day - Every day and night repeats these demonstrations of God's glory. Uttereth - Or, poureth forth, constantly and abundantly, as a fountain doth water; So this Hebrew word signifies. Knowledge - Gives us a clear knowledge or discovery of God their author.

3. Heard - Or, understood; there are divers nations in the world, which have several languages, so that one cannot discourse with, or be understood by another, but the heavens are such an universal teacher, that they can speak to all people, and be clearly understood by all.

4. Line - Their lines, the singular number being put for the plural. And this expression is very proper, because the heavens do not teach men audibly, or by speaking to their ears, but visibly by propounding things to their eyes, which is done in lines or writings. Gone - Is spread abroad. Earth - So as to be seen and read, by all the inhabitants of the earth. Words - Their magnificent structure, their exquisite order, and most regular course, by which they declare their author, no less than men discover their minds by their words. Sun - Which being the most illustrious and useful of all the heavenly bodies, is here particularly mentioned.

5. Bridegroom - Gloriously adorned with light as with a beautiful garment, and smiling upon the world with a pleasant countenance. Chamber - In which he is poetically supposed to have rested all night, and thence to break forth as it were on a sudden. Strong man - Conscious and confident of his own strength.

6. The ends - His course is constant from east to west, and thence to the east again. So that there is no part of the earth which doth not one time or other feel the benefit of his light and heat.

7. The law - The doctrine delivered to his church, whether by Moses, or by other prophets. Having discoursed hitherto of the glory of God shining forth in, the visible heavens, he now proceeds to another demonstration of God's glory, which he compares with and prefers before the former. Perfect - Completely discovering both the nature and will of God, and the whole duty of man, what he is to believe and practice, and whatsoever is necessary to his present and eternal happiness. Whereas the creation, although it did declare so much of God, as left all men without excuse, yet did not fully manifest the will of God, nor bring men to eternal salvation. Converting - From sin to God, from whom all men are naturally revolted. Testimony - His law, so called because it is a witness between God and man, what God requires of man, and what upon the performance of that condition, he will do for man. Sure - Hebrew. faithful or true, which is most necessary in a witness: it will not mislead any man, but will infallibly bring him to happiness. Simple - Even persons of the lowest capacities.

8. Right - Both in themselves, and in their effect, as guiding men in the ready way to eternal happiness. Rejoicing - By the discoveries of God's love to sinful men, in offers and promises of

mercy. Commandment - All his commands. Pure - Without the least mixture of error. The eyes - Of the mind, with a compleat manifestation of God's will and man's duty: both which, the works of nature, and all the writings of men discover but darkly and imperfectly.

9. The fear - The law and word of God, because it is both the object and the rule, and the cause of holy fear. Clean - Sincere, not adulterated with any mixture. Constant and unchangeable, the same for substance in all ages. Judgments - God's laws are frequently called his judgments, because they are the declarations of his righteous will, and as it were his judicial sentence by which he expects that men should govern themselves, and by which he will judge them at the last day.

12. Who - Thy law, O Lord, is holy and just and good. But I fall infinitely short of it. Cleanse - Both by justification, through the blood of thy son; and by sanctification thro' thy Holy Spirit. Though the first may seem to be principally intended, because he speaks of his past sins. Secret - From the guilt of such sins as were secret either, from others; such as none knows but God and my own conscience: or, from myself; such as I never observed, or did not discern the evil of. Pardon my unknown sins, of which I never repented particularly, as I should have done.

13. Presumptuous - From known and evident sins, such as are committed against knowledge, against the checks of conscience, and the motions of God's spirit. Dominion - If I be at any time tempted to such sins, Lord let them not prevail over me, and if I do fall into them, let me speedily rise again.

14. Let - Having prayed that God would keep him from sinful actions, he now prays that God would govern, and sanctify his words and thoughts: and this was necessary to preserve him from presumptuous sins, which have their first rise in the thoughts. Redeemer - This expression seems to be added emphatically, and with special respect to Christ, to whom alone this word Goel can properly belong.

## 20

A prayer for the king, ver. 1-4. The king and the people rejoice in God, and pray for his help, ver. 5-9. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

1. God of Jacob - God had made a covenant with Jacob and his posterity.

2. Sanctuary - From the tabernacle in Zion, where the ark then was; toward which the Israelites directed their prayers.

5. Rejoice - Hereby they shew their confidence in God, and their assurance of the victory. Name - To the honour of God. Set up - In way of triumph.

6. Now - We are already sure of victory by the consideration of God's power and faithfulness and love to David, and to his people. They speak as one person, because they were unanimous in this prayer. Saveth - Will certainly save. Strength - This shews how God will hear him, even by saving him with a strong hand.

7. Remember - Trust in it.

8. Brought down - From their horses and chariots, to which they trusted. Stand - Stand firmly, and keep the field.

9. Let the king - God, the supreme monarch, the king of kings, and in a peculiar manner the king of Israel.

**21**

A thanksgiving for blessings received, ver. 1-6. An expression of confidence in God, ver. 7-13. To the chief musician, A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Of David - The subject of this psalm is the same with the former, both being made for the peoples use, concerning the king. Only the prayers there used, are here turned into praises, for the blessings received in answer to their prayers. And as David was an illustrious type of Christ, so in many of these expressions he looks beyond himself to Christ, in whom they are properly, and fully accomplished.

3. Prevent - Crowning him with manifold blessings, both more and sooner than he expected. With - With excellent blessings.

4. For ever - Thou gavest him a long life and reign here, and after that didst translate him to live with thee for ever. But this was more eminently fulfilled in Christ, who asked of his father, life, or to be saved from death, Heb. v, 7, though with submission to his will: but his father, though he saw it necessary to take away his temporal life, yet instantly gave him another, far more noble, even the perfect possession of an everlasting life both in his soul and body, at his right hand.

5. Glory - His fame or renown. Salvation - By reason of those great and glorious deliverances which thou hast wrought both for him, and by him.

6. Countenance - Smiling upon him, by thy grace and favour.

9. Oven - Like wood, which when it is cast in there, is quickly consumed.

10. Fruit - Their children. God will take away both root and branch, the parents and all that wicked race.

11. Thee - Against God, not directly, but by consequence, because it was against David, whom God had anointed, and against the Lord's people, whose injuries God takes as done to himself.

13. Exalted - By thy own power, or by the manifestation thereof.

**22**

It is confessed that David was a type of Christ, and that many passages of the Psalms, though literally understood of David, yet had a further and mystical reference to Christ. But there are some other passages, which were directly, and immediately intended for, and are properly to be understood of the Messiah; though withal there may be some respect and allusion to the state of the penman himself. And this seems to be the state of this psalm, which is understood of the Messiah, by the Hebrew doctors themselves, and by Christ himself and by his apostles. And there are many passages in it, which were literally accomplished in him, and cannot be understood of any other. In this psalm David speaks of the humiliation of Christ, ver. 1-21. Of the exaltation of Christ, ver. 22-31. To the

chief musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Shahar - This was the title of some musical instrument, name, or song, which was usually sung in the morning.

1. My God - Who art my friend and father, though now thou frownest upon me. The repetition denotes, the depth of his distress, which made him cry so earnestly. Forsaken - Withdrawn the light of thy countenance, the supports and comforts of thy spirit, and filled me with the terrors of thy wrath: this was in part verified in David, but much more fully in Christ. Roaring - My out-cries forced from me, by my miseries.

3. But thou art - Just and true in all thy ways, this he adds to strengthen his faith, and to enforce his prayers, and prevail with God for the honour of his holy name, to hear and help him. Inhabitest - Whom thy people are perpetually praising.

6. A worm - Neglected and despised. People - Not only of the great men, but also of the common people. Which doth not so truly agree to David as to Christ.

7. Shoot out - They gape with their mouths, in mockery. This and the next verse are applied to Christ, Matt. xxvii, 39, 43.

12. Bulls - Wicked and violent, and potent enemies; for such are so called, Ezek xxxix, 18 Amos iv, 1. Of Bashan - As the cattle there bred were, and therefore fierce and furious.

14. Water - My spirits are spent and gone like water which once spilt can never be recovered; my very flesh is melted within me, and I am become as weak as water. Bones - I am as unable to help myself, and as full of torment, as if all my bones were disjointed. Wax - Melted, through fear and overwhelming grief.

15. Dried - I have in a manner no more moisture left in me, than is in a dry potsherd. Cleaveth - Through excessive thirst and drought. Death - Thy providence, delivering me into the power of mine enemies, and by thy terrors in my soul.

16. Dogs - So he calls his enemies for their insatiable greediness, and implacable fierceness against him. Pierced - These words cannot with any probability be applied to David, but were properly and literally verified in Christ.

17. May tell - By my being stretched out upon the cross.

18. They part - This also cannot be applied to David, but was literally fulfilled in Christ, Matt. xxvii, 35 John xix, 24.

20. Darling - Hebrew. my only one; his soul, which he so calls, because it was left alone and destitute of friends and helpers.

21. Heard - Answered and delivered me.

22. Declare - When thou hast delivered me. Thy name - that power and faithfulness and goodness, which thou hast manifested on my behalf. Congregations - The same whom he calls the congregation, and the seed of Jacob and Israel: which also does not so fitly agree to David, who never gives this title to any, but such as were near a-kin to him, as it does to Christ, who extends this name to all his disciples, Matt. xii, 48, 49, and to whom this very text is applied, Heb. ii, 11, 12.

24. Abhorred - He did not turn away his face from it, as men do from things which they abhor. From him - For ever: tho' he did so for a time.

25. Great congregation - In the universal church, of Jews and Gentiles.

26. Satisfied - This is doubtless to be understood, of those spiritual blessings, that grace and peace, and comfort, which all believing souls have in the sense of God's love, the pardon of their sins, and the influences of God's spirit. Seek him - That seek his favour. Your heart - He speaks of the same persons still, though there be a change from the third to the second person, as is usual in these poetical books. For ever - Your comfort shall not be short and transitory, as worldly comforts are, but everlasting.

27. The world - All nations from one end of the world to the other. So this is an evident prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, and a clear proof, that this psalm immediately speaks of Christ; to whom alone, this and divers other passages of it, belong. Remember - They shall remember their former wickedness with grief and shame, and fear; particularly in worshiping dead and impotent idols. They shall remember their great and manifold obligation to God, which they had quite forgotten, his patience in sparing them so long, in the midst of all their impieties, and in giving his son for them: they shall remember the gracious words and glorious works of Christ, what he did, and suffered for them; which possibly divers of them had been eye and ear-witnesses of. The Lord - Into the only true God, and unto Jesus Christ, to whom this name of Jehovah is often ascribed in scripture.

28. For - This is added as a reason, why the Gentiles should be converted, because God is not only God and the Lord of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles, and of all nations.

29. Fat - Kings and princes, and the great men of the world. Shall eat - Shall feed upon the bread of life, Christ and all his benefits. Worship - This is added to shew what kind of eating he spoke of. Go down - That is, all mankind, for none can escape death.

30. A seed - Christ shall not want a seed or posterity, for though the Jewish nation will generally reject him, the Gentiles shall come in their stead. A generation - That believing seed shall be reputed both by God and men, The generation, or people of the Lord, as the Jews formerly were.

31. They - The seed last mentioned. Come - From Judea and Jerusalem (from whence the gospel was first to go forth) to the Gentile world, to the several parts whereof the apostles went upon this errand. His - God's righteousness: his wonderful grace and mercy unto mankind, in giving them Christ and the gospel; for righteousness is often put for mercy or kindness. Unto - Unto succeeding generations. Whereby David gives us a key to understand this psalm, and teaches us that he speaks not here of himself, but of things which were to be done in after-ages, even of the spreading of the gospel among the Gentiles, in the time of the New Testament. That he - They shall declare that this is the work of God, and not of man.

## 23

David extolls the goodness of God as his shepherd, and expresses his confidence in him, ver. 1-6. A psalm of David.

2. Lie down - To repose myself at noon, as the manner was in those hot countries. Green - Where there is both delight and plenty of provisions.

3. Restoreth - Hebrew. He bringeth it back; from its errors and wandering. For - Not for any worth in me, but for the glory of his justice, and faithfulness, and goodness.

4. Thy rod and thy staff - Two words denoting the same thing, and both designing God's pastoral care over him.

5. A table - Thou furnishest me with plenty of provisions and comforts. Oil - With aromatic ointments, which were then used at great feasts; thy comforts delight my soul. Runneth over - Thou hast given me a plentiful portions, signified by the cup, given to the guests by the master of the feast.

**24**

This psalm is generally thought to have been composed by David, upon bringing the ark of God from the house of Obed- edom, into the tabernacle which David had built for it, 2 Sam. vi, 12, 17. Wherein he hath a farther prospect to the temple, which he earnestly desired and intended to build. Moreover because the tabernacle, and temple, and ark, were types of Christ, and of his church and of heaven. David extended his thoughts to them also, or at least the Holy Ghost designed to comprehend them under these typical expressions. He shews God's sovereignty over the world, ver. 1, 2. Who shall receive his blessing, ver. 3-6. An exhortation to receive Christ, ver. 7-10. A psalm of David.

2. Seas - The whole collection of waters, as well as the sea and the rivers running into it, as that great abyss of waters which is contained in the bowels of the earth.

3. The hill - Zion or Moriah, the place of God's sanctuary and special presence. Having asserted God's dominion over all mankind, he now proposes an important question, by whom God will be served, and his blessing enjoyed? Stand - To minister before him. Standing is the posture of ministers or servants. Who shall serve God, with God's acceptation. Holy place - In the place which he hath sanctified for his service.

4. He - Whose actions and conversation are holy and unblameable. Pure heart - Careful to approve itself to God, as well as to men; ordering a man's very thoughts and affections according to God's word. Vanity - Who doth not value or desire the vain things of this life, such as honours, riches, pleasures; but makes God his portion.

5. The blessing - Grace and glory, and all other good things.

6. The generation - The true progeny which God regards. Face - His grace and favour, which is often called God's face.

7. Lift up - He speaks here of the gates and doors of the temple, which by faith and the spirit of prophecy, he beheld as already built, whose doors he calls Everlasting, not so much because they were made of strong and durable materials, as in opposition to those of the tabernacle, which were removed from place to place. These gates he bids lift up their heads, or tops, by allusion to those gates which have a portcullis, which may be let down or taken up. And as the temple was a type of Christ, and of his church, and of heaven itself; so this place may also contain a representation, either of Christ's entrance into his church, or into the hearts of his faithful people, who are here

commanded to set open their hearts and souls for his reception: or of his ascension into heaven, where the saints or angels are poetically introduced as preparing the way, and opening the heavenly gates to receive their Lord and king, returning to his royal habitation with triumph and glory. The king - The Messiah, the king of Israel, and of his church, called the King, or Lord of glory, 1 Cor. ii, 8 James ii, 1, both for that glory which is inherent in him, and that which is purchased by him for his members.

8. The Lord - He is no ordinary person, no other than Jehovah, who hath given so many proofs of his almightiness, who hath subdued all his enemies, and is now returned in triumph.

9. Lift up - The same verse is repeated again, to awaken the dulness of mankind, who are so hardly brought to a serious preparation for such solemnities; and to signify the great importance of the matter, contained under these expressions.

10. Of hosts - Under whose command are all the hosts of heaven and earth, angels and men, and all other creatures.

## 25

David distrest, takes refuge in God, ver. 1-7. Shews the goodness of God to them that fear him, ver. 8-15. Prays for help against his enemies, and for the church, ver. 16-22. A psalm of David.

2. Ashamed - Disappointed of my hope.

3. Cause - Without any provocation of mine.

4. Teach - Teach me my duty, and cause me to keep close to it, notwithstanding all temptations.

8. Upright - Holy and true, in all his declarations and offers of mercy to sinners. Therefore - He will not be wanting to such poor sinners as I am, but will guide them into the way of life and peace.

9. The meek - Such as meekly submit themselves to God, and are desirous to be directed and governed by him. Judgment - In the paths of judgment, in the right way.

10. Paths - All the dealings of God with them, yea even those that are afflictive, are done in kindness and faithfulness to them.

11. For - Or, though (as this particle is often rendered) it be great. Possibly he speaks of his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba. Great - Or, much or manifold. For the Hebrew word signifies both great and much.

12. Chuse - Which God appointeth.

13. At ease - Hebrew. in Good; in the possession and enjoyment of the true good. The land - Canaan; which was given as an earnest of the whole Covenant of Grace, and all its promises.

14. The secret - His love and favour, which is called his secret, Job xxix, 4 Prov. iii, 32, because it is known to none but him that enjoyeth it. Will shew - He will make them clearly to understand it, both its duties and its blessings; neither of which ungodly men rightly understand.

15. Pluck - He will deliver me out of all my troubles.

20. Soul - My life.

22. Israel - If thou wilt not help me, yet spare thy people who suffer for my sake, and in my sufferings.

**26**

David professes his integrity, ver. 1-8. Deprecates the doom of the wicked, ver. 9, 10. Casts himself upon the mercy of God, ver. 11, 12. A psalm of David.

1. Trusted - I have committed my cause and affairs to thee.

3. For - I dare appeal to thee, because thou knowest I have a deep sense of thy loving-kindness, by which I have been led to love and obey thee.

4. Sat - Continued with them. I have been so far from an imitation of their wicked courses, that I have avoided their company. Vain - With false and deceitful persons. Go in - Into their company.

6. Compass - Approach to thine altar with my sacrifices: which I could not do with any comfort, if I were conscious of those crimes, whereof mine enemies accuse me.

8. House - Thy sanctuary and worship. honour - Thy glorious and gracious presence.

9. Gather not - Do not bind me up in the same bundle, or put me into the same accursed condition with them.

12. Standeth - I stand upon a sure and solid foundation, being under the protection of God's promise, and his almighty and watchful providence. Congregations - I will not only privately, but in the assemblies of thy people celebrate thy praise.

**27**

David declares his confidence in God, ver. 1-3. His desire to be in the house of God, ver. 4-6. He prays for light and salvation, ver. 7-12. And exhorts others to wait upon God, ver. 13, 14. A psalm of David.

2. Light - My counsellor in all my difficulties, and my comforter and deliverer in all my distresses. Strength - The supporter and preserver of my life.

3. In this - That God is my light.

4. Dwell. &c. - Have opportunity of constant attendance upon God. To behold - That there I may delight myself, in the contemplation of thy amiable and glorious majesty, and of thy infinite wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, and mercy.

5. The secret - In his tabernacle, into which mine enemies cannot come. He alludes to the ancient custom of offenders, who used to flee to the tabernacle or altar. Rock - A place high and inaccessible.

9. Away - From thy face or presence, or from the place of thy worship.

11. Because of - That I may neither fall into their hands by my folly, nor give them any occasion of triumphing over me.

13. The living - David was thus earnestly desirous of this mercy in this life, not because he placed his portion in these things; but because the truth and glory of God, were highly concerned in making good the promise of the kingdom to him.

**28**

A prayer for help, ver. 1-3. The doom of the wicked, ver. 4, 5. A thanksgiving, closed with prayer, ver. 6-9. A psalm of David.

2. Towards - Towards the holy of holies, because there the ark was; from whence God gave oracular answers to his people.

3. Draw not - Do not drag me; as thou dost these, to execution and destruction.

5. Regard not - The providential works of God towards his people.

7. I am helped - He speaks of it as past, because God assured him by his spirit, that he had heard and accepted his prayers.

**29**

It is probable David wrote this psalm, during a storm of thunder, lightning, and rain; as that he wrote the eighth in a moon- shining night, and the nineteenth in a sun-shining morning. He calls on the great to give glory to God, ver. 1, 2. Observes his power in thunder and lightning, Ver. 3-9. His dominion over the world and care over the church, ver. 10, 11. A psalm of David.

1. Ye - Ye potentates and rulers of the earth. Glory - By an humble and thankful acknowledgment of it.

2. Give, &c. - The honour which he deserves: own him as the Almighty, and the only true God. Holiness - Or, in his holy and beautiful house.

3. The waters - Above in the clouds, which are called waters, Gen. i, 7 chap. xviii, 11. The Divine power displays itself in those high places, which are far above the reach of all earthly potentates. Many - Upon the clouds, in which there are vast treasures of water, and upon which God is said to sit or ride, chap. xviii, 10, 11; civ, 3.

5. Lebanon - A place famous for strong and lofty cedars.

6. Them - The cedars; which being broken by the thunder, the parts of them are suddenly and violently hurled hither and thither. Sirion - An high mountain beyond Jordan joining to Lebanon. Lebanon and Sirion are said to skip or leap, both here, and chap. cxiv, 4, by a poetical hyperbole.

7. The flames - The lightnings.

8. Kadesh - An eminent wilderness, vast and terrible, and well known to the Israelites, and wherein possibly they had seen, and observed some such effects of thunder.

9. To calve - Through the terror it causes, which hastens the birth. He names the hinds, because they bring forth their young with difficulty, Job xxxix, 1, 2. Discovereth - Hebrew. maketh bare, of its trees, which it breaks or strips of their leaves. Glory - Having shewed the terrible effects of God's power in other places, he now shews the blessed privilege of God's people, that are praising God in his temple, when the rest of the world are trembling under the tokens of his displeasure.

10. The flood - The most violent waters, which sometimes fall from the clouds upon the earth. These are fitly mentioned, as being many times the companions of great thunders. And this may be alleged as another reason, why God's people praised him in his temple, because as he sends terrible tempests and thunders, so he also restrains and over-rules them. Sitteth - He doth sit, and will sit as king for ever, sending such tempests when it pleaseth him.

## 30

He praises God for delivering him, and exhorts others to praise him, ver. 1-5. Recollects his former security, and his prayer when in trouble, ver. 6-10. And stirs himself up to thankfulness, ver. 11, 12. A Psalm and song, at the dedication of the house of David. Title of the psalm. Song - A psalm to be sung with the voice to an instrument. David - At the dedication of David's house, which was built, 2 Sam. v, 11, and doubtless was dedicated, as God had commanded.

5. Cometh - Speedily and in due season.

7. Mountain - My kingdom: kingdoms are usually called mountains in prophetical writings.

9. Profit - What wilt thou gain by it? The dust - Shall they that are dead celebrate thy goodness in the land of the living? Or, shall my dust praise thee?

11. Sackcloth - Given me occasion to put off that sackcloth, which they used to wear in times of mourning, Esth iv, 1 chap. xxxv, 13 Isaiah xxxii, 11 Joel i, 13. Girded - With joy, as with a garment, surrounding me on every side.

12. My glory - My tongue.

## 31

David professes his confidence in God, intermixing prayer to him, ver. 1-8. Complains to God and prays for deliverance, ver. 9-18. Concludes with giving glory to God, and encouraging others to trust him, ver. 19-24. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

1. Ashamed - Of my confidence in thy promise. Deliver me - According to thy faithfulness and goodness.

5. My spirit - My soul or life; to preserve it from the malice of mine enemies. For - Thou hast delivered me formerly, and therefore I commit myself to thee for the future. O Lord, &c. - Who hast shewed thyself so, in making good thy promise.

6. Vanities - Idols, which are often called Vanities, as Deut. xxxii, 21. Or, curious arts, and all sorts of divinations.

7. Known - Loved me, and cared for me.

8. Room - Made way for me to escape, when I was encompassed by them.

9. Grief - With continual weeping.

10. Iniquity - For the punishment of mine iniquity. Consumed - The juice and marrow of them bring almost dried up with grief.

11. A fear - They were afraid to give me any countenance or assistance. Fled - To prevent their own danger and ruin.

12. A broken vessel - Which is irreparable, and useless, and therefore despised by all.

13. Fear - Just cause of fear.

15. My times - All the affairs and events of my life, are wholly in thy power.

19. Laid up - His favour is not always manifested, to them, but it is laid up for them in his treasure, whence it shall be drawn forth when they need it, and he sees it fit. Before - Publickly and in the view of the world.

20. The secret - Or, as in the secret of thy presence: either,

1. As if they were in thy presence chamber, where thine own eye and hand girdeth them, from all the assaults of their enemies; called his secret, partly, because the greatest part of the world are strangers to God and his presence: and partly, because it is a safe and secure place, such as secret and unknown places are. Or,
2. As if they were in the secret of God's tabernacle, as it is called, chap. xxvii, 5, the place of God's special presence, where none might enter save the high-priest. With thy secret favour and providence, which saves them by hidden and unknown methods. From - From their vain-glorious boasting and threats, and from their bad and insolent attempts. Pavilion - Or, tabernacle. Strife - From contentious and slandering tongues.

21. City - In Keilah: where God wonderfully preserved me.

22. Haste - When my passion took away my consideration, and weakened my faith. Cut off - Cast out of thy sight, and out of the care of thy gracious providence.

## 32

The happiness of them whose sins are forgiven, ver. 1, 2. The necessity of confessing our sins, and of prayer, ver. 3-6. God's promise to them that trust in him, ver. 7-10. An exhortation to rejoice in God, ver. 11. A psalm of David, Maschil. Title of the psalm. Maschil - Or, an instructor. This psalm is fitly so called, because it was composed for the information of the church, in that most important doctrine, the way to true blessedness.

2. Imputeth - Whom God doth not charge with the guilt of his sins, but graciously pardons and accepts him in Christ. No guile - Who freely confesses all his sins, and turns from sin to God with all his heart.

3. Silence - From a full and open confession of my sins. Old - My spirit failed, and the strength of my body decayed. Roaring - Because of the continual horrors of my conscience, and sense of God's wrath.

4. Hand - Thy afflicting hand. My moisture - Was dried up.

5. The iniquity - The guilt of my sin.

6. For this - Upon the encouragement of my example. Found - In an acceptable and seasonable time, while God continues to offer grace and mercy. Waters - In the time of great calamities. Not come - So as to overwhelm him.

8. I will - This and the next verse seems to be the words of God, whom David brings in as returning this answer to his prayers. Mine eye - So Christ did St. Peter, when he turned and looked upon him.

9. Will not - Unless they be forced to it by a bit or bridle. And so all the ancient translators understand it.

10. Sorrows - This is an argument to enforce the foregoing admonition.

## 33

The Psalmist exhorts the righteous to praise God, for his truth, justice and goodness, ver. 1-5, For creating the world, ver. 6-9. For his providence in governing it, ver. 10-17. For his peculiar favour to his people, encouraging them to trust in him, ver. 18-22.

2. Harp, &c. - These instruments were used in the publick worship of God in the tabernacle.

3. A new song - Renewed or continued from day to day.

4. The word - All God's counsels and commands are wise, and just, and good. His works - All his works of providence agree with his word, and are the accomplishment of his promises or threatenings.

5. Goodness - He not only doth no man wrong, but he is kind and merciful to all men.

6. The word - God made this admirable structure of the heavens, and all its glorious stars; not with great pains and time, but with one single word. Host - The angels: or the stars.

7. Store-houses - Either in the clouds, or in the bowels of the earth.

10. The Lord - Thus he passes from the work of creation, to the works of providence, and from the instances of his power, in senseless and irrational creatures, to his power in over-ruling the thoughts and wills, and actions of men, whether single or united.

11. The Counsel - All his purposes and designs are always successful.

13. All men - Although he hath a relation to Israel, yet he hath a general care over all mankind, all whose hearts and ways he observes.

15. Fashioneth - Having said that God sees and observes all men, he now adds, that he rules and governs them; yea, even the hearts which are most unmanageable, he disposes and inclines

according to the counsel of his will. Alike - Or, equally, one as well as another: whether they be Jews or Gentiles, princes or peasants; all are alike subject to his jurisdiction. Their works - Both outward and inward, all the workings of their minds and actions, and all their endeavours and actions.

16. No king - He instances in these, as the most uncontrollable persons in the world, and most confident of themselves. By which he strongly proves his general proposition, of God's powerful providence over all men. By an host - But only by God's providence, who disposes of victory and success, as he pleases, and that frequently to the weakest side.

17. An horse - Though he be strong and fit for battle, or for flight, if need requires. And so this is put for all warlike provisions. Vain things - Hebrew. a lie; because it promises that help and safety which it cannot give.

18. The eye - Whosoever therefore would have safety, must expect it only from the watchful eye, and almighty hand of God. That fear - These are the chief objects of his care and favour. Hope - That place their hope and trust, and happiness, not in any creature, but only in God, and in his mercy and blessings.

## 34

David praises God for his goodness to himself and others, ver. 1-7. Encourages the righteous to trust in him, ver. 8-10. Exhorts them to fear God and depart from evil, ver. 11-14. God's favour to the righteous and displeasure at the wicked, ver. 15-22 A psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech: who drove him away, and he departed. Title of the psalm. When - A psalm made upon that occasion, though not at that time, when he counterfeited madness. Wherein whether he sinned or not, is matter of dispute; but this is undoubted, that his deliverance deserved this solemn acknowledgment. Abimelech - Called Achish, 1 Sam. xxi, 10. But Abimelech seems to have been the common name of the kings of the Philistines, Gen. xx, 2; xxvi, 1, as Pharaoh was of the Egyptians.

2. Shall boast - Shall glory in this, that I have so powerful and so gracious a master. The humble - The righteous.

3. Together - Not in place, for David was now banished from the place of God's publick worship, but in affection: let our souls meet, and let our praises meet in the ears of the all-hearing God.

5. Lightened - Comforted and encouraged. Ashamed - They were not disappointed of their hope.

6. This man - David.

7. The angel - The angels, the singular number being put for the plural.

8. O taste - Make trial, of it by your own experience of it. Good - Merciful and gracious.

9. Fear - Reverence, serve, and trust him: for fear is commonly put for all the parts of God's worship.

12. Life - A long and happy life, begun in this world and continued for ever in the next. Good - In which he may enjoy good, prosperity or happiness.

13. Evil - From all manner of evil speaking, from all injurious, false and deceitful speeches.

14. Depart - From all sin. Do good - Be ready to perform all good offices to all men. Seek - Study by all means possible to live peaceable with all men. Pursue it - Do not only embrace it gladly when it is offered, but follow hard after it, when it seems to flee away from thee.

16. The face - His anger, which discovers itself in the face.

18. Nigh - Ready to hear and succor them. To - Those whose spirits are truly humbled under the hand of God, and the sense of their sins, whose hearts are subdued, and made obedient to God's will and submissive to his providence.

20. Bones - All the parts and members of their bodies.

**35**

David prays for deliverance from his enemies, and prophecies their destruction, ver. 1-10, Describes their wickedness, ver. 11-21. Foretells their confusion, the joy of the righteous, and his own thanksgiving, ver. 22-28. A psalm of David.

3. Say - By thy spirit assuring me of it: and by thy providence effecting it.

6. Their way - By which they flee, being chased.

7. For - Out of mere malice.

10. My bones - My whole body, as well as my soul.

13. Returned - Although my fastings and prayers did them no good.

15. Gathered - They were so full of joy, that they could not contain it in their own breasts, but sought to communicate it to others. Abjects - Or, vile persons, either for the meanness of their condition, or for their wickedness. Knew not - While I had no suspicion of them. Tear me - My good name with calumnies, and reproaches and curses.

16. Mockers - They made themselves buffoons and jesters, and accustomed themselves to mock and deride David, that thereby they might gain admittance to the tables of great men, which was all they sought for.

17. Look on - Without affording me pity or help. Darling - My soul, Hebrew. my only one; which is now left alone and forsaken by my friends, and hath none to trust in but God.

18. I will - When I shall be restored to the liberty of the publick assemblies.

20. For - They breathe out nothing but threatenings and war; they use not open violence but subtile artifices, against me and my followers, who desire nothing more than to live quietly and peaceably.

21. Wide - To pour forth whole floods of scoffs and slanders. \Aha - An expression of joy and triumph. Our eye - What we have long desired and hoped for.

22. This - Thou also hast seen, all their plots and threats, and all my distresses and calamities. Keep not - Be not deaf, to my prayers. The same word signifies, both to be silent, and to be deaf.

23. Awake - To plead my cause against mine adversaries.

## 36

The grievous state of the wicked, ver. 1-4. The goodness of God, ver. 5-9. David prays, in confidence of deliverance, ver. 10- 12. To the chief musician, a psalm of David, the servant of the Lord.

1. No fear - When I consider the manifold transgressions of ungodly men, I conclude within myself, that they have cast off all fear of the Divine majesty.

2. Flattereth - He deceiveth himself with vain persuasions, that God does not mind his sins, or will not punish them. Found - Punish, as the same phrase is used, Num. xxxii, 23.

3. Left off - Once he had some degrees of wisdom, but now he is become an open apostate.

4. Deviseth - Freely, from his own inclination, when none are present to provoke him to it.

5. Thy mercy - Mine enemies are cruel and perfidious, but thou art infinite in mercy, and faithfulness. Heavens - Is infinite and incomprehensible. Faithfulness - The truth both of thy threatenings against thine enemies, and of thy promises made to good men. The clouds - Is far above our reach, greater and higher than we can apprehend.

6. Mountains - Stedfast and unmoveable: eminent and conspicuous to all men. Judgments - The executions of thy counsels. Deep - Unsearchable, as the ocean. Man - The worst of men; yea, the brute-beasts have experience of thy care and kindness.

7. Loving-kindness - Though all thine attributes be excellent, yet, above all, thy mercy is most excellent, or precious and amiable.

8. Satisfied - Who trust in thee, as he now said. Fatness - With those delightful provisions, which thou hast prepared for them in heaven. The river - Which denotes both their plenty, and their perpetuity.

9. Life - It is in God as in a fountain, and from him is derived to us. But - Of that glorious and blessed, and endless life, which alone is worthy of the name. Light - In the light of thy glorious presence, which shall be fully manifested, when we see thee face to face. Light - Joy and comfort, and happiness: the word light is elegantly repeated in another signification; in the former clause it is light discovering, in this light, discovered or enjoyed.

11. The foot - Of my proud and insolent enemies. Come - So as to overthrow me.

12. There - He seems as it were to point at the place, as if it were already done.

## 37

David exhorts to patience and confidence in God, ver. 1-8. Shews the different state of the righteous and the wicked, ver. 9- 40. A psalm of David.

1. Fret not - Because they prosper in their wicked enterprizes.

5. Commit - All thy cares and business, and necessities, commend to God by fervent prayer.

6. Judgment - It shall be as visible to men, as the light of the sun, at noon-day.

7. Rest - Do not repine at his dealings, but quietly submit to his will, and wait for his help.

8. Fret not - Either against the sinner for his success; or against God. Do evil - If grief arise in thee, take care that it do not transport thee to sin.

9. The earth - This for the most part was literally fulfilled in that state of the church.

10. Not be - He shall be dead and gone. Diligently - Industriously seeking him. His place - His place and estate, and glory.

11. But - Those who patiently bear God's afflicting hand, and meekly pass by injuries. Peace - Partly of outward peace and prosperity, which God in his due time will give them: but principally of inward peace, in the sense of God's favour and the assurance of endless happiness.

13. His day - The day appointed by God for his punishment or destruction.

18. Knoweth - Observes with care and affection. The days - All things which befall them, their dangers and fears, and suffering. For ever - To them and their seed for ever: and when they die their inheritance is not lost, but exchanged for one infinitely better.

20. Fat - Which in an instant melts before the fire.

23. Established - So that he shall not fall into mischief.

24. Fall - Into trouble.

25. Forsaken - These temporal promises, were more express to the Jews in the times of the Old Testament, than to Christians.

26. Blessed - Not only with spiritual, but with temporal blessings.

27. Dwell - Thou shalt dwell in the land, and afterwards in heaven.

30. The mouth - Having shewed, God's singular care over the righteous, he proceeds to give a character of them. Judgment - Of God's judgment, word or law.

31. Heart - His thoughts, meditations and affections are fixed upon it. Slide - Slide, or swerve, from the rule, from God's law.

35. Bay-tree - Which is continually green and flourishing even in winter.

36. Yet - He was gone in an instant. But - There was no monument or remainder of him left.

37. Peace - Though he may meet with troubles in his way, yet all shall end well.

38. Together - All without exception.

## 38

David complains of God's displeasure and his own sin, ver. 1-5. Of his bodily sickness, ver. 6-10. Of the unkindness of his friends and the injuries of his enemies, ver. 11-20. Prays to God for help, ver. 21, 22. A psalm of David to bring to remembrance. Title of the psalm. To bring, &c. - Either, to God, that by this humble and mournful prayer, he might prevail with God, to remember and pity him; or, to himself, that by reviewing this psalm afterwards, he might call to mind his former danger and misery, and God's wonderful mercy in delivering him; and that others also might remember what God had done to him.

2. Arrows - Thy judgments outward and inward.

3. Sin - Which hath provoked thee to deal thus severely with me.

4. Iniquities - Or, the punishment of mine iniquities, as this word is frequently used. Are gone - Like deep waters wherewith I am overwhelmed.

5. Foolishness - Sin.

7. Disease - The disease might be some burning fever, breaking forth outwardly in carbuncles, or boils. It is true, this and the other expressions may be taken figuratively, but we should not forsake the literal sense of the words without necessity.

12. Deceit - They design mischief, but cover it with fair pretenses.

13. Dumb - Was silent, to testify his humiliation for his sins, and his acceptation of the punishment which he had brought upon himself.

16. When - When I fall into any misery, they triumph in the accomplishment of their desires.

17. To halt - just falling into destruction. Before me - I am constantly sensible of thy just hand, and of my sins the cause of it.

18. Declare - To thee.

19. Strong - Are thriving and flourishing.

## 39

David relates the struggle which had been in his breast, ver. 1-3. He meditates on man's frailty and mortality, ver. 4-6. He prays for pardon, deliverance from trouble, and respite from death, ver. 7-13. To the chief musician, even to Jeduthun, A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Jeduthun - One of the three chief masters of the sacred musick, 1 Chron. xvi, 41, 42.

1. I said - I fully resolved. Take heed - To order all my actions right, and particularly to govern my tongue.

2. Dumb - Two words put together, expressing the same thing, to aggravate or increase it. I held - I forbear to speak, what I justly might, lest I should break forth into some indecent expressions. Stirred - My silence did not assuage my grief, but increase it.

4. My end - Make me sensible of the shortness and uncertainly of life, and the near approach of death.

5. Before thee - If compared with thee, and with thy everlasting duration.

6. Vain shew - Hebrew. in a shadow or image; in an imaginary rather than a real life: in the pursuit of vain imaginations, in which there is nothing solid or satisfactory: man in and his life, and all his happiness in this world, are rather appearances and dreams, than truths and realities. Disquieted - Hebrew. They make a noise, bustling, or tumult, with unwearied industry seeking for riches, and troubling and vexing both themselves and others in the pursuit of them.

7. Mow Lord - Seeing this life and all its enjoyments are so vain and short. My hope - I will seek for happiness no where but in God.

10. Remove - Take off the judgment which thou hast inflicted upon me. I am - Help me before I am utterly lost.

11. Beauty - His comeliness and all his excellencies or felicities. Moth - As a moth consumeth a garment, to which God compares himself and his judgments, secretly and insensibly consuming a people, Isaiah li, 8.

12. A stranger - I am only in my journey or passage to my real home, which is in the other world.

13. No more - Among the living, or in this world.

**40**

This psalm is a celebration of God's great goodness to him, and all his people. In it there are some passages which cannot belong to Christ, and some which do not properly belong to David, or to that time and state of the church, but only to Christ, and to the times of the New Testament. He praises God for delivering him out of deep distress, ver. 1-5. Thence takes occasion to speak of the work of our redemption by Christ, ver. 6- 10. Prays for mercy and grace both for himself and for his brethren, ver. 11-17. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

2. Pit - Desperate dangers and calamities. Rock - A place of strength and safety. Established - Kept me from falling into mischief.

3. And fear - Shall stand in awe of that God, whom they see to have so great power, either to save or to destroy.

4. The proud - Or, the mighty, the great and proud potentates of the world, to whom most men are apt to look and trust. Turn - From God, in whom alone they ought to trust. To lies - To lying vanities, such as worldly power and wisdom, and riches, and all other earthly things, or persons, in which men are prone to trust: which are called lies, because they promise more than they perform.

5. Many - This verse seems to be interposed as a wall of partition, between that which David speaks in his own person, and that which he speaks in the person of the Messiah, in the following verses.

6. Sacrifice - These and the following words, may in an improper sense belong to the time of David; when God might be said, not to desire or require legal sacrifices comparatively. Thou didst desire obedience rather than sacrifices, but in a proper sense, they belong only to the person and times of the Messiah, and so the sense is, God did not desire or require them, for the satisfaction of his own justice, and the expiation of mens sins, which could not possibly be done by the blood of bulls or goats, but only by the blood of Christ, which was typified by them, and which Christ came into the world to shed, in pursuance of his father's will, as it here follows, ver. 7, 8. So here is a prediction concerning the cessation of the legal sacrifice, and the substitution of a better instead of them. Opened - Hebrew. bored. I have devoted myself to thy perpetual service, and thou hast accepted of me as such, and signified so much by the boring of mine ears, according to the law and custom in that case, Exod. xxi, 5, 6. The seventy Jewish interpreters, whom the apostle follows, Heb. x, 5, translate these words, a body hast thou prepared me.

7. Them - These words literally and truly belong to Christ, and the sense is this; seeing thou requirest a better sacrifice than those of the law, lo, I offer myself to come, and I will in due time

come, into the world, as this phrase is explained in divers places of scripture, and particularly Heb. x, 5, where this place is expressly applied to Christ. Volume - These two words, volume and book are used of any writing, and both express the same thing. Now this volume of the book is the law of Moses, which is commonly and emphatically called the book, and was made up in the form of a roll or volume, as the Hebrew books generally were. And so this place manifestly points to Christ, concerning whom much is said in the books of Moses.

8. I delight - This is eminently true, of Christ, and is here observed as an act of heroic obedience, that he not only resolved to do, but delighted in doing the will of God, or what God had commanded him, which was to die, and that a most shameful, and painful, and cursed death. My heart - I do not only understand it, but receive it with heartiest love, delighting both to meditate of it, and to yield obedience to it.

9. Righteousness - Thy faithfulness. Great congregation - In the most public and solemn assemblies: not only to the Jews, but also to all nations; to whom Christ preached by his apostles, as is observed Eph. ii, 17. Not refrained - From preaching it, even to the face of mine enemies.

11. With-hold not - David, having been transported by the spirit of God to the commemoration of the great mystery of the Messiah, he now seems to be led back by the same spirit, to the consideration of his own case.

12. Taken hold - Mens sins are figuratively said to take hold of them, as an officer takes hold of a man whom he arrests. To look - Unto God or men, with any comfort: I am ashamed and confounded.

15. Shame - Their sinful and shameful actions.

## 41

David on a sick bed lays hold on God's promise and prays for mercy, ver. 1-4. Complains of the pride and malice of his enemies, ver. 5-9. Flees to God for succor, and praises him, ver. 10, 13. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

3. Make his bed - Give him ease and comfort, which sick men receive by the help of those who turn and stir up their bed, to make it soft and easy for them.

4. Heal - The soul is said to be healed, when it is pardoned and purged. For - For I acknowledge that I have sinned.

6. His heart - Even when he is with me, and pretends hearty affection, his heart is devising mischief against me.

9. Yea - These words were literally fulfilled in David, and yet the Holy Ghost looked farther in them, even to Christ and Judas, in whom they received a fuller accomplishment. Lift up - A phrase implying injury, joined with insolency and contempt; taken from an unruly horse, which kicks at him that owns and feeds him.

10. Requite - Punish them for their wicked practices; which being now a magistrate, he was obliged to do.

11. By this - Because hitherto thou hast supported me, and prolonged my days to the disappointment of their hopes.

12. Settest - Or, hast confirmed me in thy presence, under thine eye and special care: to minister unto thee, as a king over thy people. And in regard of his posterity, the kingdom was established for ever. 13. Amen - Signifies an hearty assent and approbation, and withal an earnest desire of the thing, to which it is annexed. And as the psalms are divided into five books, so each of them is closed with this word; the first here: the second, chap. lxxii, 19, the third, chap. lxxxix, 52, the fourth, chap. cvi, 48, the last in the end of chap. 1l, 6, the doubling of the word shews the fervency of his spirit, in this work of praising God.

## 42

The psalmist longs for the public service of God, ver. 1-4. Stirs himself up to trust in God, ver. 5-9. Reproached by his enemies, still hopes in him, ver. 10, 11. To the chief musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah. Title of the psalm. Sons of Korah - Who were an eminent order of singers in the house of God, 1 Chron. vi, 33.

1. Panteth - After the enjoyment of thee in thy sanctuary.

2. Thirsteth - Not after vain useless idols, but after the only true and living God. Appear - In the place of his special presence and publick worship.

4. Remember - My banishment from God's presence, and mine enemies triumphs. In me - I breathe out my sorrows and complaints to God within my own breast. The multitudes - Israelites, who went thither in great numbers. Holy-day - Or that kept the feast, the three solemn festival solemnities, which they kept holy unto the Lord.

5. For - Hebrew. for the salvations of his face, for those supports, deliverances and comforts which I doubt not I shall enjoy both in his presence and sanctuary, and from his presence, and the light of his countenance.

6. Therefore - Therefore that I may revive my drooping spirits. Remember - I will consider thy infinite mercy and power, and faithfulness. Mizar - From all the parts of the land, to which I shall be driven; whether from the parts beyond Jordan on the east: or mount Hermon, which was in the northern parts.

7. Deep - One affliction comes immediately after another, as if it were called for by the former. A metaphor taken from violent and successive showers of rain; which frequently come down from heaven, as it were at the noise, or call of God's water spouts.

8. Command - Will effectually confer upon me. Loving-kindness - His blessings, the effects of his loving-kindness.

10. As - As a sword, which cutteth the very bones, so painful are their reproaches.

## 43

The psalmist appeals to God, ver. 1, 2. Prays to be restored to the public ordinances, and trusts in God, ver. 3-5.

1. Nation - So he calls the company of his enemies for their great numbers. Man - Probably Achitophel or Absalom.

3. Send out - That is, actually discover them. Truth - Thy favour, or the light of thy countenance, and the truth of thy promises made to me; or the true-light, the illumination of thy spirit, and the direction of thy gracious providence, whereby I may be led in the right way, to thy holy hill. Hill - Of Zion, the place of God's presence and worship.

## 44

The church commemorates past mercies, ver. 1-8. Complains of present troubles, ver. 9-16. Professes her integrity, ver. 17-22. Prays for succor, ver. 23-26. To the chief musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

4. My king - The whole people speak as one man, being united in one body.

11. Scattered - Those who were not slain are carried into captivity, and dispersed in several places.

16. Avenger - Who executeth both God's and his own vengeance upon me.

17. Yet - Although we cannot excuse ourselves from many other sins, yet through thy grace we have kept ourselves from apostacy and idolatry, notwithstanding all examples and provocations.

18. Turned - From thy worship to idols.

19. Broken us - By inflicting upon us one breach after another, thou hast at last brought us to this pass. The place - A place extremely desolate, such as dragons love, Isaiah xiii, 21, 22, and therefore full of horror, and danger. Covered us - With deadly horrors and miseries.

22. Yea - Because we are constant in thy worship, which they abhor.

25. Our soul - Our persons. Our belly - We are not only thrown down to the earth, but we lie there like dead carcases.

## 45

This psalm is an illustrious prophecy of the Messiah, and points at him only, as a bridegroom espousing the church to himself, and as a king ruling in it. And our saviour probably alludes to this, where he compares the kingdom of heaven to a royal marriage. We have no reason to think, it has

any reference to Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter. It is meant purely of Christ, and no other, and to him it is applied in the New Testament. After the preface, it speaks of the person and victories of the royal bridegroom, ver. 1-5. The righteousness of his government, ver. 6, 7. The splendour of his court, ver. 8, 9. Of the royal bride, the church, her consent gained, ver. 10, 11. The nuptials solemnized, ver. 12-15. The issue of this marriage, ver. 16, 17. To the chief musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil. A song of loves. Title of the psalm. Shoshannim - Is supposed to mean, an instrument of six strings. This is a song of loves, of the holy love which is between Christ and his church.

1. Enditing - Hebrew. boileth, or bubbleth up like water over the fire. This denotes that the workings of his heart, were fervent and vehement, kindled by God's grace, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Made - Have composed. Pen - He was only the pen or instrument in uttering this song; it was the spirit of God, by whose hand this pen was guided.

2. Fairer - Than all other men: which is most true of Christ; but not of Solomon; whom many have excelled, in holiness and righteousness, which is the chief part of the beauty celebrated in this psalm. Grace - God hath plentifully poured into thy mind and tongue the gift of speaking wisely, eloquently, and acceptably. Therefore - And because God hath so eminently qualified thee for rule, therefore he hath blessed thee with an everlasting kingdom.

3. Thy sword - To smite thine enemies. And the sword is here put for all his arms, as it is in many other places.

4. And - Being thus magnificently girt and armed. Ride - March on speedily and successfully against thine enemies. The word - That is, the gospel: which is called the word of truth, Eph. i, 13, and may no less truly be called the word of meekness, because it is not delivered with terror, as the law was at Sinai, but meekly and sweetly; and the word of righteousness, because it brings in everlasting righteousness, and strongly excites all men to the practice of righteousness and holiness. And so the gospel is compared, to an horse or chariot, upon which Christ is said to ride, when the gospel is preached, and carried about from place to place. Teach thee - Thou shalt do exploits, which shall be terrible to thine enemies. But the phrase, thy right hand shall teach thee, is not to be taken properly; the meaning is, his hand should shew him, discover and work before him.

5. Arrows - The same with the sword, and this is no other than his word, which is sharp and powerful, and pierceth the hearts of men. The kings - Of thine enemies. Fall - Prostrate at thy feet, after the manner of conquered persons.

6. O God - It is evident, that the speech is still continued to the same person whom he calls king, ver. 1, 11, and here God, to assure us that he doth not speak of Solomon, but a far greater king, who is not only a man, but the mighty God, Isaiah ix, 6. A right scepter - Thou rulest with exact righteousness and equity.

7. Therefore - Therefore God hath exalted thee far above all men and angels, to a state of joy and endless glory at his right hand; which is fitly compared by the oil of gladness. Thy God - According to thy human nature, John xx, 17, though in respect of thy Divine nature, thou art his fellow, Zech xiii, 7, and his equal, Phil ii, 6, and one with him, John x, 30. Oil - So called, because it was a token of gladness, and used in feasts, and other solemn occasions of rejoicing. Fellows -

Above all them who partake with thee in this unction: above all that ever were anointed for priests or prophets, or kings.

8. Myrrh - Wherewith they used to perfume their garments: this may denote those glorious and sweet smelling virtues, which, as they were treasured up in Christ's heart, so did they manifest themselves outwardly, and give forth a grateful smell, in the whole course of his life and actions. Palaces - The king is here supposed to reside in his ivory palaces, and his garments are so fragrant, that they not only perfume the whole palace in which he is; but the sweet favour is perceived by those that pass by them, all which is poetically said, and with allusion to Solomon's glorious garments and palaces. The heavenly mansions, may not unfitly be called ivory palaces, as elsewhere in the same figurative manner they are said to be adorned with gold and precious stones, from which mansions Christ came into the world, into which Christ went, and where he settled his abode after he went out of the world, and from whence he poured forth all the fragrant gifts and graces of his spirit, although there is no necessity to strain every particular circumstance in such poetical descriptions; for some expressions may be used, only as ornaments, as they are in parables; and it may suffice to know, that the excellencies of the king Christ are described by things which earthly potentates place their glory. Whereby - By the sweet smell of thy garments out of those ivory palaces, or the effusion of the gifts and graces of thy spirit from heaven; which as it is a great blessing to those who receive them, so doth it rejoice the heart of Christ, both as it is a demonstration of his own power and glory, and as it is the instrument of bringing souls to God. Made thee - Thou art made glad.

9. Among - Among them that attend upon thy spouse, as the manner was in nuptial solemnities. As the queen is the church in general, and so these honourable women are particular believers, who are daily added to the church, Acts ii, 47. And although the church is made up of particular believers, yet she is distinguished from them, for the decency of the parable. And these believers may be said to be Kings daughters, because among others, many persons of royal race embraced the faith, and because they are in a spiritual sense, Kings unto God, Rev. i, 6. Right hand - The most honourable place. Ophir - Clothed in garments made of the choicest gold. By which he designs the graces wherewith the church is accomplished.

10. Hearken - The prophet having hitherto spoken to the bridegroom, now addresseth his speech to the bride. O daughter - He speaks like an elder person, and as her spiritual father and counsellor. Incline - He uses several words, signifying the same thing, to shew his vehement desire of her good. Forget - Comparatively.

11. So - So thou shalt be acceptable to thy husband; which will abundantly recompence thee, for the loss of thy father's house. Thy Lord - As he is thy husband, and also as he is thy king, and God.

12. The daughter - The people of Tyre; as the daughter of Zion or Jerusalem, are put for their inhabitants: he mentions the Tyrians; because they among others, and before many others, were to be converted to Christ, but they are here put for all the Gentiles, whom that city fitly represents, as being the mart of the nations. A gift - To testify their homage. The rich - Of other nations.

13. Daughter - The spouse; so called, because she was the daughter of one king, and the wife of another. Within - In her soul. Her cloathing - She is outwardly adorned with virtuous and honourable actions.

14. Brought - He alludes to the custom of conducting the bride to the bride-groom's house. Companions - Her bride-maidens attending upon her.

16. Instead - Having directed his speech to the bride, he now returns to the bridegroom, as may be gathered both from the Hebrew words, which are of the masculine gender; and from the next verse, which unquestionably belongs unto him, and therefore this cannot be understood of Solomon, and his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, because he had no children by her, and but very few by all his wives and concubines; and his children were so far from being made Princes in all the earth, that they enjoyed but a small part of their father's dominions, but this was fully accomplished in Christ: who instead of his fathers of the Jewish nation, had a numerous posterity of Christians of all the nations of the earth, which here and elsewhere are called princes and kings, because of their great power with God and with men.

17. Remembered - As he began the psalm with the celebration of the king's praises, so now he ends with it, and adds this important circumstance, that this nuptial song should not only serve for the present solemnity, but should be remembered and sung in all successive generations.

## 46

The safety of the church under God's care, ver. 1-7. An exhortation to behold his works, and to trust in him, ver. 8-11. To the chief musician for the sons of Korah, A song upon Alamoth.

2. Though - Though there should be nothing but confusion, and desolations round about us: which are often expressed by such metaphors.

4. A river - This may design the gracious presence, and blessing of the Lord, which is frequently described under the name of waters. Make glad - Shall not barely preserve it from danger, but give great occasion for rejoicing and thanksgiving. The city - Jerusalem, the place where God's holy tabernacle is settled.

7. Raged - Against God, and against his people. Uttered - He spake to them in his wrath. The earth - The inhabitants of the earth were consumed.

8. Desolations - Among those who were vexatious to God's people.

9. To cease - He hath settled as in a firm and well-grounded peace. The land - Of Israel: from one end of it to the other. The bow - The bows and spears, and chariots of their enemies.

11. Be still - Stir no more against my people. God - The only true and almighty God; your gods are but dumb and impotent idols. Exalted - I will make myself glorious by my great and wonderful works.

## 47

This psalm seems to have been composed upon the occasion of carrying the ark from the house of Obed-edom into the city of Zion, 2 Sam. vi, 12, 17. But as Zion was a type of the church, and the ark a type of Christ, so it has a farther reference, even to Christ's ascension into heaven, and to the spreading of his kingdom in all parts of the world. It contains an exhortation to rejoice in God,

ver. 1-4. A prophecy of Christ's ascension, and of the calling of the Gentiles, ver. 5-9. To the chief musician, A psalm for the sons of Korah.

3. Subdue - He speaks this in the name of the whole church, to which all particular believers were to submit themselves in the Lord.

4. Chuse - He will appoint and bestow upon us. Inheritance - The presence and worship, and blessing of God. This God had chosen for the Israelites and resolved to chuse or set apart for the Gentiles. Of Jacob - Of the people of Jacob or Israel, who are frequently called Jacob, for these did actually enjoy the presence of God in his sanctuary. Loved - Not for any peculiar worth in them, but for his free love to them, as he declareth, Deut. vii, 7, 8.

5. God - This is meant literally of the ark: but mystically of Christ's ascension into heaven, as may be gathered by comparing this with Eph. iv, 8, where the like words uttered concerning the ark upon the same occasion, chap. lxviii, 18, are directly applied to Christ's ascension.

7. The king - Not only ours, but of all the nations of the world. Sing - Not formally and carelessly, but seriously, considering the greatness of this king whom you praise, and what abundant cause you have to praise him.

8. The throne - Heaven is often called God's throne, whence God is said to behold and to rule all nations; of which general dominion of God, he here speaks. And Christ sits at his father's right-hand, for that purpose.

9. The princes - The Gentiles, who were divided in their principles, and interests, and religions, are now united and gathered together to Christ, laying their scepters at his feet, and jointly owning his worship and service. And altho' he mentions their conversion only, yet the conversion of their people might reasonably be supposed. Of the God - He doth not say the people of Abraham, lest this should be appropriated to the Israelites; but the people of the God of Abraham who worship the God of Abraham, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. The Shields - The princes or rulers, who are called shields, Hosea iv, 18, because by their office they are the common prosecutors of all their people. These are the Lord's, at his disposal, or subject to his dominion, both as to their hearts and kingdoms. Exalted - By this means God shall be greatly glorified.

## 48

The glory and excellency of the church, ver. 1-3. Which God preserves from her enemies, ver. 4-8. God is praised for this, ver. 9, 10. Who effectually provides for its safety, ver. 11-14 A song and psalm for the sons of Korah.

1. The city - In Jerusalem. Mountain - In his holy mountain.

2. The joy - This is spoken prophetically, because the joyful doctrine of the gospel was to go from thence to all nations. The city - Of God, who justly calls himself a great king.

3. Known - By long experience. Palaces - Possibly he may point at the king's palace and the temple, which was the palace of the king of heaven; which two palaces God did in a singular manner protect, and by protecting them, protected the whole city and people.

4. The kings - Either those kings confederate against Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx, 1, or the Assyrian princes; whom they vain- gloriously called kings, Isaiah x, 8. Passed - In their march towards Jerusalem.

5. Saw it - They did only look upon it, but not come into it, nor shoot an arrow there - nor cast a bank against it, 2 Kings xix, 32. Marvelled - At the wonderful works wrought by God.

6. Fear - At the tidings of Tirhakah's coming against them, 2 Kings xix, 9, and at that terrible slaughter of their army, ver. 35.

7. Breakest - Thou didst no less violently and suddenly destroy these raging enemies of Jerusalem, than sometimes thou destroyest the ships at sea with a fierce and vehement wind, such as the eastern winds were in those parts.

8. Heard - The predictions of the prophets have been verified by the events. Establish - God will defend her in all succeeding ages. And so God would have done, if Jerusalem had not forsaken him, and forfeited his protection.

9. Thought - It hath been the matter of our serious and deep meditation, when we have been worshipping in thy temple.

10. So - Thou art acknowledged to be such an one as thou hast affirmed thyself to be in thy Word, God Almighty, or All- sufficient, the Lord of hosts, and a strong tower to all that trust in thee. Righteousness - Of righteous actions; by which thou discoverest thy holiness.

11. Judgments - Upon thine and their enemies.

12. Tell - He bids them mark well her towers, bulwarks, and palaces, with thankfulness to God, when they should find upon enquiry, that not one of them were demolished.

13. Tell it - That they may continue their praises to God for this mercy, by which they hold and enjoy all their blessings.

## 49

The preface, ver. 1-4. We need not fear the wicked, ver. 5. They cannot by their riches save either their friends or themselves from death, ver. 6-10. They cannot secure happiness to themselves, either in this world or the world to come, ver. 11-14. He comforts good men against the fear of death, or of the prosperity of the wicked, ver. 15-20. To the chief musician, A psalm for the sons of Korah.

4. I will - I will hearken what God by his Spirit speaks to me, and that will I now speak to you. A parable - Which properly is an allegorical speech, but is often taken for an important, and withal, dark doctrine or sentence. Open - I will not smother it in my own breast, but publish it to the world. Dark - So he calls the following discourse, because the thing in question ever hath been thought hard to be understood.

5. In the days - In times of great distress and calamity, when wicked men flourish, and good men are oppressed. Supplanters - This character fitly agrees to David's enemies, who were not only malicious, but deceitful and treacherous.

6. Trust - As that which will secure them from calamities. Having said that good men had no cause of fear, from their present sufferings from ungodly men, now he proceeds to shew, that the ungodly had no reason to be secure because of their riches.

7. Redeem - Neither from the first death, nor from the second. Brother - Whom he would do his utmost to preserve.

8. Soul - Of their life. Precious - Hard to be obtained. Ceaseth - It is never to be accomplished, by any mere man, for himself or for his brother.

10. He seeth - Every man sees that all men die, the wise and the foolish; the evil and the good. To others - He saith not to sons or kindred; but to others, because he is wholly uncertain to whom he shall leave them, to friends, or strangers, or enemies; which he mentions as a great vanity in riches. They neither can save them from death, nor will accompany him in and after death; and after his death will be disposed, he knows not how, nor to whom.

11. Thought - Tho' they are ashamed to express, yet it is their secret hope. Houses - Either their posterity, often called mens houses: or their mansion-houses, as it is explained in the next clause. For ever - To them and theirs in succeeding generations. Call - Fondly dreaming by this means to immortalize their memories.

12. Man - Living in all splendour and glory. Abideth not - All his dreams of perpetuating his name and estate, shall be confuted by experience.

13. Way - Their contrivance to immortalize themselves.

14. Sheep - Which for a season are in sweet pastures, but at the owner's pleasure are led away to the slaughter. Death - The first death shall consume their bodies, and the second death shall devour their souls. The upright - Good men whom they abused at their pleasure. Morning - In the day of the general judgment, and the resurrection of the dead. Beauty - All their glory and felicity. Dwelling - They shall be hurried from their large and stately mansions, into a close and dark grave.

15. God - Tho' no man can find out a ransom to redeem himself, yet God can and will redeem me. The grave - The grave shall not have power to retain me, but shall be forced to give me up into my father's hands. Receive - Into heaven.

16. Afraid - Discouraged.

18. Blessed - He applauded himself as an happy man. Men - And as he flatters himself, so parasites flatter him for their own advantage. When - When thou dost indulge thyself, and advance thy worldly interest.

19. He - Now he returns to the third person: such changes are frequent in this book. Go - To the grave and hell, where he shall meet with his wicked parents, who by their counsel and example, led him into his evil courses. See - Neither the light of this life, to which they shall never return: nor of the next life, to which they shall never be admitted.

20. Understandeth not - Hath not true wisdom. The beasts - Though he hath the outward shape of a man, yet in truth he is a beast, a stupid, and unreasonable creature.

**50**

The design of this psalm is to reprove the common miscarriages of many professors of religion, who satisfied their own consciences, and fancied that they pleased God with their external and ceremonial performances, notwithstanding their neglect of piety, justice, and charity: and to instruct men concerning the nature of the true and acceptable worship of God. The glorious appearance of the great judge, ver. 1-6. Instructions given how to worship him, ver. 7-15. A reproof of those who pretend to worship him, while they disobey his commands, ver. 16-20. Their doom read, and warning given to all, to order their conversation aright, ver. 21-23. A psalm of Asaph. Title of the psalm. Asaph - Who was not only the chief of the sacred singers, but also a prophet, 2 Chron. xxix, 30, and a composer of several psalms, 2 Chron. xxix, 30.

1. Called - All the inhabitants of the earth, from one end to the other: whom he here summons to be witnesses of his proceedings in this solemn judgment, between him and his people, which is here poetically represented. For here is a tribunal erected, the judge coming to it, the witnesses and delinquents summoned, and at last the sentence given.

2. Zion - The place where he was supposed to reside, and where he would now sit in judgment. The perfection - The most amiable place of the whole world, because, of the presence and worship, and blessing of God. Shined - Hath manifested himself in a glorious manner.

3. Our God - The prophet speaks this in the persons of the worshippers of God. Though he be our God, yet he will come to execute judgment upon us. Cease - Or delay to sit in judgment. Tempestuous - This is a farther description of that terrible majesty, wherewith God would clothe himself when he came to his tribunal.

4. Call - To the inhabitants of them, all angels and men, whom he calls in for witnesses of the equity of his proceedings.

5. Gather - O ye angels, summon and fetch them to my tribunal. Which is poetically spoken, to continue the metaphor, and representation of the judgment. My saints - The Israelites, whom God had chosen and separated them from all the nations of the earth, to be an holy and peculiar people to himself, and they also had solemnly devoted themselves to God; all which aggravated their apostacy. Those - Who have entered into covenant with me, and have ratified that covenant by sacrifice. This seems to be added, to acquaint them with the proper nature, use and end of sacrifices, which were principally appointed to be signs and seals of the covenant made between God and his people; and consequently to convince them of their great mistake in trusting to their outward sacrifices, when they neglected the very life and soul of them, which was the keeping of their covenant with God.

6. Declare - God will convince the people of his righteousness, and of their own wickedness, by thunders and lightnings, and storms, or other dreadful signs wrought by him in the heavens. Himself - In his own person. God will not now reprove them, by his priests or prophets, but in an extraordinary manner from heaven.

7. Hear - Having brought in God, as coming to judgment, he now gives an account of the process and sentence of the judge. Testify - I will declare my charge against thee. Thy God - Not only in

general, but in a special manner, by that solemn covenant made at Sinai; whereby I avouched thee to be my peculiar people, and thou didst avouch me to be thy God.

8. I will not - This is not the principal matter of my charge, that thou hast neglected sacrifices which thou shouldst have offered.

9. Bullock - Be not so foolish, as to imagine that thou dost lay any obligations upon me by thy sacrifices.

11. The fowls - Such as are wild and fly up and down upon mountains.

14. Offer - If thou wouldest know what sacrifices I prize, and indispensably require, in the first place, it is that of thankfulness, proportionable to my great and numberless favours; which doth not consist barely in verbal acknowledgments, but proceeds from an heart deeply affected with God's mercies, and is accompanied with such a course of life, as is well-pleasing to God. Vows - Those substantial vows and promises, which were the very soul of their sacrifices.

15. Call - And make conscience of that great duty of fervent prayer, which is an acknowledgment of thy subjection to me, and of thy trust and dependance upon me. Glorify - Thou shalt have occasion to glorify me for thy deliverance.

16. But - With what confidence darest thou make mention of my grace and favour, in giving thee such a covenant and statutes.

21. Kept silence - I did not express my displeasure against thee in such judgments as thou didst deserve. Thoughtest - Thou didst misconstrue my patience and long-suffering, as if it had proceeded from my approbation of thy evil courses. Set in order - I will bring to thy remembrance, and lay upon thy conscience all thy sins.

23. Glorifieth - He and he only gives me the honour that I require, and not he who loads my altar with sacrifices.

## 51

David prays for pardon, ver. 1, 2. Confesses his sins, ver. 3- 5. Prays for renewing grace, ver. 6-14. Promises unfeigned thankfulness, ver. 15-17. Prays for the whole church, ver, 18, 19. To the chief musician, A psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

4. Thee only - Which is not to be, understood absolutely, because he had sinned against Bathsheba and Uriah, and many others; but comparatively. So the sense is, though I have sinned against my own conscience, and against others; yet nothing is more grievous to me, than that I have sinned against thee. Thy sight - With gross contempt of thee, whom I knew to be a spectator of my most secret actions. Justified - This will be the fruit of my sin, that whatsoever severities thou shalt use towards me, it will be no blemish to thy righteousness, but thy justice will be glorified by all men. Speakest - Hebrew. in thy words, in all thy threatenings denounced against me. Judgest - When thou dost execute thy sentence upon me.

5. Behold - Nor is this the only sin which I have reason to bewail before thee; for this filthy stream leads me to a corrupt fountain: and upon a review of my heart, I find, that this heinous crime,

was the proper fruit of my vile nature, which, ever was, and still is ready to commit ten thousand sins, as occasion offers.

6. Truth - Uprightness of heart; and this may be added; as an aggravation of the sinfulness of original corruption, because it is contrary to the holy nature and will of God, which requires rectitude of heart: and, as an aggravation of his actual sin, that it was committed against that knowledge, which God had wrote in his heart.

7. Hyssop - As lepers, are by thy appointment purified by the use of hyssop and other things, so do thou cleanse me a leprous and polluted creature, by thy grace, and by that blood of Christ, which is signified by those ceremonial usages.

8. Joy - By thy spirit, seal the pardon of my sins on my conscience, which will fill me with joy. Rejoice - That my heart which hath been sorely wounded may be comforted.

10. Create - Work in me an holy frame of heart, whereby my inward filth may be purged away. Right - Hebrew. firm or constant, that my resolution may be fixed and unmoveable. Spirit - Temper or disposition of soul.

12. The joy - The comfortable sense of thy saving grace, promised and vouchsafed to me, both for my present and everlasting salvation. Free - Or, ingenuous, or liberal, or princely. Which he seems to oppose to his own base and illiberal and disingenuous and servile spirit, which he had discovered in his wicked practices: a spirit, which may free me from the bondage of sin, and enable me chearfully to run the way of God's precepts.

14. Thy righteousness - Thy clemency and goodness.

15. My lips - Which are shut with shame and grief.

16. Not sacrifice - This is not to be understood absolutely, with respect to David's crimes, which were not to be expiated by any sacrifice.

17. A broken spirit - This is of more value than many sacrifices.

18. Good pleasure - Thy free and rich mercy. Build - Perfect the walls and buildings of that city, and especially let the temple be built, notwithstanding my sins.

## 52

The wickedness of Doeg, and his doom, ver. 1-5. The righteous will see it and fear, ver. 6, 7. David comforts himself in God, ver. 8, 9. To the chief musician, Maschil, A psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.

1. Continually - God is continually doing good: thou art continually doing mischief. O mighty - He speaks ironically. O valiant captain! To kill a few weak and unarmed persons.

2. Deviseth - Expresses what thy wicked mind had devised. Deceitfully - Doeg pretended only to vindicate himself from disloyalty, 1 Sam. xxii, 8, but he really intended to expose the priests, to the king's fury.

5. Pluck thee - Violently and suddenly as the Hebrew word signifies, from thy house and lands, and all the wages of thy righteousness. Root - Though thou seemest to have taken deep root, yet God shall pluck thee up by the very roots, and destroy thee both root and branch.

6. Fear - Reverence God's just judgment.

8. The house - In God's church, or among his people.

9. Thou hast - Destroyed mine and thine implacable enemies, and established me in the throne, of which I am no less assured, than if it were already done. I will continue in thy way, placing my whole confidence in thy power and goodness, and faithfulness. Before - In the presence of thy saints.

**53**

David here describes the wickedness of mankind, nearly in the same words as in chap. xiv. To the chief musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Mahalath - This also seems to be the name of a musical instrument, or tune.

5. Scattered - Hath not only broken their bones, their strength, and force, but also dispersed them hither and thither, so as there is no hope of a restoration. Thee - Against my people. Thou - Thou oh Jerusalem, which they besiege.

**54**

David prays for help against his enemies, ver. 1-3. Comforts himself with the assurance of deliverance, ver. 4-7. To the chief musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A psalm of David, when the Ziphim came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us.

1. Name - By thy own strength. Judge - Plead my cause.

3. Strangers - The Zephites, whom, though Israelites, he calls strangers in regard of their barbarous and perfidious carriage.

5. Thy truth - Whereby thou art engaged to fulfil thy promises and threatenings.

**55**

David complains to God, ver. 1-8. Prays for help against his enemies, ver. 9-15. Assures himself of God's protection, ver. 16- 18. And their destruction, ver. 19-23. To the chief musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A psalm of David.

3. Voice - Their clamours and threats, and slanders. Cast - They lay many crimes to my charge.

4. The terrors - Deadly terrors; such as seize upon men in the agonies of death.

8. Tempest - From the force and fury of mine enemies.

9. Destroy - Destroy them by dividing. Tongues - Their speech, as thou didst at Babel, Gen. xi, 9, their votes, and opinions, and counsels. Which was eminently done among Absalom's followers, 2 Sam. xvii, 23. Strife - Injustice and fraud, oppression and contention rule here, instead of that public justice and peace which I established. City - In Jerusalem; which in Absalom's time was a sink of all sins.

10. They - Violence and strife. Go about - Do encompass it, as it were a garrison. Walls - In the outward parts, as also in the very midst of it. So that all parts were horribly corrupted.

11. Streets - The places of buying and selling, and of public commerce.

12. Hated - With a manifest or old hatred.

13. Equal - Not in power, but in reputation, for wisdom, and influence upon my people. Guide - Whose counsel I highly prized, and constantly followed. All which agrees to Achitophel.

15. Them - All such as pretend to religion, and have manifestly apostatized both from the profession and practice of it. The grave - Cut off by a sudden and violent death. Among them - Hebrew. in their inwards. Wickedness is deeply rooted in their hearts.

17. Evening, &c. - The three stated times of prayer among the Jews.

18. He hath - He speaks of a future deliverance, as a thing done, because of the certainty of it. He hath restored me to my former peace and tranquility. For - For there were more with me than against me; even the holy angels whom God employed to defend and deliver me.

19. Hear - My prayers. Eternity - Who is eternal, and therefore unchangeable, and almighty. Because - They meet with no crosses nor disappointments. Therefore - Their success makes them go on securely, without any regard to God, or dread of his judgments.

20. He - They, the persons last mentioned.

22. Burden - All thy crosses, and cares, and fears, lay them upon the Almighty, by faith and prayer. He directs this speech to his own soul, and to all good men in like circumstances. Suffer - As he doth wicked men. Tho' he may for a season suffer them to be shaken, yet not to be overwhelmed.

23. Them - The wicked. Not live - But shall be cut off by an untimely and violent death. Trust in thee - And in this confidence I will quietly wait for deliverance.

## 56

David complains of his enemies, and begs for mercy, and help against them, ver. 1-7. Expresses his confidence in God, ver. 8-13. To the chief musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath. Title of the psalm. Jonath-elem-rechokim. Which is supposed to be the name of a song.

4. Will praise - I will praise the Lord for his word, for his promises of protection and deliverance, made to his people. Flesh - Infirm and mortal men, called flesh by way of contempt, as chap. lxxviii, 39 Isaiah xxxi, 3.

6. They gather - After they have severally employed their thoughts against me, they meet together to compare them, and to put them in execution. Hide - They lurk secretly, that they may pry into my most private actions. Steps - That they may find some occasion to reproach me. Soul - Or, life, to take it away.

7. Escape - Shall they secure themselves by injurious and malicious practices. The people - These who are mine enemies.

8. Wanderings - How I have been hunted from place to place. Put - Regard and pity them. Are they not - But why do I pray to God to do that which he hath already done?

12. Thy vows - I had made vows to express my gratitude, and resolve to perform them.

13. Walk - That I may serve and glorify thee. The light - ln this life.

**57**

David here begins with prayer and complaint, tho' not as without hope, ver. 1-6. He concludes with joy and praise, ver. 7- 11. To the chief musician Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave. Title of the psalm. Al-taschith - The word signifies, destroy not. Which some think to be a preface, containing the sum of the psalm. The cave - Either

1. That of Adullam, 1 Sam. xxii, 1, or

2. That of Engedi, 1 Sam. xxiv, 1.

3. Send forth - Will discover them, by affording his gracious help in pursuance of his promises.

4. Lions - Fierce and bloody men. I lie - I have my abode. On fire - From hell. Who are mere fire-brands, breathing out wrath and threatenings, and incensing Saul against me.

5. Excited - Glorify thy power, and goodness, and justice, and faithfulness, by my deliverance. Above, &c. - To the highest degree possible.

7. Fixed - In a stedfast belief of thy promises.

8. My glory - My tongue, the instrument of singing. Awake - I will employ all the powers of my soul and body.

9. The people - Among the Israelites, and among the Heathens, as I shall have occasion.

**58**

David describes his enemies, ver. 1-5. Foretells their ruin, ver. 6-9. Which would be to the comfort of good men, and to the glory of God, ver. 10, 11. To the chief musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David.

1. O congregation - The word seems to point at Saul's Judges and counsellors; who met together to consult what they should do against David. Sons of men - So he calls them; to mind them that they were men, and must give an account to God for all their hard speeches.

2. Heart - With free choice and consent. Hands - He intimates that they did great wrong under the pretense of justice, and while they seemed exactly to weigh the true proportion between the actions and the recompenses allotted to them, they turned the scale; and pronounced an unjust sentence. Land - Or, in this land, where God is present, and where you have righteous laws to govern you.

3. Estranged - From God, and from all goodness. Their very natures are corrupt, even from their birth: they are the wicked offspring of sinful parents. Astray - By actual sins, from their childhood, as soon as ever they were capable of the exercise of reason.

4. Poison - Their malicious disposition.

5. Not hearken - As they commonly say of the adders, such really are these men: deaf to all my counsels, to their own consciences, and to God's law. Of the charming or enchanting of serpents, mention is made both in other places of scripture, and in all sorts of authors, ancient and modern, Hebrew and Arabick, and Greek and Latin. And particularly the Arabick writers (to whom these creatures were best known) name some sorts of serpents, among which the adder is one, which they call deaf, not because they are dull of hearing, but, as one of them expressly faith, because they will not be charmed.

6. Their teeth - Their powerful instruments of doing mischief.

7. Melt away - As waters arising from melted snow, which at first run with great force, but are suddenly gone.

8. Melteth - Which is quickly dissolved.

9. Before - Before your pots can be heated. Take them - Violently and irresistibly. Living - Alive, as he did Korah.

10. Rejoice - For the blessed effects of it; the vindication of God's honour, and the deliverance of himself and of all good men. Wash - There shall be so great a slaughter of his enemies that he might, if he pleased, wash his feet in their blood.

## 59

David prays for deliverance from his enemies, ver. 1-7. He foretells their destruction, ver. 8-17. To the chief musician, Al- taschith, Michtam of David: when Saul sent and they watched the house to kill him.

4. Run - To and fro, to receive Saul's commands, and to execute them with all speed.

5. The God - A God in covenant with all true Israelites, whom thou hast promised to protect and bless. The heathen - Or, these heathens, who though they are Israelites by birth; yet in their dispositions they are mere Heathens. Be not - For indeed thou canst not according to thy word, be merciful to such incorrigible offenders.

6. Return - Watching for me: which they did at this time all the night long, 1 Sam. xix, 11. A dog - When he is pursuing his prey. Go round - When they did not find him in his own house, they sought for him in other parts of the city.

7. Pour out - Sharp and bitter word's, abundantly and vehemently, as a fountain doth waters, as this word signifies. Swords - Words as keen and mischievous as swords. For who - David doth not hear us, and God either doth not hear, or not regard what we say.

10. Prevent - Thou wilt help me sooner than I expect.

11. My people - Over whom thou hast appointed me to be governor in due time. Forget - Their former danger, and thy glorious mercy in delivering them. Scatter - Let them wander from place to place, that they may carry the tokens of thy justice, and their own shame to all places.

12. Pride - For their proud and insolent speeches against thee. Lying - For their execrations and lying reports, which they have spread concerning me.

13. Not be - In the land of the living any more.

## 60

David remembering God's judgments on the land, prays for help, ver. 1-5. Triumphs in confidence of receiving it, ver. 6-12. To the chief musician upon Shushan-eduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aram-naharaim, and with Aram- zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt, twelve thousand. Title of the psalm. Shushan-eduth - This seems to be the name of an instrument, or tune, then well known, but now unknown and forgotten. To teach - For the special instruction of God's people. Aram-naharaim - The Syrians (so called from Aram, the son of Shem, Gen. x, 22,) of the two rivers, or of Mesopotamia, the country between Tygris and Euphrates. Aram-zobah - The Syrians of Zobah, part of Syria so called.

2. Tremble - A poetical expression, signifying great changes among the people.

3. To drink - Thou hast filled us with no less honour, than men intoxicated with strong drink.

4. A banner - Which is a sign and instrument,

1. Of union. This people who were lately divided, thou hast united under one banner, under my government:
2. Of battle. Thou hast given us an army, and power to oppose our enemies; which blessing God gave to Israel, for the sake of those few sincere Israelites who were among them. The truth - Not for any merit of ours, but to shew thy faithfulness in making good thy promises.

5. Beloved - Thy beloved people.

6. Rejoice - Therefore I will turn my prayers into praises, for what God has already done. Divide - Which supposeth possession and dominion. Shechem - A place within Jordan, in mount Ephraim. Succoth - A place without Jordan. He mentions Shechem, and Succoth; for all the land of Canaan, within and without Jordan.

7. Gilead - All the land beyond Jordan, which was possessed by Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. Manasseh - The other half of that tribe within Jordan. The strength - A chief

part of my strength, either to offend mine enemies, or to defend myself. For this tribe was very numerous, and valiant and rich. Law-giver - The chief seat of my throne and kingdom, and of the inferior throne of judgment, chap. 1xxii, 5.

8. Wash-pot - In which I shall wash my feet. I shall bring them into the lowest degree of servitude. Shoe - I will use them like slaves; a proverbial expression. Triumph - It is an ironical expression, signifying that her triumphs were come to an end.

9. Who - None can do it but God. City - The cities; the singular number for the plural. Having beaten his enemies out of the field, he desires God's assistance to take their strong-holds, and so secure himself from farther attempts. Edom - Which was an high and rocky country, Obad 1-3, fortified by nature, as well as by art, and therefore not to be subdued without a Divine hand.

10. Hadst cut off - But now hast graciously returned to us.

## 61

David flees to God, and resolves to trust him, ver. 1-4. Praises God from an assurance of future blessings, ver. 5-8. To the chief musician upon Neginah, A psalm of David.

2. The end - To which David was driven. Lead me - Convey me into some high and secure fortress.

4. I will - I shall, I doubt not, be restored to the tabernacle, and worship thee there all my days.

5. Heritage - Thou hast granted me this singular mercy, to live in God's land, to enjoy his presence, and to worship in his tabernacle; which is the heritage that all that fear thee, prize and desire above all things.

6. Prolong - The years of my life and reign. Thus he speaks because his kingdom was not like Saul's, but established to him and his heirs; and because Christ, his son and heir, should actually, and in his own person possess the kingdom for ever. 7. Abide - In the throne. Before God - Living and ruling as in God's presence, serving God and worshipping him in his tabernacle. Truth - Thy truth in giving me those mercies which thou hast promised, and thy mercy in giving me such further blessings as I needs.

## 62

David expresses his confidence in God, ver. 1-7. Excites others to trust in him, ver. 8-12. To the chief musician, to Jeduthun. A psalm of David. Title of the psalm. Jeduthun - A famous musician, 1 Chron. ix, 16.

3. Ye - Mine enemies; to whom now he turns his speech. Against - Against me, a man like yourselves, whom common humanity obliges you to pity.

9. Vanity - Vain, and helpless creatures. A lie - They promise much, but generally deceive those who trust in them.

10. Vain - Feeding yourselves with vain hopes of felicity, from those riches which you take from others by violence.

11. Spoken - Frequently, both immediately as at Sinai, and by his holy prophets, from time to time. That - That power is God's prerogative; and consequently all creatures, either against or without him, are poor impotent things.

12. Therefore - God is almighty, therefore he can easily destroy all his enemies: he is also merciful, and therefore will pardon good mens failings. Renderest - And this as he is obliged to do by his holy nature, so is he able to do it, being omnipotent, and willing to do it to the godly (which was the only thing that might be doubted, because of their manifold miscarriages) because he is merciful and gracious.

## 63

David's desire and esteem of God, ver. 1-4. His satisfaction, and communion with God, ver. 5, 6. His joyful dependence upon God, ver. 7, 8. His holy triumph in him, ver. 9-12. A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

1. Early - Hebrew. in the morning, Which implies the doing it with diligence and speed. Thirsteth - For the enjoyment of thee in thy house and ordinances. Flesh - The desire of my soul, is so vehement, that my very body feels the effects of it. No water - In a land where I want the refreshing waters of the sanctuary.

2. To see - To enjoy. Power - The powerful and glorious effects of thy gracious presence.

5. Satisfied - When thou shalt fulfil my earnest desire of enjoying thee in the sanctuary.

9. Shall go - Into the grave.

10. Foxes - Their carcases shall become a prey to wild and ravenous creatures.

11. The king - I who am already anointed king. Every one - That sweareth by the name of God, in truth, and judgment, and righteousness. Every sincere servant and worshipper of God. Shall glory - Shall rejoice in my deliverance.

## 64

David describes his enemies and prays for deliverance from them, ver. 1-6. Foretells their destruction, ver. 7-10. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

6. Iniquities - They study diligently, to find new ways of doing mischief. Deep - Cunning, both to contrive and conceal, and to execute their plots.

8. Flee - Through fear of being involved in their destruction.

10. Glad - For the honour of God, which by this means is vindicated.

## 65

David praises God for hearing prayer, pardoning sin, satisfying and protecting his people, ver. 1-5. For fixing the mountains, calming the sea, preserving the succession of day and night, and making the earth fruitful, ver. 6-13. To the chief musician, A psalm and song of David.

4. Approach - To draw near to God in his house and ordinance, by prayer and praise, and other acts of communion with him. Satisfied - With the blessings there conferred upon thy people, the favour and fellowship of God, remission of sins, renovation of heart and life, joy and peace, and well-grounded assurance of eternal life.

5. Righteousness - By virtue of thy faithfulness, and goodness. Wilt thou - Thou wilt graciously answer our prayers. The confidence - Thou art the stay and support of all mankind, by thy powerful and gracious providence.

7. Tumult - No less wild and impetuous.

8. Thy tokens - Terrible thunders and lightnings, and earthquakes, and comets or other strange meteors, or works of God in the air. Morning - The successive courses of the morning and evening; or of the sun and moon which go forth at those times. Thus the whole verse speaks of the natural works of God, the former clause, of such as are extraordinary and terrible, the latter of such as are ordinary and delightful.

9. River - With rain, which he very significantly calls a river for its plenty, and the river of God, of God's immediate providing. Them - The inhabitants of the earth. Provided - Or, disposed, the earth, which without this would be hard and barren.

10. Bringest down - For the rain dissolves the high and hard clods of earth.

12. Wilderness - Which though neglected by men, are furnished with food for beasts.

13. Sing - They are abundantly satisfied with thy goodness, and in their manner sing forth the praise of their benefactor.

## 66

The psalmist calls on all people to praise God, for his sovereign power over the whole creation, ver. 1-7. For his special favour to his people, ver. 8-12. Praises him for his goodness to himself in particular, ver. 13-20. To the chief musician, A song or psalm.

1. All lands - Ye people of all nations. He invites the Gentile world, to the contemplation and celebration of God's works.

6. We - Our nation, or our ancestors, in whose loins we then were.

10. Proved us - As it were in a burning furnace; and with a design to purge out our dross.

11. Net - Which our enemies laid for us.

12. To ride - To use us like slaves.

15. I will go - One speaks in the name of all the rest. Incense - With the fat of rams, which is no less pleasing to God than incense.

18. Iniquity - Any sin. In heart - If my heart had been false to God, although I might have forborne outward acts. If I had been guilty of that, by heart was set upon sin, or I desired only that which I resolved in my heart to spend upon my lusts.

## 67

A prayer for Israel, ver. 1. For the conversion of the Gentiles, ver. 2-5. A prospect of glorious times, ver. 6, 7. To the chief musician on Neginoth, A psalm or song.

2. Thy way - The way of truth, or the true religion; the same which in the next clause is called his saving health, and both together signify the way of salvation; deal so graciously with thy people, that thereby the Gentile-world may at last be allured to join with them.

4. Judge - Rule them. Govern - Hebrew. lead; gently, as a shepherd doth his sheep; and not rule them with rigor, as other lords had done.

6. Them - When the people of the earth shall be converted to God, God will cause it to yield them abundance of all sorts of fruits. Under which one blessing, all other blessings both temporal and spiritual are comprehended. Our own - He who is Israel's God in a peculiar manner.

## 68

The occasion of this psalm, seems to have been David's translation of the ark to Zion, which was managed with great solemnity and devotion. For the first words are the very same which Moses appointed for such occasions, Num. x, 35, and the following verses pursue the same matter. Thence he falls into a description of some of the glorious works of the God to whom this ark belonged. But because David knew that both himself and the ark were types of Christ, and that the church of Israel were a type of the catholick church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, and that the legal administrations were types of those of the gospel, he therefore by the spirit of prophecy, looked through the types, to the great mysteries of Christ's resurrection and ascension, and of the special privileges of the Christian church, and of the conversion of the Gentiles, and intermixes passages, which immediately belong to these things, although the words be so ordered, that they carry a manifest allusion to the present actions, and may be applied to them, in a secondary sense. He first prays against God's

enemies, and for his people, ver. 1-3. Then praises God, for his greatness and goodness, ver. 4-6. For his wonderful works, ver. 7-14. For his special presence in his church, ver. 15- 17. The ascension of Christ, and the salvation of his people, ver. 18-20. His victories over his enemies, and favours to his church, ver. 21-28. The accession of the Gentiles to the church, ver. 29- 31. An awful acknowledgment of the glory and grace of God, ver. 32-35. To the chief musician, A psalm or song of David.

4. Jah - Is an abbreviation of the name Jehovah, which the Heathens pronounced Jao. Before him - Before the ark where he is present, as David is said to dance before the Lord, upon this occasion, 2 Sam. vi, 14.

5. Habitation - In heaven.

6. Rebellious - Those who rebel against God.

7. Wentest - In the cloudy pillar, as their captain leading them up out of Egypt.

8. Dropped - Poured down great showers, which accompanied those mighty thunders.

9. Weary - Dry and thirsty, and parched with excessive heat, and ready to faint for want of rain, chap. lxiii, 1.

10. Thy congregation - The people of Israel. It - This land for the use of thy people: which God did by designing it for them, and expelling the old inhabitants; by furnishing it with all sorts of provisions, and making it fruitful by his special blessing. Poor - Such thy really were, when God undertook the conduct of them into Canaan.

11. Gave - He put this triumphant song into their mouths.

12. Kings - The kings of Canaan, and other nations who came forth against the Israelites, accompanied with great and numerous armies. The spoil - There was enough, not only for those who took it, but also to be divided to their wives and children, when they came home.

13. Ye - Ye Israelites. Ye are - Tho' you have formerly been exposed to great reproach and misery, yet God hath changed your condition. Gold - Beautiful and glorious, like the feathers of a dove, which according to the variety of its postures, and of the light shining upon it, look like silver and gold.

14. Therein - In Canaan, at the coming of the Israelites. The land was as white as mount Salmon is with the snow.

15. The hill - Zion, the seat of God's ark. High hill - Which is not to be understood of external height, but of its spiritual height, or exaltation, in regard of the glorious privileges of God's presence, and worship.

16. Leap - Why do you triumph and look upon Zion with contempt? He speaks to the hills by an usual figure. Will dwell - This hill, though despicable in your eyes, is precious in God's, and chosen by him for his perpetual residence.

17. Chariots - The armies (whereof chariots were an eminent part in those times) which attend upon God to do his pleasure. Twenty thousand - An innumerable company, a certain number being put for an uncertain. Among them - Here the psalmist seems to be transported by the prophetic spirit, from the narration of those external successes, to the prediction of the Messiah; and of the transcendent privileges and blessings accruing to mankind thereby. As in Sinai - God is no less gloriously, though less terribly present here, than he was in Sinai, when the great God attended

with thousands of his angels, solemnly appeared to deliver the law. Yea, here is a greater privilege than Sinai had, The Lord Jehovah descending from heaven into an human body, as appears by his ascending thither again, which the next verse describes.

18. Ascended - This has a manifest reference to Christ, and his ascension into heaven, in whom alone it is literally accomplished, and to whom therefore it is ascribed, Eph. iv, 8. Although the expressions are borrowed from the ancient custom of princes, who, after some glorious achievements, used to go up into their royal cities in triumphant chariots, being attended by their captive enemies, and afterward to distribute gifts to their soldiers and subjects, and sometimes to do some acts of clemency even to their rebels and enemies. Captivity - Those whom thou hast taken captive; death and sin, and the devil, and all the enemies of Christ, and of his people, whom Christ led in triumph, having spoiled them, and making a shew of them openly, Colossiansii, 15. Received - According to thy manhood thou hast received from God all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and all those gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, which are necessary either to the perfection of thy nature, or to the good of thy church and people. Rebellious - Thy most stubborn and rebellious enemies, whether Jews or Gentiles. Might dwell - That he who as man is ascended into the highest heavens, might, as God, come down to them, and dwell with them, not only in and by his ordinances in which he is present, but also by his spirit dwelling in their hearts.

20. Issues - Escapes or deliverances.

21. Hairy - In ancient times many people used to wear long and shaggy hair, that their looks might be more terrible to their enemies.

22. Bring again - I will give my people as great deliverances as I formerly did, when I saved them from Og, king of Bashan. The sea - From the Egyptians at the Red Sea.

23. That, &c. - And as it was at the Red Sea, and at Bashan before, so yet again thine enemies shall be slain in such numbers, that thou mayst wade in their blood, and thy dogs lick it up in the field.

24. They - Men saw and observed it. Goings - The procession of the ark to Zion, the solemnity whereof is particularly described in the following verses. The sanctuary - The tabernacle prepared for it.

26. Fountain - All ye people of Israel.

27. There is - Present in this solemn pomp of carrying the ark to Zion. Little - Called little, because it was exceedingly diminished, and almost extinguished under the Judges, Judg. xx, 35; xxi, 3 &c. Ruler - The tribe which had lately swayed the scepter, but now submitted to David. Company - The people of that tribe who waited upon them. Zebulun, &c. - He mentions these tribes, because they lived in the remotest parts of the land of Canaan. And so by naming two of the nearest tribes, and two of the farthest, he intimates that the other tribes also came upon this occasion, as is manifest from 2 Sam. vi, 15-19.

28. Thy God - Having spoken of Israel, he now directs his speech to them. Commanded - Hath ordained or effectually procured. Thy strength - all that strength and power which thou hast put forth at any time

29. thy temple - The temple which Solomon shall build. Kings - Kings of the Gentiles: which was done in part, in the times of Solomon and Hezekiah, but more fully when the Lord was come into his temple.

30. Rebuke - Chastise those that will not bring presents to thee. The bulls - The fierce and furious adversaries of God, and of his church; the calves, are people or soldiers depending upon

them. Delight - That merely out of a love to mischief and spoil, make war upon others, and upon us particularly.

31. Ethiopia - He names these, as the ancient enemies of God, and of his people; but by them he understands all other nations of the like character. Unto God - Begging mercy of him. This prophecy, as also the next verse, evidently belongs to the times of the Messiah.

33. Heavens - The highest heavens; dwelling there in infinite glory, and from thence looking down upon all the inhabitants of the earth, and ruling them by his almighty power. Of old - From the beginning of the world; whereas the ark was only some hundred years old. A voice - His gospel, published by Christ and his apostles, assisted by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven; which might well be called God's voice, and that a mighty voice, because it produced such great and wonderful effects.

34. Ascribe - Acknowledge that he is able to do whatsoever he pleaseth. Excellency - His excellent power and goodness. Is over - Dwells among them. He is indeed the universal Lord, but in a special manner, he is the God of Israel.

35. Terrible - Deservedly to be feared.

## 69

David complains of his troubles, and begs help from God, ver. 1-21. Foretells the judgments of God upon his persecutors, ver. 22-29. Concludes with praise and thanksgiving, ver. 30-36. In all this David was a type of Christ, and several passages of this psalm are applied to him in the New Testament. So that, like the 22nd psalm, it begins with the humiliation, and ends with the exaltation of Christ. To the chief musician upon Shofhannim, a psalm of David.

1. Waters - Tribulations.

4. I restored - For peace sake.

5. My sins - But O Lord, although I have been innocent to mine enemies, I am guilty of many sins and follies against thee.

6. For my sake - Because of my sad disappointments. For if they see me forsaken, they will be discouraged by this example.

7. For thy sake - For my obedience to thy commands, and zeal for thy glory.

9. Zeal - That fervent love which I have for thy house and service, and glory, and people. Eaten - Exhausted my spirits. Upon me - I have been as deeply affected with thy reproaches, as with mine own. This tho' truly belonging to David, yet was also directed by the spirit of God in him, to represent the disposition and condition of Christ, in whom it was more fully accomplished, to whom therefore it is applied in the New Testament, the first part of it, John ii, 17, and the latter, Rom. xv, 3.

10. Wept - For their impiety. Reproach - They derided me for it.

11. Proverb - A proverb of reproach.

12. That sit - Vain and idle persons, that spend their time in the gates and markets.

13. In the truth - Or, According to thy saving truth, or faithfulness; grant me that salvation, which thou hast graciously promised.

21. Gall - Instead of giving me that comfort which my condition required, they added to my afflictions. Vinegar - These things were metaphorically fulfilled in David, but properly in Christ, the description of whose sufferings was principally intended here by the Holy Ghost.

22. Their table - And this punishment in their table, exactly answers their sin, in giving Christ gall for his meat, ver. 21. A snare - Their table or meat, which is set before them, shall become a snare: the occasion of their destruction.

23. Eyes - Not the eyes of their bodies, but of their minds: as they that shut their eyes and will not see, so they shall be judicially blinded. To shake - To take away their strength.

26. For - Which is an act of barbarous cruelty. Talk - Reproaching them, and triumphing in their calamities.

27. Wilt add - Give them up to their own lusts. Not let them - Partake of thy righteousness, or of thy mercy and goodness.

28. Living - Of eternal life.

29. On high - Out of the reach of mine enemies.

31. This - This hearty sacrifice of praise, is more grateful to God, than the most glorious legal sacrifices. Hath horns - That is both tender and mature, as it is when the horns bud forth, and the hoofs grow hard.

32. The humble - Those pious persons who are grieved for their calamities, will heartily rejoice in my deliverance. Live - Or, be revived, which were dejected, and in a manner dead with sorrow.

33. Prisoners - Those who are in prison or affliction for his sake.

35. Sion - His church and people. They - His servants, as is explained in the following verse. There - In the literal Canaan for a long time, in the heavenly Canaan for ever.

## 70

This psalm is copied almost word for word from the eleventh psalm, and perhaps is for that reason entitled, A psalm to bring remembrance. For it may sometimes be of use to pray over again the prayers we have formerly made to God on like occasions. David here prays, that God would send help to him, shame to his enemies, and joy to his friends. To the chief musician, a psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.

## 71

David wrote this psalm in his old age, of which the former part is prayer, ver. 1-13. The latter part, joyful praise and thanksgiving, ver. 14-24.

7. A wonder - For my many and sore calamities.

15. The numbers - Of thy salvations and mercies vouchsafed to me.

16. Make mention - To support and comfort myself with the remembrance of it. Righteousness - Of thy faithfulness in making good all thy promises.

19. Very high - Most eminent.

20. Bring me - From the grave.

**72**

Divers passages of this psalm, do not agree to Solomon, nor to any other king but the Messiah. It must therefore be acknowledged, that, this is a mixt psalm, belonging to Solomon imperfectly, but to Christ, clearly and fully: diverse expressions being so ordered, that the reader might be led by them to the contemplation of Christ, and of his kingdom. Which was the more necessary for the support of God's true Israel, because the spirit of God foresaw Solomon's dreadful apostacy, and the great miscarriages and calamities of his successors, and of the kingdom under their hands, and therefore was pleased to fortify their hearts with that glorious condition, which they should certainly enjoy under the Messiah. It is probable, David dictated this psalm, a little before he died, when he gave orders to proclaim Solomon king. After a short prayer for his successor, he foretells the glories of his reign, ver. 1-17. And concludes with praise to the God of Israel, ver. 18-20. A psalm for Solomon.

1. Judgments - He saith judgments in the plural number, because though the office of judging and ruling was but one, yet there were divers parts and branches, of it; in all which he begs that Solomon may be directed to do as God would have him to do.

2. Thy afflicted ones - For such are thine in a special manner, thou art their judge and patron.

3. The mountains - Which are so dangerous to passengers, in regard of robbers and wild beasts. Hereby it is implied, that other places should do so too, and that it should be common and universal.

4. Judge - Vindicate them from their oppressors.

5. Thee - Thee, O God, this shall be another blessed fruit of this righteous government, that together with peace, true religion shall be established, and that throughout all generations, which was begun in Solomon's days, but not fully accomplished 'till Christ came.

6. He shall come - Christ did come down from heaven, and brought or sent down from heaven his doctrine, (which is often compared to rain) and the sweet and powerful influences of his spirit.

8. Dominion - From one sea to another, or in all the parts of the habitable world. This was accomplished in Christ, and in him only. The river - Euphrates: which was the eastern border of the kingdom of Canaan, allotted by God, but enjoyed only by David, Solomon, and Christ. Of whose kingdom this may be mentioned, as one of the borders; because the kingdom of Christ is described under the shadow of Solomon's kingdom.

10. The sea - Of remote countries, to which they used to go from Canaan by sea; which are frequently called isles in scripture; the kings that rule by sea or by land.

11. All nations - Which cannot be said of Solomon with any truth or colour, but was unquestionably verified in Christ,

14. Deceit and violence - The two ways whereby the lives of men are usually destroyed. Precious - He will not be prodigal of the lives of his subjects, but like a true father of his people, will tenderly preserve them, and severely avenge their blood upon those who shall shed it.

15. Live - Long and prosperous, as Solomon: yea, eternally as Christ. Gold - This was done to Solomon, 1 Kings x, 15, and to Christ, Matt. ii, 11. But such expressions as these being used of Christ and his kingdom, are commonly understood in a spiritual sense.

16. A handful - This intimates the small beginnings of his kingdom; and therefore does not agree to Solomon, whose kingdom was in a manner as large at the beginning of his reign, as at the end, but it exactly agrees to Christ. The earth - Sown in the earth. Mountains - In the most barren grounds. Shake - It shall yield such abundance of corn, that the ears being thick and high, shall, when they are shaken with the wind, make a noise not unlike that which the tops of the trees of Lebanon, sometimes make. Of the city - The citizens of Jerusalem, which are here put for the subjects of this kingdom.

20. The prayer - This psalm is the last which David composed: for this was wrote but a little before his death.

## 73

It is probable, Asaph was the author of this psalm; for we read of the words of David and the words of Asaph the seer, which were used in praising God in Hezekiah's time, 2 Chron. xxix, 30. He begins with laying down a general principle, ver. 1. Confesses his temptation to envy the wicked, ver. 2-14. Tells how he gained the victory over it, and advantage by it, ver. 15-28. A psalm of Asaph.

1. A clean heart - To all true Israelites, who love God, and serve him in spirit and truth.

2. My feet - My faith in God's providence, was almost overthrown.

4. No bands - They are not dragged to death, by the sentence of the magistrate, which they deserve.

5. As other men - As good men frequently are.

8. And speak - Boasting of their oppressions.

9. Against - Against God, blaspheming his name, and deriding his providence. Walketh - Using all manner of liberty, reproaching all sorts of persons.

10. Turn - To this wicked company. Waters - And partake of the same prosperity with their leaders. God seems to give them a full cup of consolation, as if he would wring out all his blessings upon them.

12. Behold - These seem to be the words of the psalmist, summing up the matter.

13. In vain - Hence I was sometimes tempted, to think that religion was a vain, unprofitable thing. True religion is here described by its two principal parts, the cleansing of the heart, and the hands.

15. Offend - By grieving, discouraging and tempting them to revolt from God.

16. To know - To find out the reason of this providence.

17. Until - 'Till I consulted the word of God. He alludes to the practice of those times, which was, in difficult cases to resort to God's sanctuary, and the oracle therein. Their end - There I learned that their prosperity was short.

19. Terrors - With God's dreadful judgements unexpectedly seizing upon them.

20. They awake - Out of the pleasant dream of this vain life. Despise - Thou shalt make them despicable both to themselves and to all others; raise them to shame, and everlasting contempt. Image - All their felicity and glory, which shall be evidently discerned to be, no real or substantial thing, but a mere image or shadow.

21. Pricked - I was deeply wounded with disquieting thoughts.

22. Nevertheless - Although I gave thee just cause to cast me off, yet thou didst continue thy care and kindness to me. Hast held - That my faith might not fail.

27. Go a whoring - Those who revolt from thee, to work wickedness; which is called whoredom in scripture.

## 74

This psalm, which so particularly describes the destruction of Jerusalem, was probably written by another Asaph, who lived at the time of the captivity. He, in the name of the Jews, complains of the miseries they suffered, ver. 1-11. Encourages himself by recollecting the mighty works of God, ver. 12-17. Prays for deliverance, ver. 18-23. Maschil of Asaph Title of the psalm. Maschil of Asaph - Not composed by that famous Asaph, who flourished in David's time, but by some of his posterity, who is called by their father's name, as this psalm speaks of the destruction of the temple and of Jerusalem, and of God's people by the Chaldeans.

2. Thy congregation - Thy people. Thine inheritance - The tribe of Judah, which thou hast in a special manner chosen for thine inheritance, and for the birth of the Messiah. Nor is it strange that he mentions this tribe particularly, because the calamity here remembered, did principally befall this tribe, and Benjamin, which was united with it.

3. Lift up - Come speedily to our rescue. Because - Because otherwise our destruction is irrecoverable.

4. Roar - In a way of triumph. Midst, &c. - In the places where thy people used to assemble for thy worship. Set up - Monuments of their victory.

5. Famous - The temple was so noble a structure, that it was a great honour to any man to be employed in the meanest part of the work, though it were but in cutting down the trees of Lebanon.

6. Axes and hammers - These words are not Hebrew, but Chaldee or Syriack, to point out the time when this was done, even when the Chaldeans brought in their language, together with their arms, among the Israelites.

8. Destroy them - All at once. So they intended, although afterwards they changed their council, and carried some away captive. Burnt up - All the public places wherein the Jews used to meet together to worship God every sabbath-day.

9. Signs - Those tokens of God's gracious presence, which we used to enjoy. The temple and ark, and sacrifices, and solemn feasts, were signs between God and his people. Prophet - Who can foretell things to come. Probably Ezekiel and Jeremiah were dead when this psalm was composed; and David was involved in civil affairs, and did not teach the people as a prophet. Knoweth - How long their captivity should continue.

11. Why - Why dost thou forebear the exercise of thy power? Bosom - In which thou now seemest to hide it.

12. King - It belongs therefore to thy office to protect and save me. Midst - In the view of the world.

13. Dragons - He means Pharaoh and his mighty men.

14. Leviathan - Pharaoh. The people - To the ravenous birds and beasts of the desert. These creatures are significantly called the people of the wilderness, because they are the only people that inhabit it.

15. The flood - Thou didst by cleaving the rock, make a fountain and a stream to flow from it, for the refreshment of thy people in those dry deserts. Driedst - Jordan and the Red Sea; for the sea itself; yea, a greater sea than that, is called a river, Jonah ii, 3, where the Hebrew word is the same which is here used. And the same title is expressly given to the sea, by Homer, and other ancient writers.

16. The light - The moon, the lesser light.

17. Set - Thou hast fixed the bounds of the habitable world in general, and of all the countries and people upon the earth. And as this clause shews God's power over all places, so the next displays his dominion over all times and seasons.

18. Remember - Though we deserve to be forgotten, yet do not suffer our enemies to reproach the name of the great and glorious God.

19. Soul - The life. Turtle-dove - Of thy church, which is fitly compared to a turtle-dove, because simple and harmless, and meek, and faithful.

20. The covenant - Made with Abraham, whereby thou didst give the land of Canaan to him, and to his seed for ever. Dark places - This dark and dismal land in which we live.

21. Return - From the throne of thy grace, to which they make their resort.

## 75

Probably David wrote this psalm, at his coming to the crown, after the death of Saul, and delivered it to that Asaph, who was chief of the musicians. Herein he thanks God for bringing him to the throne, checks the insolence of his enemies, owns the sovereignty of God in all affairs, and promised to lay himself out for the public good. To the chief musician, Al-taschith, A psalm or song of Asaph. Title of the psalm. Asaph - This psalm seems to relate to the time when David had entered upon, but not got full possession of the kingdom.

1. Thy name - Thy self; art present with us, and ready to help.

2. Receive - The whole congregation, all the tribes.

3. Dissolved - Or, destroyed; by intestine divisions and wars. I hear - I support it, by maintaining religion and justice, by setting up good magistrates, and encouraging good ministers, and good men, who are indeed the pillars of a nation.

4. I said - I charged them. Deal not - Desist from your practices. Lift not up - Do not carry yourselves scornfully and maliciously.

5. Lift not - A metaphor from untamed oxen, which will not bow their heads to receive the yoke. Stiff neck - With pride and contempt.

8. For - God is here compared to the master of a feast, who then used to distribute portions of meat and drink to the several guests. A cup - Of vengeance. Red - Such as the best wine of Judea was. Mixture - The wine is mingled not with water, but with strengthening and intoxicating ingredients. Dregs - The worst and most dreadful part of those tribulations. Shall wring - This dreadful draught was brought upon them by their own choice and wickedness.

9. Declare - The praises of God.

10. Horns - Their honour and power, which they made an instrument of mischief. Will - When I shall be advanced to the throne. But - Good men shall be encouraged and promoted.

## 76

Asaph congratulates the church, in having God so nigh, ver. 1-3. He celebrates the power of God, shewn in some late victory over their enemies, ver. 4-6. He shews that all ought to fear him on this account, ver. 7-9 And that his people ought to trust him, and to pay their vows, ver. 10-12. To the chief musician on Neginoth, A psalm or song of Asaph.

2. Salem - In Jerusalem, which was anciently called Salem. Zion - Largely so called, as it includes Moriah, an adjoining hill.

3. There - At Jerusalem. Sword - Both offensive and defensive weapons. Battle - All the power of the army, which was put in battle-array.

4. Thou - O God. Than - The greatest kings and empires of the earth, which in prophetic writings are often compared to mountains. And they are called mountains of prey, because they generally were established by tyranny, and maintained by preying upon their own subjects, or other kingdoms.

5. Sleep - Even a perpetual sleep.

6. Chariot - The men who rode upon, and fought from chariots and horses.

8. Thou - Didst execute judgment upon thine enemies, by an angel from heaven: which is said to be heard, either because it was accompanied with thunders and earthquakes, or because the fame of it was quickly spread abroad. Feared - The rest of the world were afraid to disturb Israel.

10 Surely - The furious attempts of thine enemies, shall cause thy people and others to praise thee for thy admirable wisdom, power, and faithfulness.

11. Vow - A sacrifice of thanksgiving for this wonderful deliverance. Let all - All the neighbouring nations submit to the God of Israel.

12. Cut off - As men do their grapes in time of vintage; so the Hebrew verb implies. The spirit - Their breath and life, as he did in the Assyrian army.

**77**

The psalmist complains of deep distress, and temptations to despair, ver. 1-10. He encourages himself to hope, by the remembrance of what God had done formerly, ver. 11-20. To the chief musician, to Jeduthun, A psalm of Asaph.

2. Night - Which to others was a time of rest and quietness.

3. Troubled - Yea, the thoughts of God were now a matter of trouble, because he was angry with me. Overwhelmed - So far was I from finding relief.

4. Waking - By continual grief.

5. The days - The mighty works of God in former times.

6. My song - The mercies of God vouchsafed to me, and to his people, which have obliged me to sing his praises, not only in the day, but also by night.

7. Cut off - His peculiar people.

10. I said - These suspicions of God's faithfulness proceed from the weakness of my faith. The years - The years wherein God hath done great and glorious works, which are often ascribed to God's right-hand.

13. In holiness - God is holy and just, and true in all his works.

16. Afraid - And stood still, as men astonished, do.

17. Poured - When the Israelites passed over the sea. Arrows - Hail-stones or lightnings.

19. Not known - Because the water returned and covered them.

20. Leddest - First through the sea, and afterwards through the wilderness, with singular care and tenderness, as a shepherd doth his sheep.

**78**

This psalm is a narrative of the great mercies God had bestowed upon Israel, the great sins wherewith they had provoked him, and the many tokens of his displeasure at them. Here is, The preface, ver. 1-8. The general scope of this psalm, ver. 9-11. As to the particulars, we are told, what God had done for them; how ungrateful they were for his favours; how God had justly punished them; and how graciously he had spared them, notwithstanding all their provocations, ver. 12-72. Maschil of Asaph.

1. My law - The doctrine which I am about to deliver. 2. Parable - Weighty sentences. Dark sayings - Not that the words are hard to be understood, but the things, God's transcendent goodness, their unparallel'd ingratitude; and their stupid ignorance and insensibleness, under such excellent teachings of God's word and works, are prodigious and hard to be believed. Of old - Of things done in ancient times.

5. Established - This is justly put in first place, as the chief of all his mercies. A testimony - His law, called a testimony, because it is a witness between God and men, declaring the duties which God expects from man, and the blessings which man may expect from God.

9. Ephraim - That Ephraim is here put for all Israel seems evident from the following verses, wherein the sins, upon which this overthrow is charged, are manifestly the sins of all the children of Israel, and they who are here called Ephraim are called Jacob and Israel, ver. 21, and this passage may refer to that dreadful overthrow related, 1 Sam. iv, 10, 11, which is particularly named, because as the ark, so the flight was in that tribe. And the psalmist having related this amazing providence, falls into a large discourse of the causes of it, namely, the manifold sins of that and the former generations, which having prosecuted from hence to ver. 60, he there returns to this history, and relates the sad consequence of that disaster, the captivity of the ark, and God's forsaking of Shiloh and Ephraim, and removing thence to the tribe of Judah and mount Zion. Bows - These are put for all arms.

12. Field - In the territory. Zoan - An ancient and eminent city of Egypt.

15. Wilderness - In Rephidim, and again in Kadesh.

16. Streams - Which miraculously followed them in all their travels, even to the borders of Canaan.

17. Wilderness - Where they had such singular obligations to obedience. This was a great aggravation of their sins.

18. Tempted - Desired a proof of God's power. Lust - Not for their necessary subsistence, but out of an inordinate and luxurious appetite.

22. Trusted not - That he both could, and would save them from the famine which they feared.

23. Heaven - Which he compares to a store-house, whereof God shuts or opens the doors, as he sees fit.

25. Angels food - Manna, so called, because it was made by the ministry of angels.

26. South wind - First an eastern, and afterwards a southern wind.

27. Fowl - But God took away from them the use of their wings, and made them to fall into the hands of the Israelites.

31. Mightiest - The most healthy and strong, who probably were most desirous of this food, and fed most eagerly upon it.

33. Vanity - In tedious and fruitless marches hither and thither. Trouble - In manifold diseases, dangers, and perplexities.

34. Returned - From their idols. Inquired - Speedily sought to God for ease and safety.

35. Redeemer - That God alone had preserved them in all their former exigencies, and that he only could help them.

36. Lied - They made but false protestations of their sincere resolutions of future obedience.

42. Hand - The glorious works of his hand. Enemy - That remarkable day, in which God delivered them from their greatest enemy, Pharaoh.

45. Flies - These flies were doubtless extraordinary in their nature, and hurtful qualities. And the like is to be thought concerning the frogs.

46. labour - The herbs which were come up by their care and labour.

47. Sycamore-trees - Under these and the vines, all other trees are comprehended. This hail and frost destroyed the fruit of the trees, and sometimes the trees themselves.

49. Evil angels - Whom God employed in producing these plagues.

51. Ham - Of the Egyptians, the posterity of Ham, the cursed children of a cursed parent.

54. Holy place - The land of Canaan, separated by God from all other lands. Mountain - The mountainous country of Canaan; the word mountain is often used in scripture for a mountainous country.

57. Deceitful bow - Which either breaks when it is drawn, or shoots awry, and frustrates the archer's expectation.

59. Heard - Perceived or understood, it is spoken of God after the manner of men.

60. Shiloh - Which was placed in Shiloh. Among men - Whereby he insinuates both God's wonderful condescension, and their stupendous folly in despising so glorious a privilege.

61. His strength - The ark, called God's strength, 1 Chron. xvi, 11, because it was the sign and pledge of his strength put forth on his people's behalf. Glory - So the ark is called, as being the monument and seat of God's glorious presence. Enemies - The Philistines.

64. Priests - Hophni and Phinehas. No lamentation - No funeral solemnities; either because they were prevented by their own death, as the wife of Phinehas was, or disturbed by the invasion of the enemy.

66. Smote - Them with the piles. Reproach - He caused them to perpetuate their own reproach by sending back the ark of God with their golden emrods, the lasting monuments of their shame.

67. Refused - He would not have his ark to abide any longer in the tabernacle of Shiloh, which was in the tribe of Joseph or Ephraim.

68. Chose - For the seat of the ark and of God's worship.

69. Sanctuary - The temple of Solomon. Palaces - Magnificent and gloriously. Established - Not now to be moved from place to place, as the tabernacle was, but as a fixed place for the ark's perpetual residence.

## 79

This psalm seems to have been written by the later Asaph, upon the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. It contains, a representation of the deplorable condition of the Jews, ver. 1-5. And a petition for deliverance, ver. 6-13. A psalm of Asaph.

8. Prevent - Prevent our utter extirpation.

11. The prisoner - Of thy poor people now in captivity.

## 80

This psalm was composed upon occasion of some calamity, which befel the tribes of Israel after their division into two kingdoms, and before the captivity of either of them. In which time all the evils mentioned herein did befall them, sometimes in one part, and sometimes in another. The psalmist prays for the tokens of God's presence, ver. 1-3. Complains of heavy distress, ver. 4-7.

Illustrates this, by the comparison of a vine, ver. 8-16. Concludes with a prayer for mercy, ver. 17-19. To the chief musician upon Shoshannim Eduth, A psalm of Asaph. Title of the psalm. Shoshannim Eduth - It seems to be the name of a musical instrument.

1. Joseph - The children of Joseph or Israel. The name of Joseph, the most eminent of the patriarchs, is elsewhere put for all the tribes. Cherubim - Which were by the mercy seat above the ark.

2. Before Ephraim - Here is an allusion to the ancient situation of the tabernacle in the wilderness, where these tribes were placed on the west-side of the tabernacle, in which the ark was, which consequently was before them.

3. Turn us - To thy self.

9. Preparedst - Thou didst root out the idolatrous nations. Deep root - Thou gavest them a firm settlement.

10. The hills - They filled not only the fruitful valleys, but even the barren mountains.

11. The river - They possessed the whole land, from the mid-land sea to the river Euphrates.

12. Hedges - Taken away thy protection.

16. They - Thy people, signified by the vine. So now he passes from the metaphor to the thing designed by it.

17. Be - To protect and strengthen him. Right-hand - Benjamin signifies the son of the right hand, a dearly beloved son, as Benjamin was to Jacob. Son of man - The people of Israel, who are often spoken of as one person, as God's son and first-born.

18. Go back - Revolt from thee to idolatry or wickedness. Quicken - Revive and restore us to our tranquility.

## 81

This psalm may assist us in our solemn feast-days, in praising God, for what he is, and what he has done, ver. 1-7. In admonishing one another, concerning our obligations to God, the danger of revolting from him, and the happiness of keeping close to him, ver. 8-16. To the chief musician upon Gittith, A psalm of Asaph.

5. Joseph - Among the people of Israel. Testimony - For a witness of that glorious deliverance. He - God. Went - As a captain at the head of his people. Egypt - To execute his judgments upon that land. I - My progenitors, for all the successive generations of Israel make one body, and are sometimes spoken of as one person. A language - The Egyptian language, which at first was unknown to the Israelites, Gen. xlii, 13, and probably continued so for some considerable time, because they were much separated both in place and conversation from the Egyptians.

6. Pots - This word denotes all those vessels wherein they carried water, straw, lime, or bricks.

7. Calledst - At the Red Sea. Secret place - From the dark and cloudy pillar, whence I thundered against the Egyptians.

8. Testify - This God did presently after he brought them from Meribah, even at Sinai.

10. Wide - Either to pray for mercies, or to receive the mercies which I am ready to give you.

15. Him - Unto Israel. Their time - Their happy time.

16. Honey - With all pleasant and precious fruits.

## 82

We have here the dignity and duty of magistrates, ver. 1-4. The wickedness of some magistrates, and their doom, ver. 5-7. A prayer to God, ver. 8. A psalm of Asaph.

1. Standeth - To observe all that is said or done there. Mighty - Kings or chief rulers. By their congregation he understands all persons whatsoever of this high and sacred order. Judgeth - Passes sentence upon them. The gods - Judges and magistrates are called gods, because they have their commission from God, and act as his deputies.

2. How long - The psalmist speaks to them in God's name. Accept - By giving sentence according to your respect or affection to the person.

5. They - The magistrates of whom this psalm treats. Know not - The duty of their place. Nor will - Their ignorance is wilful. Walk on - They persist: it is their constant course. In darkness - In their sinful courses. The foundations - This corruption of the supreme rulers, flows from them to their inferior officers and members.

6. Have said - I have given you my name and power to rule your people in my stead. All - Not only the rulers of Israel, but of all other nations. Children - Representing my person, and bearing both my name and authority.

7. Like men - Or, like ordinary men.

8. Arise - Take the sword of justice into thine own hand.

## 83

A remonstrance of the designs and endeavours of Israel's enemies, ver. 1-8. A prayer, that God would defeat them, preserve his church, and get himself glory, ver. 9-18. A song or psalm of Asaph.

3. Hidden ones - Thy people of Israel, who are called God's hidden or secret ones, to intimate the respect which God has to them, as to his peculiar treasure.

6. The tabernacles - The people dwelling in them. Ishmaelites - Some of the posterity of Ishmael, called by their father's name, as others of them are supposed to be called Hagarens from their grandmother Hagar.

7. Gebal - An Arabian people so called by ancient writers dwelling in the southern border of Canaan, where most of the people here mentioned had their abode.

8. Of Lot - Moab and Ammon.

13. A wheel - Whereas they promise to themselves a sure possession, let them be like a wheel, which is very unstable, and soon removed.

14. The mountains - The woods upon the mountains, which in those hot countries, when they have once taken fire, burn with irresistible violence.

16. May seek - May own and worship thee as the only true God.

## 84

The psalmist declares his love for the ordinances of God, and the happiness of those that enjoy them, ver. 1-7. A devout prayer, and expression of faith in him, ver. 8-12. It is generally supposed, David wrote this, when he was driven out of the land by Absalom. To the chief musician upon Gittith, A psalm for the sons of Korah.

4. They-That constantly abide in thy house; the priests and Levites, or other devout Jews who were there perpetually, as Anna, Luke ii, 36-37. They will - They are continually employed in that blessed work.

5. Whose strength - Who trusteth in thee as his only strength. Thy ways - Blessed are they whose hearts are set upon Zion and their journey is thither.

6. Baca - A dry valley in the way to Jerusalem, here put for all places of like nature. Make a well - They dig divers little pits or wells in it for their relief. The rain - God recompenses their diligence with his blessing, sending rain wherewith they may be filled.

7. They go - They grow stronger and stronger. Appeareth - This is added as the blessed fruit of their long and tedious journey.

9. Look - Cast a favourable eye towards him. Anointed - Of me, who though a vile sinner, am thine anointed king.

10. Than dwell - In the greatest glory and plenty.

11. A sun - To enlighten and quicken, and direct and comfort his people. Shield - To save his people from all their enemies. Grace - His favour, which is better than life. Glory - The honour which comes from God here, and eternal glory.

## 85

A recital of past, and prayer for present mercy, ver. 1-7. A prediction of a favourable answer, ver. 8-13. To the chief musician, A psalm for the sons of Korah.

1. Captivity - The captives.

4. Turn us - Restore us to our former tranquillity, and free us from the troubles which we yet groan under.

6. Revive us - Give us a second reviving in bringing home the rest of our brethren, and in restraining our enemies.

8. Will hear - Diligently observe. Will speak - What answer God will give to my prayers. Peace - He will give an answer of peace. Saints - Not to all that are called God's people, but only to those who are truly such.

9. His salvation - That compleat salvation for which all the Israel of God wait; even the redemption by the Messiah; of which not only Christian, but even Jewish writers understand this place; and to which the following passages properly belong. And the psalmist might well say this salvation was nigh, because the seventy weeks determined by Daniel were begun. Glory - The glorious presence of God, and the God of glory himself, even Christ, who is the brightness of his father's glory.

10. Kissed - That great work of redemption by Christ, shall clearly manifest God's mercy in redeeming his people Israel, and in the conversion of the Gentiles; his truth in fulfilling that great promise of sending his son, his righteousness in punishing sin, on his son, and in conferring righteousness upon guilty and lost creatures; and his peace or reconciliation to sinners, and that peace of conscience which attends upon it.

11. Truth - Truth among men. Righteousness - And God's justice shall be satisfied: he shall look down upon sinful men with a smiling countenance.

13. Before him - As his harbinger. He shall fulfil all righteousness, he shall satisfy the righteousness of God, and shall advance righteousness and holiness among men. Set us - Shall cause us to walk in those righteous ways wherein he walketh.

## 86

David prays for the favour and blessing of God, ver. 1-6. Expresses confidence in him, by praise mingled with prayer, ver. 7-17. A prayer of David.

2. Holy - Sincerely devoted to thy service.

11. Truth - In the way of thy precepts, which are true and right in all things. My heart - Knit my whole heart to thyself.

13. Hell - From extreme dangers and miseries.

## 87

This psalm contains a commendation of Zion, a type of the gospel-church, which is here preferred before the rest of the land of Canaan, ver. 1, 2, 3. And before any other place, as being filled with more eminent men, and more of divine blessings, ver. 4-7. A psalm or song for the sons of Korah.

1. Its foundation - The foundation of the temple of God.

2. Zion - That is, Zion itself, or Jerusalem, which was built upon and near mount Zion. He saith Zion rather than Jerusalem, to intimate that he loved Jerusalem for Zion's sake, or for the temple, which he chose for his peculiar dwelling place.

4. Rahab - Egypt, so called, either from its pride or natural strength. Babylon - Under these two and Philistia, the constant enemies of Israel, he seems to understand all the enemies of the church of God, who shall now be not only reconciled but united to them. Arabia - The nations on every side of them, for Tyre was on the north, Arabia on the South; those nearest to them, and those more remote from them.

5. Zion - Of Jerusalem, or the church of God. Said - It shall be acknowledged. Man - Hebrew. Man and man, all sorts of men without difference of nations. Establish - And this shall not be a transient, but a lasting work; Zion shall continue in its strength and fertility because the Almighty God is her founder and protector.

6. When - When God, the maker and governor of this city shall take a survey of all his citizens. It is an allusion to princes or governors of cities that use to write and keep a register of all their people.

7. Singers - There shall be great rejoicing and praising God, both with vocal and instrumental musick, for this glorious work of the conversion of the Gentiles. He describe's evangelical worship, by legal phrases and customs, as the prophets frequently do. In thee - In Zion or the church. These words may be here added as the burden of the song, which these singers are supposed to have sung, in the name of all the people of God. All our desires and delights are in thee, all the springs of mercy, grace, and glory, flow to us only in and thro' thee.

## 88

This is the most melancholy of all the psalms: it is all lamentation, and mourning, and woe. Here we have the pressure of spirit which the psalmist was under, ver. 1-9. His humble pleadings with God, ver. 10-14. A farther declaration of his affliction, ver. 15-18. A song or psalm for the sons of Korah, to the chief musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite. Title of the psalm. Leannoth - Which seems to be the name of the instrument. Heman - Probably the same person who was famous in David's time, both for his skill in musick, and for wisdom.

4. Counted - l am given up by my friends for a lost man.

5. Free - Well nigh discharged from the warfare of the present life, and entered as a member into the society of the dead. Whom - Thou seemest to neglect and bury in oblivion.

7. Waves - With they judgments, breaking in furiously upon me like the waves of the sea.

10. Wonders - In raising them to life. To praise thee - In this world?

12. Forgetfulness - In the grave, where men are forgotten by their nearest relations.

13. Prevent - Come to thee before the dawning of the day, or the rising of the sun.

17. Water - As the waters of the sea encompass him who is in the midst of it.

## 89

This psalm manifestly treats of the declining state of the house and kingdom of David, in or about the Babylonish captivity. The psalmist praises and rejoices in God, ver. 1-18. He builds all his hopes on God's covenant with David, ver. 19-37. He laments the present calamities of the king and royal family, ver. 38-45. Expostulates with, prays to God, and praises him, ver. 46- 52. Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite. Title of the psalm. Ezrahite - Not him who is mentioned, 1 Kings iv, 31, but some person of the same name, and inspired by the same spirit, who lived long after.

1. Sing - He prefaces this, lest the following complainers of present miseries should argue ingratitude for former mercies. Faithfulness - Whatsoever hath befallen us, it proceeded not from thy unfaithfulness.

2. Establish - As firmly and durably as the heavens themselves.

3. Chosen - With David; whom I have chosen to the kingdom.

4. Build up - I will perpetuate the kingdom to thy posterity; which was promised upon condition, and was literally accomplished in Christ.

5. Heavens - The inhabitants of heaven. Faithfulness - Understand, shall be praised; which supplements are usual in scripture.

6. Among - The highest angels.

7. Feared - With a fear of reverence. Saints - The whole society of angels. All that - That encompass his throne.

8. Round thee - Like a girdle encompassing thee. It appears in all thy words and works.

10. Rhahab - Egypt.

12. Tabor - The several parts of the land of Canaan, both within Jordan, where mount Tabor is; and without it, where Hermon lies. Rejoice - Shall be fruitful and prosperous, and so give their inhabitants cause to rejoice. In - By thy favour.

14. Justice and judgment - Justice in judging.

15. Know - Who enjoy the presence of God and his ordinances, to which they are called by the sound of trumpets. Walk - Under the comfortable influences of thy favour.

16. Name - In the knowledge and remembrance of thy name, of thy infinite power and goodness.

17. The glory - To thee alone belongs the glory of all their valiant achievements.

19. Vision - Which then was the usual way by which God spake to the prophets. Holy one - To thy holy prophets; the singular number being put for the plural; especially to Samuel and Nathan.

Laid help - I have provided help for my people. Upon - Upon a person of singular courage and wisdom.

22. Exact - Not conquer him or make him tributary.

25. Set - Establish his power and dominion. The sea - The mid- land sea. The rivers - Euphrates, called rivers, in regard of divers branches of it, and rivers which flow into it. So here is a description of the uttermost bounds of the promised land.

27. My first-born - As he calls me father, ver. 26, so I will make him my son, yea my first-born; who had divers privileges above other sons. This and the following passage in some sort agree to David, but are properly accomplished in Christ. Higher - This also was in some sort accomplished in David, but more fully in the Messiah.

29. For ever - To sit upon the throne for ever, as the next words explain it. This was accomplished only in Christ.

37. A witness - The rainbow, which is God's faithful witness, a token of God's everlasting covenant between God and every living creature for perpetual generations, Gen. ix, 12, 16.

38. But - Having hitherto declared the certainty of God's promises, he now humbly expostulates with God about it.

45. Youth - The youthful and flourishing estate of David's kingdom was very short, and reached not beyond his next successor.

47. Short - Our time, the time of our king and kingdom, in whose name the psalmist puts up this petition. Wherefore - Wherefore hast thou made us and our king (and consequently all other men, whose condition is nothing better than ours) in vain, or to so little purpose? Didst thou raise us and him, settle the crown upon David's head by a solemn covenant, and vouchsafe so many and great promises and privileges, and all this but for a few years, that our crown and glory should be taken from us, within a little time after it was put upon our heads?

48. What man - All men at their best estate are mortal and miserable; kings and people must unavoidably die by the conditions of their natures; and therefore, Lord, do not increase our affliction.

50. How I - We thy servants; our king and his people; of whom he speaks as of one person.

51. Anointed - By whom he seems to understand either first the kings of Judah, the singular number being put for the plural; and by their footsteps may be meant either their ways or actions, or the memorials of their ancient splendour; or secondly the Messiah, whom the Jews continually expected for a long time, which being well known to many of the Heathens, they reproached the Jews, with the vanity of this expectation. And by the footsteps of the Messiah, he may understand his coming.

52. Blessed - Let thine enemies reproach thee and thy promises concerning the sending of the Messiah, I will heartily bless and praise thee for them, and encourage myself with them.

## 90

Probably Moses wrote this psalm, on occasion of the sentence passed on the Israelites, that their carcases should fall in the wilderness. Herein he considers the eternity of God, ver. 1-3. And the frailty of man, ver, 4-6. He submits to the righteous sentence of God, ver. 7-11. And prays for the return of his favour, ver. 12-17. A prayer of Moses the Man of God. Title of the psalm. A prayer

of Moses - Who considering that terrible sentence of God, concerning the cutting off all that sinful generation in the wilderness, takes occasion to publish these meditations concerning man's mortality and misery. V.

1. Dwelling place - Although we and our fathers, for some generations, have had no fixed habitation, yet thou hast been instead of a dwelling-place to us, by thy watchful and gracious providence. And this intimates that all the following miseries were not to be imputed to God but themselves.

2. Thou - Thou hadst thy power, and all thy perfections, from all eternity.

3. Turnedst - But as for man, his case is far otherwise, though he was made by thee happy. and immortal, yet for his sin thou didst make him mortal and miserable. Saidst - Didst pronounce that sad sentence, return, O men, to the dust out of which ye were taken, Gen. iii, 19.

4. Past - Indeed time seems long when it is to come, but when it is past, very short and contemptible. A watch - Which lasted but three or four hours.

5. Them - Mankind. Away - Universally, without exception or distinction. A sleep - Short and vain, as sleep is, and not minded 'till it be past.

7. Are consumed - Thou dost not suffer us to live so long as we might by the course of nature.

8. Hast set - Thou dost observe them, as a righteous judge, and art calling us to an account for them. Secret sins - Which though hid from the eyes of men, thou hast brought to light by thy judgments.

10. Our years - Of the generality of mankind, in that and all following ages, some few persons excepted. Flee - We do not now go to death, as we do from our very birth, but flee swiftly away like a bird, as this word signifies.

11. Thy fear - According to the fear of thee; according to that fear which sinful men have of a just God. So - It bears full proportion to it, nay indeed doth far exceed it.

12. Teach us - To consider the shortness of life, and the certainty and speediness of death. That - That we may heartily devote ourselves to true wisdom.

13. Return - To us in mercy. How long - Will it be before thou return to us? Repent thee - Of thy severe proceedings against us.

14. Early - Speedily.

17. The beauty - His gracious influence, and glorious presence. In us - Do not only work for us, but in us,

## 91

This psalm is a dialogue, wherein one declares the safety of them, who take God for their keeper, ver. 1. David declares this to be his resolution, ver. 2. Various promises are made to him, ver. 3-13. Which God himself confirms, ver. 14-16.

1. He - He that makes God his habitation and refuge.

3. Pestilence - From the pestilence, which like a fowler's snare takes men suddenly and unexpectedly.

5. By night - When evil accidents are most terrible and least avoidable. Arrow - The pestilence, or any such destructive calamity; such are frequently called God's arrows. By day - Thou shalt be kept from secret and open mischiefs.

6. Darkness - Invisibly, so that we can neither foresee nor prevent it.

12. Bear thee - Sustain or uphold thee in thy goings, as we do a child.

13. The lion - Shall lie prostrate at thy feet, and thou shalt securely put thy feet upon his neck. Dragon - By which he understands all pernicious creatures, though never so strong, and all sorts of enemies.

14. Because - This and the two following verses are the words of God.

## 92

God is praised for his works, ver. 1-5. The doom of the wicked, from the eternal God, ver. 6-9. The prosperity of the righteous, ver. 10-15. A psalm or song for the sabbath-day.

5. Thoughts - Thy counsels in the government of the world and of thy church.

6. A brutish man - Who is led by sense, not by reason and faith. This - The depth of God's counsels and works.

10. Anointed - I shall have cause of testifying my joy by anointing myself, as the manner was at all joyful solemnities.

12. Palm-tree - Which is constantly green and flourishing.

13. Planted - Whom God by his gracious providence has fixed there. The house - In its courts; he means in the church of God, whereof all good men are living members.

14. Old age - Their last days shall be their best days, wherein they shall grow in grace, and increase in blessedness.

## 93

This and the six following psalms, according to the opinion of the Hebrew doctors, belong to the times of the Messiah. The glory of God's kingdom, both of providence and glory, ver. 1-6.

1. Clothed - That majesty and strength which he always had, he will shew in the eyes of all people. Moved - He will overrule all the confusions in the world, so that they shall end in the erection of that kingdom of the Messiah, which can never be moved.

3. Floods - The enemies of thy kingdom.

5. Testimonies-Thy promises, which no less than the precepts are God's testimonies, or the witnesses, or declarations of his will to mankind. He seems here to speak of those precious promises concerning the erection of his kingdom in the world by the Messiah. Holiness - It becometh thy people to be holy in all their approach to thee.

**94**

The danger and folly of persecuting the children of God, ver. 1-11. Assurance given to the persecuted, that God will deliver them, ver. 12-23.

4. Utter - Or pour forth freely, constantly, abundantly, as a fountain doth waters (so this Hebrew word signifies.) Hard things - Insolent, and intolerable words against thee and thy people.

7. Of Jacob - He who takes that name to himself, but has no regard to his people.

9. Planted - The word is emphatical, signifying the excellent structure of the ear, or the several organs belonging to the sense of hearing. Formed - By which word he intimates the accurate and curious workmanship of the eye.

10. Know - Mens thoughts and words and actions.

11. Thoughts - Yes, he knoweth all things, even the most secret things, as the thoughts of men; and in particular your thoughts; much more your practices.

12. Blessed - Those afflictions which are accompanied with Divine instructions are great and true blessings.

15. But - God will declare himself to be a righteous judge, and will again establish justice in the earth. Follow - They will all approve of it, and imitate this justice of God in all their actions.

16. Rise - To defend and help me. I looked hither and thither, but none appeared; God alone helped me.

17. Dwelt - In the place of silence, the grave.

19. Thoughts - While my heart was filled with various and perplexing thoughts, as this Hebrew word signifies. Comforts - Thy promises, and the remembrance of my former experience of thy care and kindness.

20. Shall - Wilt thou take part with the unrighteous powers of the world who oppress thy people. A law - By virtue of those unrighteous decrees which they have made.

**95**

The author of this psalm was David, as is affirmed, Heb. iv, 7. It has a special reference to the days of the Messiah; as it is understood by the apostle, Heb. iii, 7, &c. and Heb. iv, 3-9. Herein we are called upon, to praise God, as a great and gracious God, ver. 1-7. To hear God's voice, and not harden our hearts, lest we fall as the Israelites did, ver. 8-11.

3. God's - Above all that are called God's angels, earthly potentates, and especially the false gods of the Heathen.

4. Hand - Under his government. Strength - The strongest or highest mountains.

7. Pasture - Whom he feeds and keeps in his own pasture, or in the land which he hath appropriated to himself. The sheep - Which are under his special care. Today - Forthwith or presently.

8. Harden not - By obstinate unbelief. Provocation - In that bold and wicked contest with God in the wilderness. Temptation - In the day in which you tempted me.

9. Works - Both of mercy, and of justice.

10. Do err - Their hearts are insincere and bent to backsliding. Not known - After all my teaching and discoveries of myself to them; they did not know, nor consider, those great things which I had wrought for them.

11. My rest - Into the promised land, which is called the rest, Deut. xii, 9.

## 96

This psalm is a part of that which was delivered to Asaph and his brethren, 1 Chron. xvi, 7, on occasion of bringing up the ark to the city of David. Here is a call to praise God, as a great and glorious God, ver. 1-9. To rejoice in his judging all the world, ver. 10-13.

1. O sing - Upon this new and great occasion, not the removal of the ark, but the coming of the Messiah.

4. Gods - The gods of the nations, as the next verse expounds it.

6. Before him - In his presence.

9. Beauty - Cloathed with all the gifts and graces, which are necessary in God's worship.

10. Reigneth - God hath now set up his kingdom in the world. Established - The nations of the world shall by the means of it enjoy an established and lasting peace.

13. Before - At the presence and approach of their Lord and Maker. Cometh - To set up his throne among all the nations of the earth.

## 97

Christ is the Alpha and Omega in this psalm. His government speaks terror to his enemies, ver. 1-7. And comfort to his friends, whom he preserves and delivers, ver. 8-12.

1. Isles - The Gentile nations, as this word, used Isaiah xlii, 4, is expounded, Matt. xii, 21.

2. Darkness - A dark cloud doth encompass him.

6. Heavens - The angels, yea God himself from heaven.

7. Confounded - Let them be ashamed of their folly. Gods - All you whom the Gentiles have made the objects of their worship.

8. Zion - Thy people dwelling in Zion or Jerusalem, to whom Christ came. Heard - The fame of thy judgments, and the setting up the kingdom of the Messiah.

11. Light - Joy and happiness. Sown - Is laid up for them.

**98**

This psalm sets forth the glory of the Redeemer, ver. 1-3. And the joy of the redeemed, ver. 4-9. A psalm.

2. Salvation - The redemption of the world by the Messiah: which was hitherto reserved was a secret among the Jews, yea was not throughly known by the most of the Jews themselves. Righteousness - His faithfulness in accomplishing this great promise.

**99**

Israel is required to praise God, for their hasty constitution both in church and state, ver. 1-5. Some instances of the happy administration of it, ver. 6-9.

1. People - Such as are enemies to God and his people. Sitteth - Upon the ark. He is present with his people. Earth - The people of the earth. Moved - With fear and trembling.

3. Them - All people.

4. Judgment - Though his dominion be absolute, and his power irresistible, yet he manages it with righteousness. The king's strength is by a known Hebraism put for the strong, or powerful king. Equity - In all thy proceedings.

5. Foot-stool - Before the ark, which is so called, 1 Chron. xxviii, 2. Holy - It is consecrated to be a pledge of God's presence.

6. Moses - Moses before the institution of the priesthood executed that office, Exod. xxiv, 6. That call - Who used frequently and solemnly to intercede with God on the behalf of the people.

7. Spake - To some of them: to Moses and Aaron, Exod. xix, 24; xxxiii, 9-11; 1 Sam. vii, 9, &c.

8. Them - The intercessors before mentioned. Forgavest - The people for whom they prayed, so far as not to inflict that total destruction upon them which they deserved;

## 100

An exhortation to praise God and to rejoice in him, ver. 1- 5 A psalm of praise

## 101

This psalm was composed by David between the time of God's promising the kingdom to him and his actual possession of it. The general scope of David's vow, at his entrance on his government, ver. 1, 2. The particulars of it, ver. 3-8. A psalm of David.

1. I will sing - I will praise thee, O Lord, for thy mercy and justice, which thou hast so eminently discovered in the government of the world, and of thy people; and I will make it my care to imitate thee herein.

2. I will - I will manage all my affairs with wisdom and integrity. When - God is often said in scripture to come to men, when he fulfills a promise to them. House - In my court and family, as well as in my public administrations.

4. Depart - Shall be turned out of my court. Know - Not own nor countenance.

8. Early - Speedily; as soon as I am seated in the throne.

## 102

A complaint of pressing afflictions, ver. 1-11. Motives of comfort, ver. 12-28. A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD. Title of the psalm. Complaint - This psalm contains a prayer for the use of all true Israelites, in the name and behalf of the church of Israel. It seems to have been composed in the time of their captivity, and near the end of it, ver. 13, 14.

3. An hearth - An hearth is heated or burnt by the coals which are laid upon it.

5. Skin - My flesh being quite consumed.

6. A pelican - Is a solitary and mournful bird.

9. Bread - The sense is, dust and ashes are as familiar to me as the eating of my bread; I cover my head with them; I sit, yea, lie down in them, as mourners often did.

10. Lifted me - As a man lifts up a thing as high as he can, that he may cast it to the ground with greater force.

12. Remembrance - Thy name, Jehovah, which is called by this very word, God's remembrance, or memorial, and that unto all generations, Exod. iii, 15.

13. The set time - The end of those seventy years which thou hast fixed.

18. This - This wonderful deliverance shall be carefully recorded by thy people.

19. Looked - From heaven.

20. To loose - To release his poor captives out of Babylon, and from the chains of sin and eternal destruction.

21. To declare - That they might publish the name and praises of God in his church.

22. When - When the Gentiles shall gather themselves to the Jews, and join with them in the worship of the true God.

23. He - God. The way - In the midst of the course of our lives. Some think the psalmist here speaks of the whole commonwealth as of one man, and of its continuance, as of the life of one man.

24. I said - Do not wholly destroy thy people Israel. In the midst - Before they come to a full possession of thy promises and especially of that fundamental promise of the Messiah. Thy years - Though we die, yet thou art the everlasting God.

26. Perish - As to their present nature and use.

28. Continue - Though the heavens and earth perish, yet we rest assured that our children, and their children after them, shall enjoy an happy restitution to, and settlement in their own land.

## 103

The psalmist stirs up himself to praise God for all his benefits, ver. 1-19. Calls upon all his works to assist him therein, ver. 20-22. A psalm of David.

5. The eagles - Which lives long in great strength and vigour.

11. So great - So much above their deserts and expectations.

14. Knoweth - The weakness and mortality of our natures, and the frailty of our condition, so that if he should let loose his hand upon us, we should be irrecoverably destroyed.

21. His hosts - A title often given to the angels, in regard of their vast numbers, mighty power, unanimous concurrence, and exquisite order. Ministers - This Hebrew word is commonly used of the highest and most honourable sort of servants,

## 104

David in the foregoing psalm praises God for his love to his people; in this, for his works of creation and providence. He gives God the glory of his majesty in the upper world, ver. 1-4. The creation of the sea and dry land, ver. 5-9. The provision he makes for all the creatures, ver. 10-18. The regular course of the sun and moon, ver. 19-24. The furniture of the sea, ver. 25, 26. God's care and sovereign power over all the creatures, ver. 27-32. Concludes with a resolution to continue praising God, ver. 33-35.

2. Light - With that first created light, which the psalmist fitly puts in the first place, as being the first of God's visible works.

3. Waters - In the waters above the heavens, as they are called, Gen. i, 7.

4. Spirits - Of a spiritual or incorporeal nature, that they might be fitter for their employments. Fire - So called for their irresistible force and agility, and fervency in the execution of God's commands.

5. Who laid - Hebrew. he hath established the earth upon its own basis, whereby it stands as fast and unmoveable, as if it were built upon the strongest foundations. Forever - As long as the world continues. God has fixt so strange a place for the earth, that being an heavy body, one would think it should fall every moment. And yet which way so ever we would imagine it to stir, it must, contrary to the nature of such a body, fall upwards, and so can have no possible ruin, but by tumbling into heaven.

6. The deep - In the first creation, Gen. i, 2, 9.

7. Rebuke - Upon thy command, Gen. i, 9. Fled - They immediately went to the place which God had allotted them.

8. Go up - In that first division of the waters from the earth, part went upwards, and became springs in the mountains, the greatest part went downwards to the channels made for them.

9. A bound - Even the sand of the sea-shore.

11. Wild asses - Stupid creatures, and yet plentifully provided for by the Divine providence.

13. The hills - Which most need moisture. From - From the clouds. Satisfied - By this means all the parts of the earth, are made fruitful. The fruit - With the effects of those sweet showers.

15. Oil - He alludes to the custom of those times and places, which was upon festival occasions to anoint their faces with oil. Bread - Which preserves or renews our strength and vigour.

16. Trees - Which come up, and thrive not by man's industry, but merely by the care of God's providence.

19. For seasons - To distinguish the times, the seasons of divers natural events, as of the ebbing and flowing of waters, and other seasons for sacred and civil affairs, which were commonly regulated by the moon.

21. Roar - They roar when they come within sight of their prey. Seek - Their roaring is a kind of natural prayer to God, for relief.

25. Creeping - This word is common to all creatures that move without feet.

26. Leviathan - The whale. Therein - Who being of such a vast strength and absolute dominion in the sea, tumbles in it with great security, and sports himself with other creatures.

20. Darkness - Which succeeds the light by virtue of thy decree.

29. Hidest - Withdrawest the care of thy providence.

30. Spirit - That quickening power of God, by which he produces life in the creatures from time to time. For he speaks not here of the first creation, but of the continued production of living creatures. Created - Other living creatures are produced; the word created being taken in its largest sense for the production of things by second causes. Renewest - And thus by thy wise and wonderful providence thou preservest the succession of living creatures.

31. Rejoice - Thus God advances the glory of his wisdom and power and goodness, in upholding the works of his hands from generation to generation, and he takes pleasure in the preservation of his works, as also in his reflection upon these works of his providence.

32. He looketh - This is a farther illustration of God's powerful providence: as when he affords his favour to creatures, they live and thrive, so on the contrary, one angry look or touch of his upon the hills or earth, makes them tremble and smoke, as Sinai did when God appeared in it.

35. Praise ye the Lord - Hebrew. Hallelujah. This is the first time that this word occurs. And it comes in here on occasion of the destruction of the wicked. And the last time it occurs, Rev. xix, 1, 3, 4, 6, it is on a like occasion, the destruction of Babylon.

**105**

In the former psalm we praise God for his common providence; in this, for his special favours to his church. The first eleven verses of it David delivered to Asaph, (1 Chron. xvi, 7, &c.) to be used in the daily service of the sanctuary. Here is the preface, ver. 1-7. The history itself in several articles: God's covenant with the patriarchs, ver. 8-11. His care of them in a strange land, ver. 12-15. His raising up Joseph, ver. 16-22. The increase of Israel in Egypt, and their deliverance out of it, ver. 23- 38. His care of them in the wilderness, and their settlement in Canaan, ver. 39-45.

3. Glory - Glory in the God whom you serve, as the only true God.

4. Seek - The Lord in his strength, in his sanctuary, or before the ark, which is called God's strength. Face - His gracious presence.

5. Judgments - The punishments which he brought upon Egypt by his mere word.

6. Of Jacob - The only branch of Abraham's seed to whom the following blessings belong.

7. Judgments - God executes his judgments upon all nations and people.

8. Remembered - So as to perform it. The word - The promise. Commanded - Established. Thousand generations - To all generations.

9. Oath - Wherewith he ratified the covenant with Isaac, Gen. xxvi, 3.

10. A law - That it might be as firm and irrevocable as a law.

11. Lot - The portion assigned to you by lot.

13. They went - Both in Canaan, where there were seven nations, and in Egypt.

15. Anointed - My prophets, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; who are called God's anointed, because they were consecrated to be his peculiar people, and to be kings and princes in their families. And they are called prophets, because God familiarly conversed with them and revealed his will to them, and by them to others.

16. Staff of bread - Bread, which is the staff or support of our lives.

19. His word - That word or Revelation which came first to Pharaoh in a dream, and then to Joseph concerning the interpretation of it. Purged - From those calamities which were cast upon him, and so prepared the way for his release.

23. Ham - Ham was the father of Mizraim, or the Egyptians, Gen. x, 6.

25. Turned - That is, suffered them, to be turned.

28. They - Moses and Aaron, who inflicted that plague after Pharaoh had threatened them.

30. Land - Their country. In chambers - Which entered into the chambers. Kings - Of Pharaoh and his sons, and his chief nobles and governors.

31. Coasts - In all their land, even to the utmost borders of it.

37. Feeble - Diseased or unable for his journey: which in so vast a body, and in a people who had been so dreadfully oppressed, was wonderful.

39. Covering - To protect them from the heat of the sun.

40. Quails - He speaks of the first giving of quails, Exod. xvi, 13, which God gave them as a refreshment, notwithstanding their sin in desiring them, which he graciously pardoned. Bread - With manna which came out of the air, commonly called heaven.

41. River - They flowed in channels which God provided for them, and followed the Israelites in their march.

44. labour - The fruits of their labour; their cities, vineyards, olive-yards.

## 106

The foregoing psalm was an history of God's goodness to Israel; this is an history of their rebellion: against him; probably both were wrote by David at the same time, as we find the first verse and the two last in that psalm, which he delivered to Asaph, 1 Chron. xvi, 35, &c. Herein we have the preface, ver. 1-5. The narrative of all of the sins of Israel, aggravated by the great things God did for them; their provocations at the Red-sea, ver. 6-12. Lusting, ver. 13-15. Mutinying, ver. 16-18. Worshiping the golden calf, ver. 19-23. Murmuring, ver. 24-27. Worshiping Baal- peor, ver. 28-31. Quarreling with Moses, ver, 32, 33. Mixing with the nations of Canaan, ver. 34-39. God rebuked them, yet saved them from ruin, ver. 40-46. The conclusion, ver. 47, 48. It begins and ends with Hallelujah.

4. Me - He speaks here in the name, and on the behalf of the whole nation. With-With those favours which thou dost usually and peculiarly give to thy people.

5. See - Enjoy. Chosen - Of thy chosen people; such as are Israelites indeed. Gladness - Such joy as thou hast formerly afforded unto thy beloved nation. Glory - That we may have occasion to glory in God's goodness towards us. Inheritance - In the congregation of thy people.

6. Glory - As our fathers did.

7. At the sea - When those wonders were but newly done, and fresh in memory.

8. Saved them - That he may vindicate his name from the blasphemous reproaches, which would have been cast upon it, if they had been destroyed.

9. Led them - As securely as if they had walked upon the dry land.

13. Soon - Even within three days, Exod. xv, 22, 23. Waited not - They did not wait patiently upon God for supplies, in such manner and time as he thought fit.

14. Lusted - For flesh.

15. Souls - Into their bodies. So their inordinate desire of pampering their bodies, was the occasion of destroying them.

16. The saint - So called, because he was consecrated by God for that sacred office of the priesthood, in which respect all the priests are said to be holy, Lev. xxi, 6-8. Hereby he intimates, that their envy and rebellion was not only against Aaron, but against God himself.

19. A calf - When they were but just brought out of Egypt by such wonders, and had seen the plagues of God upon the Egyptian idolaters, and when the law of God was but newly delivered to them in such a tremendous manner.

20. Their glory - God, who was indeed their glory. Into - Into the golden image of an ox or calf, which is so far from feeding his people, as the true God did the Israelites, that he must be fed by them.

23. Breach - God had made a wall about them; but they had made a breach in it by their sins, at which the Lord, who was now justly become their enemy, might enter to destroy them; which he had certainly done, if Moses by his prevailing intercession had not hindered him.

24. Despised - Preferring Egypt, and their former bondage, before it, Num. xiv, 3, 4.

25. The voice - To God's command, that they should boldly enter into it.

26. Lifted up - He swear. Of this dreadful and irrevocable oath of God, see Num. xiv, 11, 12.

27. Overthrow - He swear also (tho' not at the same time) that he would punish their sins, not only in their persons, but in their posterity.

28. Joined - They had communion with him, as God's people have with God in acts of his worship.

31. And - It was accepted and rewarded of God as an act of justice and piety.

37. Devils - They did not worship God as they pretended, but devils in their idols; for those spirits, which were supposed by the Heathen idolaters to inhabit in their images, were not good spirits, but evil spirits, or devils.

43. Counsel - By forsaking God's way, and following their own inventions.

45. Repented - Changed his course and dealing with them.

## 107

The psalmist here observes God's providential care of the children of men in general, and shews how he helps those that are in any distress, in answer to their prayers. He instances in banishment and dispersion, ver. 1-9. Captivity and imprisonment, ver. 10-16. Sickness, ver. 17-22. Distress at sea, ver. 23-32. The disposal of families and nations, ver. 33-13

3. Gathered - Into their own land.

4. No city - Or rather, no town inhabited, where they might refresh themselves.

6. The Lord - Hebrew. Unto Jehovah, to the true God. For the Heathens had, many of them, some knowledge of the true God.

7. Forth - Out of the wilderness.

10. Darkness - In dark prisons or dungeons.

12. Heart - The pride and obstinacy of their hearts. Fell - They fell into hopeless miseries.

17. Afflicted - With sickness.

20. Word - His command, or blessing.

32. Exalt him - In public assemblies, and before all persons, as they have opportunity. Elders - The magistrates or rulers; let them not be ashamed nor afraid to speak of God's wonderful works, before the greatest of men.

33. Rivers - Those grounds which are well watered, and therefore fruitful. And so the water-springs, here, and the standing water, ver. 35 are taken. Into - Into a dry ground, which is like a parched and barren wilderness.

34. For - He doth not inflict these judgments without cause, but for the punishment of sin in some, and the prevention of it in others.

35. Water - Into a well-watered and fruitful land.

36. Hungry - Poor people who could not provide for themselves.

39. They - These men, who when they are exalted by God, grow insolent and secure. Low - By God's just judgment.

40. Contempt - Renders them despicable. Wander - Banishes them from their own courts and kingdoms, and forces them to flee into desolate wildernesses for shelter.

## 108

The five first verses of this psalm are taken out of psalm 57, the rest out of psalm 60. David thanks God for personal mercies, ver. 1-5. Prays for national mercies, ver. 6-13. A song or psalm of David.

1. Glory - With my tongue.

## 109

David complains of his enemies and appeals to God, ver. 1-5. Foretells their destruction, ver. 6-20. Prays that God would succor him in his low condition, ver. 21-29. Concludes with a joyful hope of deliverance, ver. 30, 31 To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

1. God - The author and matter of all my praises.

4. Adversaries - They requite my love with enmity, as it is explained ver. 5.

6. A wicked man - Who will rule him with rigor and cruelty. Satan - To accuse him; for this was the place and posture of accusers in the Jewish courts.

7. Sin - Because it is not from his heart.

10. Desolate places - Into which they are fled for fear and shame.

11. Catch - Hebrew. ensnare, take away not only by oppression but also by cunning artificers. Stranger - Who hath no right to his goods.

17. Delighted not - In desiring and promoting the welfare of others.

18. Garment - Which a man wears constantly. Like water - Water in the cavity of the belly, between the bowels, is almost certain death. And oil soaking into any of the bones, will soon utterly destroy it.

20. That speak evil against my soul - With design to take away my life.

21. Is good - Above the mercy of all the creatures.

23. When - Towards the evening, when the sun is setting. The locust - Which is easily driven away with every wind.

## 110

That this psalm belongs to the Messiah, is abundantly evident both from the express testimony of the New Testament, Acts ii, 34; 1 Cor. xv, 25 Heb. i, 13; x, 13. and from the consent of the ancient Hebrew doctors. Of him, it is directly and immediately to be understood; the spirit of God wisely so ordering this matter, that it might be a convincing testimony against the unbelieving Jews, concerning the true Messiah, and concerning the nature and quality of his kingdom. His prophetic office, ver. 2. His priestly office, ver. 4, His kingly office, ver. 1, 3, 5, 6. His states of humiliation and exaltation, ver. 7. A psalm of David.

1. The Lord - God the father. Said - Decreed it from eternity, and in due time published this decree, and actually executed it; which he did when he raised up Christ from the dead, and brought him into his heavenly mansion. Unto - Unto his son the Messiah, whom David designedly calls his Lord, to admonish the whole church, that although he was his son according to his human nature, yet he had an higher nature, and was also his Lord, as being God blessed for ever, and consequently Lord of all things. The Hebrew word Adon is one of God's titles, signifying his power and authority over all things, and therefore is most fitly given to the Messiah, to whom God hath delegated all his power Matt. xxviii, 18. Sit - Now take thy rest and the possession of that sovereign kingdom and glory, which by right belongeth to thee; do thou rule with me with equal power and majesty, as thou art God; and with an authority and honour far above all creatures, as thou art man. Make - By my almighty power communicated to thee as God by eternal generation, and vouchsafed to thee as mediator. Enemies - All ungodly men, sin and death, and the devil. Footstool - Thy slaves and vassals.

2. The rod - Thy strong or powerful rod, and the rod is put for his scepter, or kingly power: but as the kingdom of Christ is not carnal, but spiritual, so this scepter is nothing else but his word. Zion - From Jerusalem.

3. People - Thy subjects, shall offer thee as their king and Lord, not oxen or sheep, but themselves, their souls and bodies, as living sacrifices, and as freewill-offerings, giving up themselves to the Lord, 2Cor viii, 5, to live to him, and to die for him. The day - When thou shalt take into thy hands the rod of thy strength, and set up thy kingdom in the world. In the beauties - Adorned with the beautiful and glorious robes of righteousness and true holiness. The dew - That is, thy offspring (the members of the Christian church) shall be more numerous than the drops of the morning dew.

4. Sworn - That this priesthood might be made sure and irrevocable.

5. The Lord - God the son; the Lord, who is at thy right-hand. Strike - Shall destroy all those kings who are obstinate enemies to him.

6. Judge - Condemn and punish them. The places - Or, the place of battle. Dead bodies - Of his enemies. Heads - All those princes who oppose him. But this and the like passages are not to be understood grossly, but spiritually, according to the nature of Christ's kingdom.

7. Drink - He shall have a large portion of afflictions, while he is in the way or course of his life, before he comes to that honour of sitting at his father's right-hand. Waters in scripture frequently signify sufferings. To drink of them, signifies to feel or bear them. Therefore - He shall be exalted to great glory and felicity.

## 111

This and several of the following psalms seem to have been wrote for the service of the church in their solemn feasts. It is composed alphabetically, each sentence beginning with a several letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The psalmist here praises God for his works, ver. 1-9. Recommends the fear of God, ver. 10.

2. Sought - Diligently meditated upon.

3. Work - Either all his works, or that eminent branch of those works, his providence towards his people. Righteousness - His justice or faithfulness in performing his word.

4. Remembered - By their own nature, and the lasting benefits flowing from them, which are such as cannot easily be forgotten.

5. Meat - All necessary provisions for their being and well-being.

7. The works - All that he doth on the behalf of his people, or against their enemies. Truth - Are exactly agreeable to his promises, and to justice. Commandments - His laws given to the Israelites, especially the moral law. Sure - Constant and unchangeable.

8. Done - Constituted or ordered.

9. Redemption - The deliverance out of Egypt, which was a type of that higher redemption by Christ. Commanded - Appointed, or established firmly by his power and authority. For ever - Through all successive generations of his people to the end of the world. Reverend - Terrible to his enemies, venerable in his peoples eyes, and holy in all his dealings with all men.

10. The fear - True religion. Beginning - Is the only foundation of, and introduction to, true wisdom.

## 112

This also is an alphabetical psalm. We have here the character and blessedness of the righteous, ver. 1-9. The iniquity of the wicked, ver. 10.

2. Generation - The posterity.

3. Righteousness - The fruit or reward of his righteousness, which is God's blessing upon his estate.

4. Darkness - In the troubles and calamities of life. He - The upright man.

5. Lendeth - Gives freely to some, and lends to others according to the variety of their conditions. Affairs - His domestick affairs. Discretion - Not getting his estate unjustly, nor casting it away prodigally, nor yet withholding it from such as need it.

6. Moved - Though he may for a season be afflicted, yet he shall not be eternally destroyed.

7. Evil tidings - At the report of approaching calamities.

9. Dispersed - His goods, freely and liberally. Righteousness - His liberality, or the reward of it. Ever - What he gives is not lost, but indeed is the only part of his estate, which will abide with him to all eternity.

10. The desire - Either of the misery of good men; or of his own constant prosperity.

## 113

We are here exhorted to praise God, ver. 1-3. Particularly for his glory and greatness, ver. 4, 5 And for his grace and goodness, ver. 6-9.

6. Humbleth - Who is so high, that it is a wonderful condescention in him to take any notice of his heavenly host, and much more of sinful and miserable men upon earth.

8. Princes - As he did Joseph, David, and others. His people - Who in God's account are far more honourable than the princes of Heathen nations.

## 114

This and the four following psalms, the Jews were wont to sing at the close of the paschal supper. It is a solemn commemoration of God's delivering Israel, giving them the law, and water out of the rock, ver. 1-8.

2. Judah - Or Israel, one tribe being put for all. Judah he mentions as the chief of all the tribes.

4. The mountains - Horeb and Sinai, two tops of one mountain, and other neighbouring mountains.

7. Tremble - The mountains did more than what was fit at the appearance of the great God.

**115**

We are to give glory to God, not to ourselves or idols, ver. 1-8. By trusting in his promise and blessing, ver. 9-15. And by praising him, ver. 16-18.

8. Are like them - As void of all sense or reason as their images.
9. Their - Who trust in him.
10. Aaron - You priests and Levites.
11. Ye that fear - All of you who worship the true God, not only Israelites, but even Gentile proselytes.
12. Mindful - In our former straits, and therefore we trust he will still bless us.
13. Both small - Of whatsoever quality, high and low, rich and poor.
16. The Lord's - In a peculiar manner, where he dwelleth in that light and glory, to which no man can approach. Given - As the foregoing verse declares, that God was the creator of heaven and earth, so this asserts that he is also their Lord and governor to dispose of all men and things as he pleases.
17. Silence - Into the place of silence, the grave.

**116**

This psalm is a solemn thanksgiving to God. Wherein the psalmist professes his love to God, for delivering him out of great straits and dangers, ver. 1-8. Prays for his future protection, and promises to praise him, and to walk holy before him, 9-19.

3. The sorrows - Dangerous and deadly calamities. Pains - Such agonies and horrors, as dying persons use to feel.
7. Rest - Unto a chearful confidence in God.

**117**

An exhortation to all nations to praise God for his mercy and truth, ver. 1, 2.

**118**

The form of this psalm seems to be dramatical, and several parts of it are spoken in the name of several persons; as it is in the book of the Song of Solomon, and in one part of Ecclesiastes. David speaks in his own name from the beginning to ver. 22, from thence to ver. 25, in the name of the people; and thence to ver. 28, in the name of the priests; and then concludes in his own name. He calls upon all about him to praise God, ver. 1-4. Encourages himself and others to trust in God, from the experience he had had of his power and mercy, ver. 5-18. He gives thanks for his advancement to the throne, as it was a figure of the exaltation of Christ, ver. 19-23. The people, the priests, and the psalmist himself triumph in the prospect of the Redeemer's kingdom, ver. 24-29.

10. Nations - The neighbouring nations, Philistines, Syrians, Ammonites, Moabites, who were stirred up, by the overthrows which David had given some of them, by their jealousy at his growing greatness, and by their hatred against the true religion.

11. Yea - The repetition implies their frequency and fervency in this action.

12. Bees - ln great numbers. Thorns - Which burns fiercely, but quickly spends itself.

13. Thou - O mine enemy. The singular word is here put collectively for all his enemies.

14. Salvation - My saviour.

15. Doth valiantly - These are the words of that song of praise now mentioned.

16. Exalted - Hath appeared evidently, and wrought powerfully and gloriously.

19. Open - O ye porters, appointed by God for this work. The gates - Of the Lord's tabernacle: where the rule of righteousness was kept and taught, and the sacrifices of righteousness were offered.

20. The righteous - As David was a type of Christ and the temple of heaven, so this place hath a farther prospect than David, and relates to Christ's ascending into heaven, and opening the gates of that blessed temple, both for himself and for all believers.

22. The builders - The commonwealth of Israel and the church of God are here and elsewhere compared to a building, wherein, as the people are the stones, so the princes and rulers are the builders. And as these master-builders rejected David, so their successors rejected Christ. Head stone - The chief stone in the whole building, by which the several parts of the building are upheld and firmly united together. Thus David united all the tribes and families of Israel: and thus Christ united Jews and Gentiles together. And therefore this place is justly expounded of Christ, Mark xii, 10 Acts iv, 11 Rom. ix, 32 Eph. ii, 20. And to him the words agree more properly than to David.

24. Made - Or sanctified as a season never to be forgotten.

25. We - These seem to be the words of the Levites, to whom he spake ver. 19.

26. Blessed - We pray that God would bless his person and government. Cometh - To the throne; or from his Father into the world: who is known by the name of him that cometh or was to come, and of whom this very word is used, Gen. xlix, 10 Isaiah xxxv, 4. Name - By commission from him. We - We who are the Lord's ministers attending upon him in his house, and appointed to bless in his name, Num. vi, 23 Deut. x, 8. So these are the words of the priests.

27. The Lord - Or, The mighty God, as this name of God signifies, and as he shewed himself to be by this, his wonderful work. Who - Who hath scattered our dark clouds, and put us into a state of peace, and safety, and happiness. The horns - These are supposed to be made for this very use, that the beasts should be bound and killed there. These three last verses are David's words.

**119**

Because this psalm was very large, and the matter of it of the greatest importance, the psalmist thought fit to divide it into two and twenty several parts, according to the number of the Hebrew letters, that he might both prevent tediousness, and fix it in the memory. Each part consists of eight verses. All the verses of the first part beginning with Aleph, all the verses of the second with Beth, and so on. It is observable, that the word of God is here called by the names of law, statutes, precepts or commandments, judgments, ordinances, righteousness, testimonies, way and word. By which variety, he designed to express the nature and perfection of God's word. It is called his word, as revealed by him to us; his way, as prescribed by him for us to walk in; his law, as binding us to obedience; his statutes, as declaring his authority of giving us laws; his precepts as directing our duty; his ordinances, as ordained by him; his righteousness, as exactly agreeable to God's righteous nature and will; his judgments, as proceeding from the great judge of the world, and being his judicial sentence to which all men must submit; and his testimonies, as it contains the witness of God's will, and of man's duty. And there is but one of these one hundred and seventy six verses, in which one or other of these titles is not found. The general scope and design of this psalm is, to magnify the law and make it honourable: to shew the excellency and usefulness of divine Revelation, and recommend it to us, by the psalmist's own example, who speaks by experience of the benefits of it, for which he praises God, and earnestly prays for the continuance of God's grace, to direct and quicken him in his way.

6. Respect - A due respect, which implies hearty affection, diligent study, and constant practice. To all - So as not to allow myself in any known sin, or in the neglect of any known duty.

7. When - When by thy good spirit I shall he more fitly instructed in the meaning of thy word.

8. Forsake me not - For then I shall fall into the foulest sins.

9. A young man - Or, any man. But he names the young man, because such are commonly void of wisdom and experience, and exposed to many and great temptations. Cleanse - Purge himself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.

11. Hid - I have laid it up in my mind like a choice treasure, to be ready upon all occasions to counsel, quicken or caution me.

17. Live - Safely and comfortably.

18. Open - Enlighten my mind by the light of thy Holy Spirit, and dispel all ignorance and error. Behold - Those great and marvelous depths of Divine wisdom and goodness, and those profound mysteries of Christ, and God's grace to mankind, and of that everlasting state, which are not to be known but by Divine illumination.

19. A stranger - I am not here as in my home, but as a pilgrim travelling homeward in a strange land. Commandments - Which are my chief support and guide in my pilgrimage.

20. Breaketh - Faints, as it frequently does, when a thing vehemently desired is delayed. Judgments - To a more sound knowledge and serious practice of them.

21. The proud - Obstinate and presumptuous sinners, who sin with an high hand. Err - Or, wander, knowingly or wilfully.

25. The dust - I am in danger of present death: I am like one laid in the grave. Quicken - Preserve my life, or raise me out of the dust. Word - According to thy promise.

26. My ways - My sins; and all my cares, and fears, and troubles.

27. Understand - More throughly.

28. Melteth - Like wax before the fire.

29. Grant me - Vouchsafe me an accurate knowledge of thy word, and let me govern myself by it in all things.

30. Laid - Or, set before me as a mark to aim at; as a rule to direct me.

32. Run - I will obey thy precepts with all readiness, fervency, and diligence. Enlarge - When thou shalt replenish my heart with wisdom, and love to thee and thy law.

36. Covetousness - He mentions this in particular, because it is most opposite to God's testimonies, and does most commonly hinder men from receiving his word, and from profiting by it: and because it is most pernicious, as being the root of all evil.

37. Vanity - The vain things of this present world, such as riches, honours, pleasures: from beholding them, with desire or affection. Quicken - Make me lively, vigourous and fervent in thy service.

38. Stablish - Confirm and perform thy promises.

39. I fear - For my instability in thy ways; which in respect to my own weakness, I have great cause to fear.

40. Longed - After a more solid knowledge and constant performance of them. In - According to thy faithfulness.

43. Take not - Do not deal so with me, that I shall be ashamed to mention thy word. Judgments - In thy word.

45. At liberty - Enjoy great freedom and comfort in thy ways.

48. Lift up - To receive and embrace thy precepts and promises.

49. Thy word - Thy promises.

52. Judgments - Thy ancient dispensations to the children of men in punishing the ungodly.

53. Horror - A mixed passion, made up of abhorrence of their sins, and dread and sorrow at the consideration of the judgments of God coming upon them.

54. The house - In this world, wherein I am a stranger and pilgrim, as all my fathers were.

55. Thy name - Thy holy nature and attributes, thy blessed word, and thy wonderful works. In the night - When darkness causes fear in others, I took pleasure in remembering thee; and when others gave themselves up to sleep, my thoughts and affections were working towards thee.

56. This - This comfortable remembrance.

57. Said - I have professed and owned it.

59. Thought - I seriously considered both my former courses, and my duty in all my future actions.

61. Robbed - Done me many injuries, for my respect to thy law.

66. Judgment - Whereby I may rightly discern between truth and falsehood. Knowledge - A spiritual experimental knowledge.

70. Fat - They are stupid and insensible.

74. Glad - For the encouragement they have by my example to trust in God. See me - Alive and in safety. Word - In thy promise, and have not been disappointed of my hope.

75. Judgments - Thy corrections. Of faithfulness - In pursuance of thy promises, and in order to my good.

79. Known - Loved and practiced them.

80. Sound - That I may love and obey them sincerely, constantly, and universally.

81. Fainteth - With long desire and earnest expectation.

83. Bottle - A leathern bottle. My natural moisture is dryed and burnt up.

84. The days - The days of my life. I have but a little while to live; give me some respite before I die.

85. Who - Who have no respect to thy law.

86. Faithful - Just and true.

89. In heaven - With thee in thy heavenly habitation.

91. They - The heaven and the earth. Ordinances - As thou hast appointed. For - All things are subject to thy power and pleasure.

96. Perfection - Of the greatest and most perfect enjoyments in this world. Commandment - Thy word; one part of it being put for the whole. Broad - Or, large, both for extent, and for continuance: it is useful to all persons: it is of everlasting truth and efficacy; it will never deceive those who trust to it, as all worldly things will, but will make men happy both here and for ever.

100. Because - The practice of religion is the best way to understand it.

102. Taught me - By thy blessed spirit, illuminating my mind, and working upon my heart.

108. Offerings - The sacrifices of prayer and praise.

109. Is - Exposed to perpetual danger.

118. Deceit - Their deceitful devices, shall bring that destruction upon themselves which they design for others.

121. Judgment, &c. - Just judgment.

122. Surety - Do thou undertake and plead my cause.

123. The word - For the performance of thy faithful or merciful promise.

126. To work - To put forth thy power for the restraint of evil- doers. They - The wicked. Made void - Or, abrogated thy law, have openly cast off its authority.

127. Therefore - Because the general apostacy of others makes this duty more necessary.

129. Wonderful - In regard of the deep mysteries, the most excellent directions, and the exceeding great and precious promises of God contained in them.

131. Panted - I thirst after thy precepts, and pursue them eagerly.

133. Steps - My motions and actions.

136. Rivers - Plentiful tears, witness of my deep sorrow for God's dishonour, and for the miseries which sinners bring upon themselves.

140. Pure - Without the least mixture of falsehood.

142. Everlasting - The same in all ages and places.

143. Trouble - Outward troubles and anguish of spirit.

148. Watches - The middle watch, which was set in the middle of the night; and the morning watch, which was set some hours before the dawning of the day.

149. Judgment - According to thy word.

150. Nigh - To me, they are at hand and ready to seize upon me. Are far - They cast away from them all thoughts of thy law.

152. Of old - By long experience. Founded - Thou hast established them upon everlasting foundations.

160. The beginning - From the beginning of the world.

161. But - But I feared thine offense and displeasure more than their wrath.

164. Seven times - Many times; a certain number being put for an uncertain.

165. Offend - Hebrew. they shall have no stumbling-block, at which they shall stumble and fall into mischief.

175. Judgments - Thy word or testimonies, which are the only ground of my hope in thy help.

**120**

David prays against lying tongues, and denounces judgment against them, ver. 1-4. Complains of his wicked and unpeaceable neighbours, ver. 5-7. A song of degrees. Title of the psalm. Of degrees - Or, of accents, as the word properly signifies. This title is given to this and the fourteen following psalms, probably because they were sung upon the fifteen degrees, steps, or stairs of the temple, which the Jewish writers mention.

4. Arrows - The wrath and vengeance of the mighty God, which in scripture is often compared to arrows, and here to coals of juniper, which burn very fiercely and retain their heat for a long time.

5. Mesech - Mesech and Kedar are two sorts of people often mentioned in scripture, and reckoned amongst the barbarous nations. But their names are here to be understood metaphorically. And so he explains himself in the next verse.

**121**

David assures himself of help from God, ver. 1, 2. He assures others of it, ver. 3-8. A song of degrees.

1. Hills - To Sion and Moriah, which are called the holy mountains.

5. Shade - To keep thee from the burning heat of the sun.

6. Smite - With excessive heat. Moon - With that cold and moisture which come into the air by it. Intemperate heats and colds are the springs of many diseases.

**122**

This psalm seems to have been wrote for the use of the people, when they came to Jerusalem at the three solemn feasts. David here shews the joy with which they were to go up to Jerusalem, ver. 1, 2. The esteem they were to have of it, ver. 3-5. The prayers they were to make for its welfare, ver, 6-9. A song of degrees of David.

4. The tribes - Whom God has chosen to be his people. Unto - Unto the ark, called the testimony, because of the tables of the covenant laid up in it, which are called God's testimony, and the tables of the testimony. And this is called the testimony of, or to Israel, because it was given by God to them. Give thanks - To worship God; this one eminent part thereof being put for all the rest.

5. Judgment - The supreme courts of justice for ecclesiastical and civil affairs. Thrones - The royal throne allotted by God to David and to his posterity, and the inferior seats of justice under his authority.

**123**

The psalmist expresses and prays for deliverance from trouble, ver. 1-4. A song of degrees.

2. Look - For supply of their wants, and for help and defense against their oppressors. Until - Until he help and save us.

**124**

David describes the danger he and his people had been in, ver. 1-5. Blesses God for delivering them, ver. 6-8. A song of degrees of David.

5. The proud - Our enemies, compared to proud waters, for their great multitude and swelling rage.

**125**

The safety of them that trust in God, and the fate of the wicked, ver. 1-5. A song of degrees.

3. The rod - Their power and authority. Not rest - Not continue long. The lot - Upon the habitations and persons of good men. Lest - Lest they should be driven to indirect courses to relieve themselves.

5. Lead them - Unto sinful courses. Israel - Upon the true Israel of God.

## 126

This psalm was probably composed by Ezra, at the return of Israel from Babylon. Those who are returned, are called upon to be thankful; those who still remain there, are prayed for and encouraged, ver. 1-6. A song of degrees.

1. Turned - Brought the captive Israelites out of Babylon into their own land. Dream - We were so surprized and astonished.

4. Turn - As thou hast brought us home, bring also the rest of our brethren. As - As thou art pleased sometimes to send floods of water into dry and barren grounds, such as the southern parts of Canaan were.

## 127

We must trust in God for success in all enterprizes, ver. 1, 2. And for children, ver. 3-5. A song of degrees of Solomon.

1. Build - Assist and bless those that build it.

2. You - Builders, or watchmen. To sit - To use constant and unwearied diligence. So - By his blessing. Giveth - Freely, without that immoderate toiling, wherewith others pursue it.

3. Children - The chief of these blessings. Heritage - Only from God's blessing, even as an inheritance is not the fruit of a man's own labour, but the gift of God.

4. Youth - These he prefers before other children, because they live longest with their parents, and to their comfort and support, whereas children born in old age seldom come to maturity before their parents death.

5. Full - Who hath a numerous issue. Shall speak - They shall courageously plead their cause in courts of judicature, not fearing to be crushed by the might of their adversaries.

## 128

The happiness of them that fear God, ver. 1-6. A song of degrees.

3. Olive-plants - Numerous, growing and flourishing.

**129**

The people of God commemorate their deliverance out of sore afflictions, ver. 1-4. The destruction of their enemies, ver. 5- 8. A song of degrees.

1. From my youth - From the time that I was a people.
4. Righteous - Faithful or merciful. The cords - Wherewith the plow was drawn. By these cords he understands all their plots and endeavours.
6. House-tops - Which there were flat. Which - Having no deep root, never comes to maturity. And so all their designs shall be abortive.
8. The blessing - Which was an usual salutation given by passengers to reapers: so the meaning is, it never continues 'till the harvest comes.

**130**

The psalmist confessing his sins, expresses his hope in God, ver. 1-6. And exhorts Israel to hope in him, ver.7, 8. A song of degrees.

3. Mark - Observe them accurately and punish them as they deserve. Stand - At thy tribunal.
4. Forgiveness - Thou art able and ready to forgive repenting sinners. Feared - Not with a slavish, but with a childlike fear. This mercy of thine is the foundation of all religion, without which men would desperately proceed in their impious courses.
5. I wait - That he would pardon my sins.
6. They - Whether soldiers that keep the night-watches in an army, or the priests or Levites who did so in the temple.
7. Israel - Every true Israelite. Plenteous - Abundantly sufficient for all persons who accept it upon God's terms.

**131**

David testifies his humility, and exhorts Israel to trust in God, ver. 1-3. A song of degrees of David.

2. Surely - When my mind was provoked. Weaned - Wholly depending upon God's providence, as the poor helpless infant, relies upon its mother for support.

**132**

Probably this psalm was wrote by Solomon to be sung at the dedication of the temple, of which he desires God would come and take possession, ver. 8, 9, 10. With these words he concluded his prayer, 2 Chron. vi, 41, 42. He pleads David's piety towards God, ver. 1-7. And God's promise to David, ver. 11-18. A song of degrees.

1. Afflictions - All his sufferings for thy sake.

5. Until - Until I have raised an house in which the ark may be put.

6. It - Of the ark. Ephratah - In the tribe of Ephraim, which was called also Ephratah. Found it - Afterwards we found it in Kirjath- jearim, which signifies a city of woods, in the territory whereof the ark was seated for twenty years.

7. Tabernacles - Into his temple. Footstool - The ark, is often said to sit between the cherubim, which were above the ark.

8. Rest - Into thy resting place, the temple so called, Isaiah lxvi, 1, where thou hast now a fixed habitation. The ark - The seat of thy powerful and glorious presence.

10. David's sake - In regard of thy promises vouchsafed to David. Turn not - Cast me not out of thy presence. Of - Of me whom thou hast anointed to be king over thy people.

16. Salvation - With thy saving graces and blessings.

17. There - In Jerusalem. To bud - His power and glory to flourish. A lamp - A successor to continue for ever in his family, as this phrase is expounded 1 Kings xi, 36; xv, 4, and particularly one eminent and glorious light, namely, the Messiah.

**133**

The happiness of brotherly love, ver. 1-3. A song of degrees of David.

2. Ointment - It is no less grateful and refreshing than that oil which was poured forth upon Aaron's head at the time of his consecration to the priestly office. Skirts - Not to the lower skirt or bottom of his sacerdotal garment, but to the upper skirt of it, or the mouth of it, as the Hebrew word properly signifies.

3. Zion - It is as desirable as the dew which falls upon mount Hermon, nay, as desirable as that heavenly dew of God's ordinances and graces which he hath commanded to fall upon the mountains

of Zion and Moriah, and others which are round about Jerusalem. There - Where brethren live in peace and unity.

**134**

In this psalm the priests or Levites who watched all night in the temple, exhort one another, and pray for one another, ver. 1-3. A song of degrees.

1. Servant - Peculiarly so called, priests and Levites. Night - Not only by day, but also by night, when their watch was more necessary. Stand - Serve or minister.

3. Thee - Thee whosoever thou art who dost faithfully perform the duty here commanded.

**135**

An exhortation to praise God for his greatness and mighty works, ver. 1-7. For destroying his enemies, ver. 8-11. For his mercy toward Israel, ver. 12-14. The vanity of idols, ver. 15-18. Another exhortation to praise God, ver. 19-20.

2. Ye - Ye priest and Levites.

6. Seas - In the visible seas, and in the invisible depths both of the earth and of the waters.

7. From - From all parts of the earth, from one end to another. Rain - An eminent instance of his good providence.

14. Judge - Will in due time plead the cause of his people. Repent - He will recall that severe sentence which for their sins he had passed upon them.

**136**

We must praise God as great and good in himself, ver. 1- 3. As the Creator of the world, ver. 4-9. As Israel's God, ver. 10- 22. As our Redeemer, ver. 23, 24. As God over all, ver. 25, 26.

2. The God of gods - Who is infinitely superior to all that are called gods, whether angels, or princes, or idols.

22. Israel - He speaks of all that people as of one man, because they were united together in one body in the worship of God.

25. Food - To all living creatures. For which God deserves great praises, which the psalmist teaches us to render to God for them, because those who are most concerned, either cannot, or do not perform this duty.

**137**

Probably this psalm was wrote toward the end of the Babylonish captivity. Herein the captives complain of the scoffs of their enemies, yet remember Jerusalem, and foresee the downfall of Babylon, ver. 1-9.

1. Sat - The usual posture of mourners.
2. Harps - Harps are here put for all instruments of musick.
3. A song - Such songs as you used to sing in the temple of Zion.
4. The Lord's - Those songs which were appointed by God to be sung only in his service.
6. If - If I do not value Jerusalem's prosperity more than all other delights.
7. The day - In the time of its destruction.
8. Happy - As being God's instrument to vindicate his honour, and execute his just judgments.

**138**

David praises God for his goodness, and foretells that other kings will praise him, ver. 1-5. He rejoices in hope of still greater blessings, ver. 6-8. A psalm of David.

1. The gods - Before kings and princes.
2. Temple - Where the ark was. He was not permitted to enter into it. Magnified - For thou hast glorified thy word or promise unto me more than any other of thy glorious perfections.
4. The kings - A prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles. Hear - The gospel preached among then.
5. The ways - His wonderful counsel and gracious providences.
8. Perfect - Will finish the great work of my deliverance. Forsake not - Or, do not give over, the work of my salvation, which is thus far advanced, not by any human help, but by thy power and providence.

**139**

This psalm is, by many of the Jewish doctors, esteemed the most excellent in the whole book. The omniscience of God is here asserted, ver. 1-6. Proved by two arguments; That he is every where present, ver. 7-12. And that he made us, ver. 13-16. This may fill us with pleasing admiration of God, ver. 17, 18. With an holy hatred of sin, ver. 19-22. And with an holy satisfaction in our own integrity, ver. 23, 24. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

2. Afar off - Thou knowest what my thoughts will be in such and such circumstances, long before I know it, yea from all eternity.

3. Compassest - Thou discernest every step I take. It is a metaphor from soldiers besieging their enemies, and setting watches round about them.

5. Beset me - With thy all-seeing providence. And laid - Thou keepest me, as it were with a strong hand, in thy sight and under thy power.

6. I cannot - Apprehend in what manner thou dost so presently know all things.

8. Hell - If I could hide myself in the lowest parts of the earth.

9. The wings - If I should flee from east to west: for the sea being the western border of Canaan, is often put for the west in scripture. And wings are poetically ascribed to the morning here, as they are elsewhere to the sun, and to the winds.

16. Imperfect - When I was first conceived. Book - In thy counsel and providence, by which thou didst contrive and effect this great work, according to that model which thou hadst appointed.

17. Thoughts - Thy counsels on my behalf. Thou didst not only form me at first, but ever since my conception and birth, thy thoughts have been employed for me.

18. Them - Thy wonderful counsels and works on my behalf come constantly into my mind.

22. Perfect hatred - See the difference between the Jewish and the Christian spirit!

## 140

David prays and hopes for deliverance from his enemies, ver. 1-7. Foretells their destruction, ver. 8-13. To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

3. Tongues - Using words as sharp and piercing as the sting of a serpent.

9. Mischief - The mischief which they design against me, shall fall upon themselves.

10. Coals - Divine vengeance, which is compared to coals of fire.

13. Dwell - Shall constantly enjoy thy gracious and powerful presence.

## 141

David prays for acceptance and assistance, ver. 1-6. For the deliverance of himself and friends, ver. 7-10. A psalm of David.

4. Incline not - Suffer it not to be inclined. Heart - Keep me not only from wicked speeches, but from all evil motions of my heart. Dainties - The pleasures or advantages which they gain by their wickedness.

5. Smite - By reproofs. Break - Not hurt, but heal and greatly refresh me. Calamities - In the calamities of those righteous persons who reproved him. When they came into such calamities as those wherein he was involved he would pity them and pray for them.

6. Judges - The chief of mine enemies. Overthrown - Or, cast down headlong by thine exemplary vengeance. Hear - Hearken unto my counsels and offers which now they despise.

7. Our bones - Our case is almost as hopeless as of those who are dead, and whose bones are scattered in several places.

**142**

David complains to God and trusts in him, ver. 1-7 Maschil of David; A prayer when he was in the cave.

3. Knowest - So as to direct me to it. My path - What paths I should chuse whereby I might escape.

4. Right-hand - The place where the patron or assistant used to stand.

5. Portion - Even in this life.

7. Prison - Set me at liberty. Compass - Shall flock to me from all parts, to rejoice and bless God with me and for me.

**143**

David complains and prays for pardon and help, ver. 1-12. A psalm of David.

2. Justified - Upon terms of strict justice.

3. For - This is not a reason of what he last said, but an argument to enforce his petition delivered, ver. 1. Soul - My life; nothing less will satisfy him. Dead - I am in as hopeless a condition in the eye of man, as those that have lain long in the grave.

5. The days - What thou hast done for thy servants in former times.

6. As land - Thirsteth for rain.

8. Morning - Seasonably and speedily.

**144**

David blesses God for his mercies, ver. 1-4. Prays against his enemies, ver. 5-8. Promises to praise him, ver.9-11. The happiness of those who serve God, ver. 12-15. A psalm of David.

2. Subdued - Who hath disposed my peoples hearts to receive and obey me as their king.

5. Come - To help me. Smoke - As Sinai did at thy glorious appearance, Exod. xix, 18. This is a figurative and poetical description of God's coming to take vengeance upon his enemies.

7. Strange children - Either of the Heathen nations: or of the rebellious Israelites.

8. Vanity - Vain brags and threatenings which shall come to nothing. Falsehood - Deceiving themselves, by being unable to do what they designed; and others, by not giving them that help which they promised.

12. That - This mercy I beg not only for my own sake, but for the sake of thy people, that they may enjoy those blessings which thou hast promised them; and particularly, that our sons, who are the strength and hopes of a nation, may be like plants, flourishing and growing in height and strength, as plants do in their youth; for when they grow old, they wither and decay. Cornerstone - Strong and beautiful.

14. Breaking in - Of enemies invading the land, or assaulting our cities, and making breaches in their walls. Going out - Of our people, either out of the cities to fight with an invading enemy: or out of the land into captivity.

**145**

This also is an alphabetical psalm. In it David praises God for his greatness, ver. 1-7. For his goodness and everlasting kingdom, ver. 8-13. For his providence, ver. 14-16. For his mercy to his servants, ver. 17-21. David's psalm of praise.

14. All - All that look up to him for help.

15. All - Of all living creatures. Wait - Expect their supplies wholly from thy bounty. Expectation is here figuratively ascribed to brute creatures.

18. Nigh - To answer their prayers. In truth - With an upright heart.

**146**

The psalmist praises God, and exhorts all to trust in him alone, ver. 1-5. Because of his power, faithfulness and everlasting kingdom, ver. 6-10.

4. That day - As soon as ever he is dead. Thoughts - All his designs and endeavours either for himself or for others.

6. For ever - Both because he liveth for ever to fulfil his promises, and because he is eternally faithful.

**147**

The psalmist praises God for his care over the church, ver. 1-14. His government over all, ver. 15-18. His giving his word to Israel, ver. 19, 20.

4. Calleth them - He exactly knows them as we do those whom we can call by name.

9. Ravens - Which he mentions because they were most contemptible, especially to the Jews, to whom they were unclean: and because they are not only neglected by men, but also forsaken by their dams as soon as ever they can fly, and so are wholly left to the care of Divine providence.

10. Delighteth not - As if he needed either the one or the other for the accomplishment of his designs.

13. Thy gates - Thy strength consists not in thy walls, and gates, and bars, but in his protection.

14. Borders - In all thy land, even to its utmost borders.

15. Commandment - Which is sufficient without any instruments to execute whatsoever pleaseth him. Swiftly - The thing is done without delay.

16. Like wool - Not only in colour and shape, and softness, but also in use, keeping the fruits of the earth warm. Ashes - In colour and smallness of parts, as also in its burning quality.

17. Ice - Great hail-stones, which are of an icy nature, and are cast forth out of the clouds, like morsels or fragments.

**148**

An exhortation to all creatures in heaven and earth, man especially, to praise God, ver. 1-14.

4. Heavens of heavens - Ye highest heavens, the place of God's throne. Waters - Ye clouds which are above a part of the heavens.

6. Established - He hath made them constant and incorruptible, not changeable, as the things of the lower world. A decree - Concerning their continuance.

7. Dragons - Either serpents, which hide in the deep caverns of the earth; or whales, and other sea-monsters, which dwell in the depths of the sea.

8. Fire - Lightnings and other fireworks of the air. Vapor - Or, fumes: hot exhalations. Fulfilling his word - Executing his commands, either for the comfort or punishment of the inhabitants of the earth.

13. Above - Above all the glories which are in earth and in heaven.

14. The horn - In scripture commonly denotes strength, victory, glory, and felicity.

**149**

An exhortation to praise God for his love to his people, ver. 1-5. And for enabling them to overcome their enemies, ver. 6- 9.

4. The Lord - He rejoiceth over them to do them good. Beautify - Hebrew. adorn, make them amiable and honourable in the eyes of the world, who now hate and despise them. The meek - All true Israelites are such.

5. In glory - For the honour which God putteth upon them. Beds - By night as well as by day.

7. Vengeance - For all their cruelties and injuries towards God's people. This was literally accomplished by David upon the Philistines, Ammonites, Syrians and other neighbouring nations.

9. Written - Appointed and declared in the holy scripture.

**150**

An exhortation to praise God with all sorts of musical instruments, ver. 1-6.

1. Sanctuary - In his temple. The firmament - In heaven: there let the blessed angels praise him.

6. Also - Every living creature in heaven and in earth.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

WE have here a new way of writing, wherein Divine wisdom is taught us in Proverbs or short sentences, which contain their whole design within themselves, and are not connected with one another. And these Proverbs of Solomon are not merely a collection of the wise sayings which had been formerly delivered, but were the dictates of the Spirit of God in Solomon: so that it is God by Solomon that here speaks to us. I say, to us: for when Solomon speaks to his son, St. Paul says,

The exhortation speaketh to us, as unto children. The nine first chapters are as a preface exhorting us to the study and practice of wisdom, and warning us against the things that would hinder it. We have then the first volume of Solomon's Proverbs, chap. 10-24. After that a second volume, chap. 25-29. And then Agur's prophecy, chap. 30. And Lemuel's, chap. 31. The scope of all is, to direct us so to order our conversation, that we may see the salvation of God.

## I

The title of the book, shewing the general design of it, ver. 1-6. The first principle of it recommended, ver. 7-9. A caution against bad company, ver. 10-19. Wisdom's reasonings with the sons of men, and the certain ruin of those who will not hearken unto them, ver. 20-33.

2. To know - Written to help men to know throughly and practically. Both human wisdom to conduct our affairs in this life, and Divine wisdom. Instruction - The instructions delivered either by God, or men, in order to the attainment of wisdom. To perceive - Which teach a man true understanding.

3. To receive - Willing to receive the counsels of others. Such as makes men wise and prudent, and to teach just judgments or equity.

4. Simple - Such as want wisdom. Young man - Who wants both experience and self-government.

5. Will hear - Is willing to learn. Attain to - The art of governing himself or others.

7. The fear - Reverence and obedience to God. Beginning - The foundation without which all other knowledge is vain. Fools - That is, wicked men, are so far from attaining true wisdom, that they despise it, and all the means of getting it.

8. My son - He speaks to his scholars with paternal authority and affection. Of thy mother - Those pious instructions, which thy mother instilled into thee in thy tender years.

17. In vain - The fowler who spreads, his net in the sight of the bird looseth his labour. But these, are more foolish than the silly birds, and though they are not ignorant of the mischief which these evil courses will bring upon themselves, yet they will not take warning.

18. Their own blood - The destruction which they design to others, fall upon themselves.

19. Greedy - That seeks gain by wicked practices.

20. Wisdom - Having expressed the counsels of wicked men, he now declares the voice of wisdom. By wisdom he understands the wisdom of God revealed to men in his word. And this is said to cry with a loud voice, to intimate God's earnestness in inviting sinners to repentance. Abroad - Or, in the streets or open places. Not in corners, but openly before all the world.

21. Gates - Where magistrates sit in judgment, and people are assembled. The city - Not only in the gate, but in every part of the city.

22. Scoffers - That scoff at religion and contemn the word and faithful ministers of God.

23. My words - By my spirit I will cause you to understand my word.

24. Called - By my ministers, by my judgments, and by the motions of my spirit and your own conscience.

26. Your fear - The misery you do or should fear.

28. Early - With diligence and fervency.

29. Knowledge - The practical knowledge of God and of their duty.

31. Eat - They should receive punishment answerable to their sins. Filled - With the fruits of them.

32. Turning - From God. Destroy - Shall prove the occasion of their ruin, by making them presumptuous, and secure.

## II

Solomon shews, that they who diligently seek wisdom shall find it, ver. 1-9. He shews the advantage of it, that it would preserve them from evil men, ver. 10-15. And evil women, ver. 16-19. And would lead them into, and keep them in the way of good men, ver. 20-22.

1. Hide - Lay them up in thy heart with care, as men do their choicest treasures.

3. Criest - To God, the only giver of it.

4. Seek her - With unwearied diligence and earnest desire and patient expectation.

8. Path of judgment - Righteous paths, judgment being here put for righteousness. And keeping of paths may be put for keeping them in their paths.

9. Then - When God in answer to thy desires hath given thee wisdom. Equity - All the parts of thy duty to man, as well as the fear of God.

10. When - Thou dost truly love wisdom.

13. Darkness - Of sin.

15. Crooked - Who swerve from the straight way of God's law, and have windings and turnings, to escape conviction.

16. Strange woman - From the adulteress or whore.

17. Forsaketh - Her husband whom she took to be her guide and governor, in her youth. The covenant - The marriage covenant: so called because God is the author of that mutual obligation: and because God is called to be the witness and judge of that solemn promise and covenant.

18. For - Conversation with her (which was most usual in her own house) is the certain way to death, which it brings many ways, and undoubtedly, without repentance, to God's wrath and the second death.

20. That - This depends upon ver. 11, and is mentioned as another happy fruit of wisdom.

## III

An exhortation to be steadily religious, ver. 1-4. To trust God, ver. 5, 6. To fear him, ver. 7, 8. To honour him with our substance, ver. 9, 10. To bear affliction well, ver. 11-12. The praise of wisdom, ver. 13-20. The good effects of adhering to it, ver. 21-26. Caution, against uncharitableness, strife, envy; if we would avoid a curse and inherit a blessing, ver. 27-35.

1. My law - The law of God, which might be called his law, as the gospel is called Paul's gospel, 2Tim ii, 8, because delivered by him.

3. Mercy - Mercy denotes all benignity, charity, and readiness to do good to others: truth or faithfulness respects all those duties which we owe to God or man, which we have special obligation from the rules of justice. Bind them - Like a chain, wherewith persons adorn their necks. Table - In thy mind and heart, in which all God's commands are to be received and engraven.

4. Understanding - Whereby to know thy duty, and to discern between good and evil. Of God - Grace or favour with God, and that understanding which is good in God's sight.

5. Trust - Wholly rely upon God's promises and providences. Lean not - Under this one kind of carnal confidence, he understands all other confidence in bodily strength, wealth, or friends.

8. Navel - To thy body, which is signified by one part of it. Marrow - Which is the nourishment and strength of the bones.

9. Substance - Lay out thy estate not to please thyself, but to glorify God. First-fruits - Or, with the chief or best; which answers to the first-fruits under the law.

10. So - This is not the way to diminish thy estate, but rather to increase it.

11. Despise not - Either by making light of it, or not being duly affected with it; or by accounting it an unnecessary thing: but rather esteem it a privilege and favour from God. Weary - Neither think it tedious or hard, but endure it with patience and chearfulness.

13. Findeth - Which supposes his diligent searching for it.

17. Peace - Procure a blessed tranquility in a man's mind and conscience.

18. A tree - A pledge of everlasting life. He alludes to the tree of life, and intimates, that this is the only restorer of that life which we have lost by sin.

19. Wisdom - Either by Christ, or by that Divine perfection of wisdom, which is the fountain of wisdom in man.

20. The depths - That great abyss contained in the bowels of the earth, breaks forth into fountains and rivers.

21. Eyes - The eyes of thy mind. Constantly and seriously meditate upon them.

22. Grace - Like a beautiful chain or ornament.

25. Be not - Thou shalt not be afraid. Sudden - For sudden and unexpected evils are most frightful. And fear is here put for the evils feared. Desolation - Which cometh upon the wicked.

26. Shall be - A sure ground of confidence to thee. Taken - In the snares either of sin or mischief.

27. With-hold not - Do not deny it, but readily and chearfuly impart it. Good - Any thing which is good, either counsel, comfort, reproof, or the good things of the present life. Due - That is, to all men, by that great and sovereign law of love.

28. Say not - The former verse forbad the denial, and this forbids the delay of this duty.

29. Securely - Relying upon thine integrity.

31. Envy not - For his impunity and success.

32. Abomination - Therefore sooner or later he must be miserable. The righteous - They are God's friends, to whom he imparts the favours and comforts to which other men are strangers.

33. The house - Not only upon his own person, but also upon his posterity.

35. Shame - Instead of that glory which they seek.

## IV

An exhortation to the study of wisdom, is forced by various arguments, ver. 1-13. A caution against bad company, ver. 14-19. Directions for the attaining and keeping of wisdom, ver. 20-27.

1. A father - Of me, who have paternal authority over you and affection for you.

3. Tender - Young and tender in years, and tenderly educated. Only beloved - Beloved above all the rest.

4. Said - The following verses, at least as far as the tenth verse, are the words of David.

7. With all - Even with the price of all.

8. Exalt - Let her have thine highest esteem and affection.

9. Grace - A beautiful ornament, such as they used to put upon their heads.

16. For - They cannot sleep with quietness.

17. For - Wickedness is as pleasant to them as their bread.

18. But - Just men daily grow in knowledge, and grace, and consolation, 'till all be perfected and swallowed up in glory.

19. Darkness - Full of ignorance and error, of uncertainty and confusion, of danger and misery.

23. Heart - Thy thoughts, will, and affections. For - From thence proceed all the actions, as of the natural, so of the spiritual life, which lead to eternal life.

24. Mouth - All sorts of sinful words.

25. Right on - Direct all thine actions to a right end, and keep thy mind fixed upon that way which leads to it, and neither look or turn aside to the right-hand or the left.

26. Ponder - Consider thine actions before thou dost them, and see that they agree with the rule. And - Let thine actions be uniformly and constantly good in spite of all temptations.

## V

A farther exhortation to wisdom, ver. 1, 2. A caution against whoredom, ver. 3-14. Remedies against it, ver. 15-23.

3. The lips - It concerns thee to get and to use discretion, that thou mayest be able to resist those temptations to which thou art exposed.

4. But - The effect of that to which she entices men, is destruction.

5. Feet - Her manner of life.

6. Lest - To prevent thy serious consideration. Moveable - She transforms herself into several shapes, and has a thousand arts to ensnare. Know - Thou canst not discover all her practice.

9. honour - Thy dignity and reputation, the strength of thy body and mind. Years - The flower of thine age. The cruel - To the harlot, who though she pretends love, yet in truth is one of the most cruel creatures in the world, wasting thy estate and body without pity, and damming thy soul for

ever. 10. Strangers - Not only the strange women themselves, but others who are in league with them. labours - Wealth gotten by thy labours.

14. A moment - In how little a time am I now come into remediless misery! Assembly - And that in the congregation of Israel, where I was taught better things.

15. Drink - Content thyself with those delights which God alloweth thee in the sober use of the marriage-bed.

16. Fountains - Thy children proceeding from thy wife and from thyself. Fountains are here put for rivers flowing from them. Dispersed - They shall in due time appear abroad to thy comfort, and for the good of others.

18. Fountain - Thy wife. Blessed - With children; for barrenness was esteemed a curse among the Israelites.

19. Satisfy thee - At all convenient times: for that there may be excess in the marriage-bed is manifest. Ravished - Love her fervently. It is an hyperbolical expression.

22. Holden - He is in perfect bondage to his lusts, and is neither able nor wiling to set himself at liberty.

23. Die - He shall die in his sins. Astray-From the way of life, and from eternal salvation.

## VI

A caution against suretyship, ver. 1-5. Against slothfulness, ver. 6-11. The practice and end of a mischievous man, ver. 12-15. Account of seven things which God hates, ver. 16-19. An exhortation to keep the commandments, ver. 20-23. Farther warnings against whoredom, ver. 24-35.

1. Surety - Rashly, without considering how thou shalt discharge the debt as occasion require. Otherwise suretyship in some cases may be not only lawful, but an act of justice and charity. Stricken thy hand - Obliged thyself by giving thine hand, as the custom then was in such cases. With - With the creditor, whom he calls a stranger, because the usurers in Israel, who lent money to others, upon condition of paying use for it, were either Heathens, or were reputed as bad as Heathens, because this practice was forbidden by God's law, Deut. xxiii, 19.

3. Hand - Into the power. Friend - Of the debtor, for whom, as being thy friend, thou didst become surety; whereby thou art in his power, by his neglect or unfaithfulness, to expose thee to the payment of the debt. Make sure - Or, and prevail with thy friend, strive to win him by thine incessant and earnest solicitations.

4. Give not sleep - Until thou hast taken care for the discharge of this obligation.

6. Go - This is a distinct precept; and it is for the most part as needless to seek, as hard to find, coherence in the Proverbs.

11. Travelleth - Swiftly and unexpectedly. Armed man - Irresistibly.

16. Hate - Above many other sins which have a worse name in the world.

18. Deviseth - He whose practice it is to contrive wickedness. Swift - Such as greedily execute their wicked designs.

20. The law - The word of God, which thy parents delivered to thee.

21. Bind them - Constantly remember, and duly consider them.

22. It - The law of God which thy parents have taught thee. Talk - It shall give thee counsel and comfort.

25. Eye-lids - With her wanton glances,

30. Despise - Abhor, but rather pity him.

31. Restore - He speaks not of that restitution which the law required, but of that which either the wronged person might force the thief to make, or which the thief would willingly give rather than be exposed to public shame.

34. Rage - It enflames a man with rage. In the day - When he hath an opportunity to avenge himself.

## VII

An exhortation to cleave to wisdom, as a preservative from strange women, ver. 1-5. The snares they lay for unwary young men, ver. 6-23. A serious caution against coming near them, ver. 24-37.

2. Live - Thou shalt live. Eye - With all possible care and diligence.

3. Bind them - As a ring which is continually in a man's eye.

4. And call - Acquaint and delight thyself with her.

8. Passing - Idle and careless, near the corner of the street in which her house stood.

12. Without - Without the door of her house. Corner - Of the streets, where she might either conceal or discover herself, as she saw fit.

14. Offerings - I have paid my peace-offerings which I had vowed. Whereby she signifies, that she had plentiful provisions at her house for his entertainment. For the peace-offerings were to be of the best flesh, Lev. xxii, 21, and a considerable part of these offerings fell to the offerer's share.

20. Hath taken - Which is an evidence that he designs to stay a considerable time. At the day - So that we need not fear any surprise.

22. As an ox - Going to it securely, as if it were going to a good pasture.

23. His liver - His vital parts, 'till his life be lost.

## VIII

A recommendation of Divine wisdom, ver. 1-21. The praise of the Son of God, the eternal Wisdom of the Father, ver. 22-31. An exhortation to hearken to him, ver. 32-36.

1. Wisdom - It is a great question what this wisdom is. Some understand it of the Divine wisdom; others of the second person in the Godhead: and it cannot be denied that some passages best agree

to the former, and others to the latter opinion. Possibly both may be joined together, and the chapter may be understood of Christ considered partly in his personal capacity, and partly in regard of his office, which was to impart the mind and will of God to mankind.

2. High place - Where she may be best seen and heard. Paths - Where many paths meet, where there is a great concourse, and where travelers may need direction.

3. Gates - The places of judgment, and of the confluence of people. The entry - To invite passengers at their first coming and to conduct them to her house. The doors - Of her house.

4. O men - To all men without exception.

5. Ye simple - Who want knowledge, and experience. Fools - Wilful sinners.

9. To him - Whose mind God hath enlightened. To them - That are truly wise.

10. And not silver - Rather than silver.

12. I dwell - My inseparable companion is prudence to govern all my actions, and to direct the actions of others. Find out - I help men to find out. Inventions - Of all ingenious contrivances for the glory of God, and for the good of men.

14. Wisdom - All solid and substantial and useful wisdom is assential to me.

15. By me - They rule their kingdoms wisely and justly, by my counsel and assistance. Their injustice is from themselves, but all the good they do, they owe to my conduct.

17. I love - I do not despise their love, but kindly accept it and recompence it with my love and favour. Early - With sincere affection and diligence, which he mentions as the evidence of their love.

21. Substance - Substantial happiness: opposed to all worldly enjoyments, which are but mere shadows.

22. Possessed me - As his son by eternal generation, before the beginning. Of old - His works of creation.

23. Set up - Hebrew. anointed, constituted to be the person by whom the Father resolved to do all his works, to create, to uphold and govern and judge, to redeem and save the world. From the beginning - Before which, there was nothing but a vast eternity. The earth - Which together with the heaven, was the first of God's visible works.

24. No depths - No abyss or deep waters. Brought forth - Begotten of my father.

26. The earth - The dry land called earth after it was separated from the waters Gen. i, 10. Fields - The plain and open parts of the earth distinguished from the mountains. Dust - Of this lower part of the world which consists of dust.

27. I was there - As co-worker with my Father. Depth - Of that great abyss of water and earth mixed together, which is called both earth and water and the deep, Gen. i, 2, when he made this lower world in the form of a globe.

28. Strengthened - When he shut up the fountains in the cavities of the earth, and kept them there as it were by a strong band. The deep - Which have their original from the deep, either from the sea, or from the abyss of waters in the bowels of the earth.

31. My delights were - To uphold them by my power and providence, to reveal myself and my Father's will to them from age to age, to assume their nature, and to redeem and save them.

34. Waiting - As servants or clients, wait at the doors of princes or persons of eminency.

## IX

Christ, under the name of wisdom invites us to his entertainment, ver. 1-6. Foretells the different successes of his invitation, ver. 7-9. Shews the fruit of fearing God, ver. 10-12. Sin, in the person of a foolish woman invites us to her entertainment, ver. 13-17. Which ends in destruction, ver. 18

1. Her house - For the reception of her guests. Seven - Many pillars; whereby is intimated the beauty and stability of the church. Pillars - Prophets, and apostles, and ministers.

2. Killed - Made provision for the guests. Mingled - With water, as they used to do in those hot countries. Furnished - With all necessaries, and now waits for the guests.

3. Maidens - Her servants to invite the guests, ministers of the word whom he calls maidens for the decency of the parable; for wisdom being compared to a great princess, was fit to be attended upon by maidens. Highest places - From such high seats as those from which Judges delivered their sentences, and officers made proclamations.

4. Simple - Ignorant, and weak.

7. A former - He shews whom he meant by the foolish, ver. 6, even scorners and wicked men, and presses his last advice of forsaking them because there was no good, but hurt to be got from them.

8. A scorner - An obstinate and incorrigible sinner.

12. For thyself - Thou dost not profit me but thyself.

14. At the door - Watching for occasions of sin.

15. Go right - Who are going innocently about their business.

16. Simple - This title is not given them by her, but by Solomon.

17. Sweet - From the difficulty of obtaining them; and because the very prohibition renders them more grateful to corrupt nature.

## X

Here the Proverbs, properly so called, begin. They are short, but weighty sentences, most of which are two sentences in one verse, illustrating each other. But it is seldom there is any coherence between the verses, much less any thread of discourse.

2. Of wickedness - Such as are got by any sort of wicked practices. Death - Often from temporal, and always from eternal death.

5. Gathereth - The fruits of his field. In summer - In harvest. He that improved the opportunities of doing good to himself and others.

6. Violence - Their own violence or injustice. This may be an allusion to the ancient custom of covering the mouths and faces of condemned malefactors.

8. Who receive - Is ready to hear and obey the precepts of God and men. Fall - Into mischief.

9. Surely - Or, securely, or confidently, as the word properly signifies; quietly resting upon God's favour and gracious providence for his protections. Known - His wickedness shall be publickly discovered.

10. Winketh - That secretly designs mischief against others, as this phrase is used, Psalm xxxv, 19.

13. Wisdom - This wisdom shews itself in his speech. A rod - Rebukes from God and men.

14. Lay up - In their minds, to be brought forth upon fit occasions. Knowledge - Whereby they may be enabled to speak both what, and when it is seasonable. But - Fools are more forward to lay out than to lay up, and for want of knowledge speak much and foolishly, whereby they frequently bring destruction upon themselves.

15. Wealth - It often redeems him from dangers and calamities. Poverty - Is the cause of their ruin.

16. The labour - The fruit of his labour, to the preservation of this life, and obtaining eternal life. Fruit - The fruit of all their labour tends to sin, and serves only for fuel to mens pride and luxury.

18. Lying lips - With flattering words. He here condemns two opposite vices, secret hatred, and manifest slander.

20. Is - Of great worth and use. Heart - And consequently the tongue.

21. Feed - By their wise discourses and counsels. Die - They have not wisdom to preserve themselves, much less to feed others.

26. So - Unserviceable and vexatious.

28. Gladness - Shall be accomplished, and turned into enjoyment.

29. The way - The way of God's precepts. Strength - Gives strength, support, and protection.

30. Never be removed - They shall live happily here, and eternally in heaven. The earth - They shall not have so much as a quiet abode upon earth; much less shall they have any possession in heaven.

32. The lips - Knowledge is here ascribed to the lips, as it is to the hands, Psalm lxxviii, 72, because they are conducted by knowledge and wisdom. Acceptable - What is truly worthy of acceptation.

XI

1. A false balance - The use of all false weights and measures in commerce.

8. Cometh - Into trouble.

9. Delivered - From the infection of the hypocrite's evil counsel.

11. The blessing - Wherewith they bless the city, by their sincere prayers, and wise and wholesome counsels. The mouth - By their curses, and oaths, and blasphemies, and wicked counsels.

12. Despiseth - Which he shews by contemptuous or reproachful expressions. Holdeth peace - Forbears all such expressions, and silently and patiently bears those reproaches.

13. Secrets - Such things as were committed to his trust with a charge of secrecy.

16. Gracious woman - A woman endued with the grace of God. Retaineth - Or, holdeth fast her honour, or reputation.

18. Worketh - A work which will deceive his expectation. Soweth - That worketh it with constancy, and diligence.

21. Though hand join - Though they are fortified against God's judgments by a numerous issue and kindred, and friends, and by mutual and strong combinations. The seed - Not only their persons, but their children.

22. So is a fair woman without discretion - "Of beauty vain, of virtue void, What art thou in the sight of God? A slave to every base desire, A creature wallowing in the mire. Go, gaudy pageant of a day, Thy folly, with thy face display: Set all thy charms and graces out, And shew - the Jewel in thy snout!"

23. The desire - The desires and expectations of the righteous shall end in their happiness, but the desires and expectations of the wicked men shall be disappointed, and end in the wrath of God.

24. Scattereth - That gives liberally. Increaseth - Through God's blessing upon his estate. Poverty - By God's providence secretly blasting his estate.

25. Fat - Shall be enriched both with temporal and spiritual blessings.

26. With-holdeth corn - In a time of scarcity. Selleth - Upon reasonable terms.

27. Seeketh - To do good to all men. favour - With God and men.

29. Troubleth - He who brings trouble upon himself and children, either by prodigality, or by restless endeavours to heap up riches. Wind - Shall be as unable to keep what he gets as a man is to hold the wind in his hand.

30. The fruit - His discourses and his whole conversation, is like the fruit of the tree of life. Winneth - That gains souls to God.

31. Recompensed - Punished for his sins.

XII

6. Lie in wait - Are designed to entrap others, and to destroy them. Deliver them - From those that lie in wait for them.

7. Are not - Both they and their families suddenly perish.

9. Despised - That lives in a mean condition. honoureth - That glories in his high birth or gay attire.

10. Regardeth - He will not destroy it either by labour beyond its strength, or by denying it necessary food or rest. Cruel - There is cruelty mixed even with their most merciful actions.

11. Tilleth - That employs his time in an honest calling. Vain persons - In an idle course of living.

12. Desireth - He approves those arts, which wicked men use like nets to ensnare other men. The root - That piety, which is the root of his actions, yields him sufficient fruit both for his own need, and to do good to others.

14. Mouth - By his pious and profitable discourses. Hands - Of his actions.

15. Hearkeneth - That distrusts his own judgments, and seeks counsel from others.

16. Covereth - The shame, or injury done to him, which he conceals and bears with patience.

17. Deceit - He who uses himself to lying in his common talk, will use falsehood and deceit in judgment.

18. Health - Tends to the comfort and benefit of others.

19. A moment - Liars, though they may make a fair shew for a season, yet are quickly convicted.

20. Deceit - They whose hearts devise mischief shall be deceived in their hopes, and bring trouble upon themselves: but they who by good counsels labour to promote peace, shall reap the comfort of it themselves.

23. Concealeth - He does not unseasonably utter what he knows. Foolishness - Betrays his ignorance and folly.

25. A good word - A compassionate or encouraging word.

26. neighbour - Than any other men. Seduceth - Hebrew. maketh them to err, to lose that excellency or happiness which they had promised themselves.

27. Resteth not - Does not enjoy the fruit of his labours. Precious - Yields him comfort and blessing with it.

XIII

2. Shall eat - Shall receive comfort, and benefit by his wise and profitable discourses.

6. Keepeth him - From that over-throw which befall sinners.

7. Maketh rich - Some men who have little or nothing, pretend to have great riches. Maketh rich - Some rich men profess to be poor.

8. Riches - Riches enable a man to redeem his life when it is in greatest danger, and poverty preserves a man from many injuries. Because they are cautious, that they may not provoke others; and because they are esteemed objects of pity.

9. The light - The prosperity. Rejoiceth - Shines with a pleasant and constant brightness. Rejoicing is here ascribed to the light, as it is to the sun, Psalm xix, 5, metaphorically. Put out - Their felicity shall have a hidden end.

10. Pride - It is chiefly, pride which blows up the coals of contention. Well-advised - Who are not governed by their passions, but by prudent considerations. Wisdom - Which teaches them to avoid contention.

11. Vanity - By wicked practices.

12. Hope deferred - Delays in obtaining what a man passionately desires. The desire - The good desired. A tree of life - It is satisfactory, and reviving.

13. The word - The word of God.

14. The law - The instruction, or counsel; as the word law, is frequently understood in scripture.

15. Giveth - Makes a man acceptable to God. Rough - Offensive and hateful to God and men, as rough ways are to a traveler.

16. Knowledge - Considerately and discreetly. Layeth open - By his foolish actions.

17. A messenger - Who is unfaithful in the execution of that which is committed to his charge. Is health - Procures benefit, as to his master, so to himself.

19. Sweet - Whatsoever men earnestly desire, the enjoyment of it is sweet to them; therefore sinners rejoice in the satisfaction of their sinful lusts, and abhor all restraint of them.

21. Evil - Punishment proportionable to their sin.

23. The poor - Poor persons by their diligent labours, and God's blessing often grow rich. Destroyed - Or, consumed, brought to poverty, for want of discretion.

24. Hateth his son - His fond affection, is as pernicious to him as hatred.

XIV

1. Buildeth - Maintains and improves her family and estate. Her hands - By her idleness or sin.

3. A rod - His insolent speeches as they are like a rod, offensive to others, so, they make a rod for their own backs.

4. The crib - The stable is empty of food for cattle, and much more for man. In the same sense cleanness of teeth is put for famine, Amos iv, 6. The strength - By their labours, or by diligence in husbandry, which then was principally managed by oxen.

6. Findeth it not - Because he doth not seek it aright. That understandeth - That is honest and pious.

8. His way - Consists not in vain speculations, but in a diligent study of his duty, and of the way to eternal happiness. The folly - The wit of ungodly men, which is really their folly, is employed only in finding out ways of deceiving.

9. favour - They find favour both with God and men.

10. Bitterness - The inward griefs and joys of mens hearts, are not known to any but a man's self.

12. Right - There are some evil courses which men may think to be lawful and good. The end - The event shews that they were sinful and destructive.

13. In laughter - The outward signs of joy are often mixed with real sorrow.

14. In heart - He who departs from God inwardly. Filled - With the fruit of his ways, the punishment of his sins. Satisfied - From the pious temper of his own heart, which cleaves to the Lord, he shall receive unspeakable comfort.

15. The simple - A foolish man. Looketh - He orders his dealings in the world with due circumspection, not considering so much what other men say as what he ought to do.

16. Feareth - Trembles at God's judgments when they are either inflicted or threatened. Rageth - Frets against God; or is enraged against his messengers. Confident - Secure and insensible of his danger.

17. Foolishly - His passion hurries him into foolish speeches and actions. Wicked devices - One who suppresses his passion, but meditates revenge. Hated - Both by God and men.

18. Inherit - They possess it as their inheritance, holding it fast, and glorying in it. Knowledge - The saving knowledge of God and of their own duty.

19. The evil - Good men shall have the pre-eminency over the wicked.

20. Hated - Despised and abandoned.

21. Despiseth - That does not pity and relieve the poor.

23. The talk - Idle talking will bring a man to poverty.

24. Riches - They are a singular advantage and ornament to them. But - As for rich fools, their folly is not cured, but made worse and more manifest by their riches.

25. Souls - Such as are innocent, from false accusations.

27. To depart - To preserve men from destructive courses.

29. Exalteth - Hebrew. lifteth up, like a banner, makes it known and visible to all men.

30. A sound heart - Free from envy and inordinate passions. Is life - Procures and maintains the health and vigour of the body.

31. His maker - Whose image the poor man bears, by whose providence he is made poor, and who hath declared himself to be their protector and avenger.

32. Driven away - In his death, from God's favour and presence. Death - In his greatest dangers and distresses, yea even in death itself.

33. Resteth - Is laid up and hid there. In the midst - In the heart. Made known - They will publish in all times and companies.

35. Shame - Both to himself, by his foolish management of the king's affairs, and to the king who made so foolish a choice of a servant.

XV

2. Aright - Expressing what he knows prudently and gracefully. Poureth out - Plentifully, continually, and vehemently, as a fountain does waters.

4. Wholesome - Which utters sound and useful counsels. Tree of life - Is greatly useful to preserve the present life, and to promote the spiritual and eternal life, both of the speaker and hearers. Perverseness - False or corrupt speeches. A breach - Disturbs and wounds the spirits, both of the speaker and hearers.

6. Revenues - Though he may obtain great revenues, yet they are attended with much trouble.

7. Disperse - Freely communicate to others what they know.

8. Sacrifice - All the religious services, yea, the most costly; one kind being put for all the rest. Prayer - The cheapest and meanest services.

11. Destruction - The place of destruction, of which men know nothing but by Divine Revelation.

14. Foolishness - Wickedness is meat and drink to them.

15. Afflicted - Of the troubled in mind. Evil - Tedious and uncomfortable. Chearful - Hebrew. of a good heart.

16. Trouble - Tumultuous lusts and passions, vexatious cares, and horrors of conscience.

19. An hedge - As a way hedged up with thorns, troublesome, perplexed, and full of difficulties. Plain - Is easy and pleasant to him, notwithstanding all its difficulties.

22. Counsel - When men do not seek, or will not receive advice from others.

23. The answer - By a wise, or good and seasonable answer.

24. The way - The way a wise man takes to obtain life, is to place his heart, and treasure, and conversation on things above.

25. The proud - Of the mighty oppressors. The border - The estate, the border being often used, for the land within the borders.

26. Pleasant - Acceptable to God.

27. Troubleth - Brings God's curse upon himself and family. Gifts - Bribes given to corrupt judgment. Live - Shall preserve himself and family from ruin.

28. Studieth - He speaks considerately. The mouth - Not the heart; for he rashly speaks what comes into his mouth, without the direction of his heart or conscience.

30. A good report - A good name. Fat - Not only chears a man for the present, but gives him such stable comfort as revives his soul, and gives vigour to his body.

31. The ear - The man that hearkens to that reproof which leads to life, seeks and delights in the company of the wise.

33. The instruction - Doth instruct men in true wisdom.

XVI

1. From the Lord - Men can neither think nor speak wisely and well without Divine assistance.

2. Weigheth - Exactly knows as men do the things which they weigh. Spirits - The hearts of men.

3. Commit - Refer all thy actions and concerns to God, as the end of them, and depend upon God's providence for success. Established - Thy designs shall be brought to an happy issue.

4. Doth work - He orders or disposes. For - For his own glory; for the discovery of his wisdom, power, goodness, truth, justice. The wicked - Wilful and impenitent sinners. Men make themselves wicked, and God therefore makes them miserable.

6. By mercy - By a merciful and just and faithful frame of heart and course of life. Is purged - As they qualify a man to offer up acceptable prayers to God for the pardon of his sins. By fear -

By a filial reverence unto God. Depart - They are kept from abusing pardoning mercy, and from returning to folly or wickedness.

9. Deviseth - Proposes what he will do. Directeth - Over-rules and disposes all his designs and actions.

10. A divine sentence - Great sagacity and piercing judgment. Of the king - Of wise kings; who only are worthy of that name and office.

11. The Lord's - Are made by his direction and appointment, so that no man can alter them without violating God's rights and authority.

15. A cloud - As acceptable as those clouds which bring the latter rain, whereby the fruits are filled and ripened a little before the harvest.

17. The high-way - Their common road, in which they walk, tho' through frailty or temptation they slip into the bypath of sin. From evil - From the evil of sin, and consequently from the evil of punishment. Keepeth - That takes heed to walk in that high-way.

20. Good - He who orders his affairs with discretion.

21. The wise - He who is truly wise, shall be so accounted by others. Sweetness - Eloquence added to wisdom. Increaseth - Both in himself, for while a man teaches others, he improves himself; and others, who by this means are induced to hear and receive his instructions.

22. The instruction - Their most grave and serious counsels are foolish.

23. Teacheth - Directs him what to speak, and keeps him from speaking foolishly. Addeth - Enables him to speak learnedly and wisely.

27. Diggeth up - Prosecutes his evil designs with great industry. His lips - His tongue is set on fire of hell.

30. Shutteth - That his thoughts may be more intent. Moving - Which is the gesture of one whose thoughts are deeply engaged.

32. Is better - Of a more gallant and generous spirit, and more valiant and victorious.

33. The lot - As the ancient practice was in deciding doubtful things. The event of which though casual to men, is directed by God's providence.

XVII

4. False lips - To false accusations and calumnies, which give him occasion and encouragement to do mischief.

7. Excellent speech - Discourse of high and excellent things.

8. A precious stone - Pleasant and acceptable; and withal dazzles his eyes. Whithersoever - To whomsoever it is presented. But this, as also many of her Proverbs, are to be understood of most men, not of all.

9. Covereth - That conceals as far as he may, other mens faults.

11. Rebellion - Against God. Messenger - Or, a cruel angel, the angel of death, the devil, or some bloody men employed by God to avenge his quarrel.

12. Folly - In the heat of his lust or passion.

14. Letteth out - By cutting the bank of a river. Leave off - Avoid the occasions, and prevent the beginning of contention.

16. A price - Opportunities and abilities of getting it. No heart - Neither discretion to discern the worth of wisdom, nor any sincere desire to get it.

17. Was born - Was sent into the world for this, that he might comfort and relieve his brother in adversity.

18. Friend - Debtor, for whom being his friend, he becomes surety.

20. No good - Shall not get that advantage which he expects.

22. Doth good - Even to the body; it contributes much to bodily health and vigour. Drieth - Wastes the marrow of the bones, and the moisture and strength of the body.

24. In the face - His wisdom appears even in his looks. The eyes - Minding most, those things which are remotest from him, and least concern him.

26. To strike - Nor to smite magistrates, either with the hand or tongue, for the execution of justice.

XVIII

1. Desire - Thro' desire of wisdom, a man having separated himself from the company, and noise, and business of the world, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom, uses all diligence, that he may search and find out all solid knowledge and true wisdom.

2. Understanding - In getting sound and saving, knowledge. The discovery - In uttering that folly and wickedness which is in his heart.

3. Cometh - Into any place or company. Contempt - He despiseth all instruction and reproof. Reproach - And he shews his contempt by ignominious and reproachful expressions.

4. A man's - A wise man's. As a brook - That wisdom which is in his heart is continually pouring forth wise and good counsels.

8. They go - They wound mortally.

9. Is brother - Though they take several paths, yet both come to one end.

10. The name - The Lord, as he hath revealed himself in his works, and in his word by his promises.

14. Sustain - Will easily support him under any outward troubles. Wounded - Dejected with the sense of its own guilt and misery.

18. Parteth - Gives to every one what is right or meet.

20. Satisfied - Wise discourses tend to the satisfaction of the speaker, as well as to the good of the hearers.

21. Death and life - Are brought upon men by, the good or bad use of their tongues. Lovest - That love much talking.

22. A wise - A good wife; one that deserves the name, and performs the duty of that relation. favour - Obtains her not by his own diligence, but by God's good providence.

24. A man - Hebrew. A man of friends; who desires the friendship of others.

XIX

2. Hasteth - That rashly and headily rushes into actions.

3. Perverteth - Blasts his designs and enterprises. Fretteth - He ascribes his unhappiness not to his own sin, but to God and his providence.

6. A friend - in profession.

7. Brethren - His nearest relations. Hate - Despise and shun him. Pursueth - Earnestly imploring their pity.

10. Delight - To live in pleasure and outward glory, doth not become him, nor suit with him; because prosperity corrupts even wise men, and makes fools mad; and because it gives him more opportunity to discover his folly, and to do mischief both to himself and others.

13. Dropping - Are like rain continually dropping upon an house.

15. Casteth - Makes a man careless, and like one asleep in his business.

16. His ways - The commands of God.

18. While - Before custom in sin, and thy indulgence have made him incorrigible. Let not - Forbear not to give him due and necessary correction.

19. Great wrath - Of strong passions. Deliver - If thou forbear to punish him. Do it - Thou must deliver him again and again.

22. The desire - The hearty desire of being kind is accepted by God, and should be owned by men as a real kindness. A poor man - Who is not able to give what he desires to do. A liar - Than a rich man who feeds the poor with fair promises, but doth not perform what he pretends.

23. Satisfied - Shall be fully contented with God's favour and blessing.

24. Bring it - To feed himself; he expects that the meat should drop into his mouth.

25. Scorner - An obstinate and impudent transgressor. Simple - Who sin thro' ignorance, being possibly drawn to it by the scorner's evil counsel or example. Reprove - A verbal reproof will be more effectual for his reformation, than the severest punishments will be to a scorner.

26. Wasteth - His father's estate. Chaseth - Causes her to avoid his presence, and to go from the house where he is.

28. Scorneth - Hath no reverence to the place of justice, nor to the presence of God there. Devoureth - Utters it with greediness and delight.

29. Prepared - Although they be deferred for a time, yet they are treasured up for them.

XX

1. A mocker - Wine immoderately drunk makes men mockers. Raging - Makes men full of rage.

2. The fear - The terror which the wrath of a king causes.

3. Meddling - Is always ready to begin strife, and obstinate in the continuance of it.

5. Counsel - Designs of doing something of moment. Deep water - Is secret and hard to be discovered.

8. His eyes - With his very looks, or by his diligent inspection into affairs.

10. Divers - One greater for shew and one lesser for use.

11. Is known - The future disposition of a man may be probably conjectured from his childish manners.

13. Open - Shake off sloth and betake thyself to thy employment with diligence and vigour.

15. The lips - But wise speeches are of far greater worth.

16. Take - As a pledge, without which he ought not to be trusted. Of him - That is surety.

18. Established - The way to bring our purposes to good effect is to manage them with serious consideration.

20. Lamp - His name and memory shall utterly perish.

24. His way - What the issue of his designs will be.

25. A snare - It brings guilt upon him. After - After a man has made vows to inquire for ways to break them.

26. The wheel - As the cart-wheel was anciently turned over the sheaves to beat the corn out of them. He punishes them as their offenses deserve.

27. The spirit - The reasonable soul. The candle - Is a clear and glorious light set up in man for his information and direction. Of the Lord - So called because it comes from God in a more immediate manner than the body, Eccles xii, 7, and because it is in God's stead, to observe and judge all our actions. Searching - Discerning not only his outward actions, which are visible to

others, but his most inward thoughts and affections. The belly is here put for the heart, as it is frequently.

30. The blueness - Grievous wounds, which make men black and blue; or severe punishments. Cleanseth - Are the means to reclaim a wicked man, and to purge out his corruption. The belly - Of the heart. Grievous wounds or stripes cleanse not only the outward man by keeping it from evil actions, but even the inward man, by expelling or subduing vile affections: which is a great and blessed benefit of afflictions.

XXI

1. The kings - He names kings not to exclude other men, but because they are more arbitrary and uncontrollable than others. As rivers - Which husband-men draw by little channels into the adjacent grounds as they please.

4. The plowing - Even their civil or natural actions, which in themselves are lawful, are made sinful as they are managed by ungodly men, without any regard to the glory of God, which ought to be the end of all our actions.

5. Hasty - Who manages his affairs rashly.

6. Lying tongue - By any false or deceitful words or actions. Is tossed - Is like the chaff or smoak driven away by the wind. Of them - That take those courses which will bring destruction upon them.

8. The way - Of every man by nature. Strange - Estranged from God. Right - But he whose heart is pure, his conversation is agreeable to it.

10. Desireth - To do mischief. No favour - He spares neither friend nor foe.

11. The wise - The simple learn wisdom, both from the punishment of wicked men, and from the prosperity of good men.

12. Considereth - He looks through its present glory to that ruin for which it is designed.

14. In secret - Which makes it more acceptable. In the bosom - Secretly conveyed into the bosom.

16. Shall remain - Shall, without repentance, be condemned to eternal death.

17. Wine and oil - Delicious fare and luxurious feasting. Wine and oil were much used in feasts in those parts.

18. A ransom - The wicked shall be brought into those troubles, which were designed by wicked men for the righteous: thus Haman was a ransom for Mordecai.

20. The wise - Wise men lay up desirable treasures for their own use, and for their families. Oil is particularly mentioned, because that was a considerable part of their wealth and treasures in those countries.

22. The strength - The strongest sorts to which the citizens trust.

25. Killeth - Torments him to death, while he passionately desires what he sees, he shall not enjoy, and will not take pains to procure.

26. Coveteth - Spends his whole time in vain and lazy desires. Giveth - By God's blessing upon his industry he procures enough, not only for his own support, but for the relief of others.

27. The sacrifice - All the most costly services which they offer to God. Because - As all the ancient translators render it, the Hebrew particle, aph, being expletive: or, even because; so the following clause gives the reason. A wicked mind - Not in obedience to God's command, but either to cover, or countenance, or promote some wicked design.

28. Heareth - He witnesses nothing but what he has heard or seen. Constantly - Always affirms the same thing.

29. Hardeneth - Continues in evil with obstinacy and impudence. Directs - He orders his steps aright.

31. The horse - Under which all war-like provisions are comprehended.

XXII

1. favour - A good report among men, especially good men, and that hearty kindness which attends it.

2. Meet - They live together, and need one another. The maker - Not only as they are men, but as they are poor or rich, which difference comes from God's providence. They have one common creator, and Lord, and judge, and the one cannot despise nor grudge at the other without reflecting upon God.

3. The evil - The judgment of God threatened, and approaching. Hideth - Retires to his strong tower, by prayer and repentance, puts himself under the protection of the almighty. Pass on - Carefully and securely.

6. Depart - Not easily and ordinarily.

7. Is servant - Is at his mercy, and forced to comply with his pleasure.

8. The rod - That power which he used with fury shall be taken from him.

9. He - Who looks upon the wants and miseries of others with compassion.

12. Preserve - God by the watchful eye of his providence maintains and defends. Knowledge - Men of knowledge, knowing and good men. The matters - All his hopes, enterprizes, and concerns.

14. The mouth - Her fair and flattering speeches.

15. Bound - Is fixed and settled there, as being born with him, and rooted in his very nature.

16. That giveth - That prodigally casts away his estate upon those who do not need it.

17. My knowledge - The knowledge of God, which I am here delivering.

18. Fitted - Fitly expressed: thou wilt be able to discourse profitably of them.

20. In counsels and knowledge - In counsels which proceed from found knowledge.

21. Answer - That thou mayst be able to give solid, and satisfactory answers.

22. In the gate - Under pretense of justice.

23. Spoil the soul - Take away not only their goods but their lives too.

29. Before kings - He is fit to be employed in the affairs of princes.

XXIII

1. Ruler - With a great man.

2. Put a knife - Restrain thine appetite, as if a man stood with a knife at thy throat.

3. Deceitful - They do not yield thee that satisfaction which thou didst expect from them.

4. Thine own wisdom - From worldly wisdom, which persuades men to use all possible means to get riches.

5. Set thine eyes - Look upon it with earnestness and desire. Is not - Which has no solid and settled being. Eagle - Swiftly, strongly, and irrecoverably.

6. Evil eye - Of the envious or covetous man.

7. So is he - You are not to judge of him by his words, but by the constant temper of his mind.

8. Vomit up - When thou perceivest his churlish disposition, his meat will be loathsome to thee. Sweet words - Thy pleasant discourse wherewith thou didst design to delight and profit him.

9. Of a fool - Cast not away good counsels upon incorrigible sinners.

10. Enter not - To possess their lands.

11. Redeemer - Hebrew. their near kinsman, to whom it belongs to avenge their wrongs, and to recover and maintain their rights.

13. Shall not die - It is a likely way to prevent his destruction.

16. My reins - I shall rejoice with all my soul.

18. An end - An expected and happy end for such as fear God.

19. Guide - Order the whole course of thine affections and actions. In the way - In God's way.

23. Buy - Purchase it upon any terms, spare no pains or cost. Truth - The true and saving knowledge of God's will. Sell it not - Do not forsake it for any worldly advantage.

26. Give me - Solomon here speaks in God's name.

30. Mixt wine - Either mixed with water, or with other ingredients to make it strong and delicious.

31. Red - Which was the colour of the best wines in that country. Aright - When it sparkles, and seems to smile upon a man.

34. Lieth down - To sleep. Sea - In a ship in the midst of the sea.

35. Sick - I was not sensible of it. Again - At present my condition requires sleep to settle myself, and when I am composed, I purpose to return to my former course.

XXIV

2. Destruction - How they may oppress and destroy others.

3. Through wisdom - There is no need that thou shouldest raise thy family by ruining others, which thou mayest more effectually do by wisdom.

4. By knowledge - Which in scripture phrase includes the love and practice of what we know.

5. Is strong - Is courageous and resolute, and able by wisdom to do greater things than others can accomplish by strength.

6. Thy war - War is better managed by wisdom than by strength.

7. A fool - For a wicked man, whose sins enfeeble his mind, and make it incapable of wisdom. Openeth not - He knows not how to speak acceptably, and profitably in the publick assembly.

8. Shall be called - Though he cover his wicked devices with fair pretenses, he shall be branded with that infamy which is due to him.

9. The thought - The very inward thought or contrivance of evil, is a sin in God's sight.

11. Deliver - When it is in thy power. Drawn - By the violence of lawless men.

12. Consider - That this is only a frivolous excuse.

13. Eat - This is not a command, but a concession, and is only here expressed to illustrate the following verse. Honey in those parts was an usual food.

14. A reward - It is not only sweet for the present, but brings a sure and everlasting reward.

16. Falleth - Into calamities, of which he evidently speaks both in the foregoing verse, and in the following branch of this verse. Fall - Frequently into irrecoverable destruction.

17. Falleth - Into mischief.

18. From him - Understand, upon thee, which is implied in the Hebrew phrase.

20. No reward - All his happiness shall quickly and eternally perish. The candle - All their comfort and glory shall cease.

21. To change - That are unstable in their obedience to God or to the king.

22. Who knoweth - Who can conceive how sore and sudden will be the ruin of them that fear not God, and the king.

23. These - The counsels following, to the end of the chapter, no less than those hitherto mentioned, are worthy of their consideration.

25. Rebuke - That publickly and judicially rebuke and condemn the wicked. Delight - The peace of a good conscience.

26. Shall kiss - Shall respect him. A right answer - That speaks pertinently and plainly, and truly.

32. Received - I learned wisdom by his folly.

XXV

1. These - Which are contained in this and the following chapters. The men - Certain persons appointed by Hezekiah for that work. Many of them are political precepts, and such as in a special manner concerned Hezekiah, and other princes, for the conduct of their house and kingdom. Copied - Out of the historical records which were then extant.

2. The glory - It is agreeable to the nature of God; it is a testimony of his infinite wisdom, and of his absolute power and sovereignty. To conceal - To keep his counsels, and the reasons of his actions in his own breast. Search out - To communicate their counsels to others, that so they may search and find out the right way.

3. The heart - Though wise kings will search out other men, yet their inward thoughts and purposes are hardly discoverable.

4. Take away - Then, and not 'till then it is fit for that use.

6. Stand not - Do not affect frequent and familiar society with greater persons than thyself.

9. Debate - If thou hast any quarrel with him, first try to compose it by private discourse with him. Discover not - Let not heat of contention provoke thee to divulge any of his secrets committed to thy trust.

10. Lest he - Reproach thee for thy gross violation of the laws of prudence, justice and friendship.

11. Of silver - Which it seems was usual in those times, and was grateful to the eye for the beauty and variety both of the colours and figures, the golden apples appearing through net-work of silver. 13. Cold of snow - As drink cooled with ice or snow, as is usual in hot countries.

14. Boasteth - Promising what he never intends to give. Is like - Like empty clouds carried about with wind, and not affording that rain which they promise.

15. Forbearing - By patient submission and expectation. Breaketh - Softens the hardest heart.

16. Honey - By honey he understands, not only all delicious meats, but all worldly delights, which we are here taught to use with moderation.

17. Withdraw - Visit him not too frequently.

18. A sword - Is as cruel and pernicious as any instrument of death.

20. As vinegar - Which dissolves the nitre, and makes it useless and ineffectual.

21. Bread - By bread and water he understands all things necessary for his subsistence.

22. For - In so doing, which words are expressed Rom. xii, 20, where this text is quoted. Thou shalt melt him into repentance, and love.

25. So - Because it comes more rarely and difficultly, after it hath been long expected.

26. Falling - When righteous men are oppressed by the wicked, the state of that common-wealth is as deplorable, as if the publick fountains were corrupted.

27. Not good - For health. To search - Industriously to seek for applause. Is not - Is not only sinful, but shameful also.

XXVI

2. By flying - Secures itself from the fowler. Not come - Upon the innocent person, but he shall escape from it like a bird.

4. According - So as to imitate his folly, by passionate or reproachful speeches.

5. According - So as his folly needs and requires, convincing him strongly, reproving him sharply, and exposing him to just shame.

6. Cutteth off the feet - Of his messenger; bids one go that wants legs. Drinketh - Drinking, in scripture, frequently denotes the plentiful doing or receiving of any thing.

7. The legs - Hebrew. the legs of the lame are lifted up, in going, or in dancing, which is done with great inequality and uncomeliness. So - No less incident are wise and pious speeches from a foolish and ungodly man.

8. Bindeth - Whereby he hinders his own design of throwing the stone out of it. So - No less absurd is he that giveth to a fool that honour which he is not capable of using aright.

9. A thorn - As a thorn is in a drunkard's hand, which he cannot manage cautiously, but employs to his own and others hurt. So - As unprofitable, and, by accident, hurtful to himself and others.

10. Rewardeth - Will certainly give that recompence which is deserved by fools and transgressors, by such as sin either thro' ignorance, or wilfully.

14. Turneth - Moving hither and thither upon it, but not removing from its place.

16. A reason - A satisfactory reason of ail their actions.

17. He - Who is going upon the way. With strife - In which he is not concerned, nor any way obliged to meddle. That taketh - Exposes himself to needless hazard.

18. And death - Any instruments of death.

23. Burning - With malice or hatred: A slanderous or evil tongue. Dross - Such a tongue and heart are of no real worth, although sometimes they make a shew of it, as dross does of silver. 26. Deceit - With false professions of love.

27. Rolleth - Up the hill with design to do mischief to some person.

XXVII

1. Boast not - Of any good thing which thou purposeth to do, or hopest to receive tomorrow, or hereafter. Knowest not - What may happen in the space of one day. The day is said to bring forth, what God by his almighty power either causes or suffers to be brought forth or done in it.

3. Heavier - More grievous, being without cause, without measure, and without end.

5. Open - When it is needful, in which case, though it put a man to some shame yet it doth him good. Better - More desirable and beneficial. Secret love - Which does not shew itself by friendly actions, and particularly by free and faithful reproof.

6. Wounds - The sharpest reproofs. Kisses - All the outward profession of friendship.

8. Wandereth - That flies from place to place, whereby she is exposed to all the arts of fowlers, and to birds of prey. So - So is he who through vanity or lightness changes his abode, or his calling.

10. Neither go - For comfort and relief, so as to forsake thy friend for him. A neighbour - The friend, who hath shewed himself to be a good neighbour. Near - In affection.

11. Reproacheth - For being the father of a wicked son.

14. Blesseth - That praises him to his face. A loud voice - That both he, and others, may be sure to take notice of it. Rising early - To shew his great forwardness. A curse - His friend will value this kind of blessing no more than a curse.

16. Hideth - Attempts to smother her passion. Right-hand - Which being the great instrument of action, by its much stirring, diffuses the savour of it.

17. Iron - Iron tools are made sharp and fit for use, by rubbing them against the file, or some other iron. The countenance - The company or conversation of his friend.

18. So he - That serves him faithfully, prudently, and diligently.

19. So - So one man resembles another in the corruption of his nature.

20. Hell - The grave devours all the bodies which are put into it, and is always ready to receive and devour more. The eyes - The desires, which discover themselves by the eyes.

21. To his praise - Or, according to his praise. So a man is tried by praise.

23. Flock - Flocks and herds are here put for all possessions, because anciently they were the chief part of a man's riches.

24. For - What thou dost now possess, will not last always. If a man had the wealth of a kingdom, without care and diligence it would be brought to nothing.

25. The hay - Another encouragement to diligence; God invites thee to it by the plentiful provisions wherewith he has enriched the earth for thy sake. The mountains - Even the most barren parts afford thee their help.

26. The price - By the sale whereof thou mayest either pay the rent of the field which thou hirest, or purchase fields or lands. Goats might better be spared and sold than sheep, which brought a more constant profit to the owner.

27. Goat's milk - Or, if thou chusest rather to keep thy goats, the milk will serve thee for food to thyself and family. In ancient times men used a plain and simple diet.

XXVIII

2. But - By a wise and good prince.

3. It like - Is like a violent rain or flood, which washes away the very seeds in the earth. He is the worst of all oppressors.

4. Contend - Are so far from praising them, that they severely reprove them.

5. Judgment - What is just and right. All things - Which are necessary to be known by them.

6. Better - In a much happier condition.

10. Causeth - That by evil counsel, or example, or artifice, draws them into evil.

12. Rejoice - Are promoted. Glory - In that common-wealth. Rise - Are advanced to authority. Hidden - Wise and good men, who only are worthy of the name of men, withdraw themselves into obscure places.

14. Alway - In all times, companies, and conditions.

16. Oppressor - The tyranny of a prince, is a manifest sign of folly. Prolong - By God's favour, the peace and satisfaction of his own mind, and the hearty love of his people.

17. Violence - That sheddeth any man's blood. Shall flee - Shall speedily be destroyed. Shall slay - None should desire or endeavour to save him from his deserved punishment.

18. At once - Once for all; so he shall never rise more.

20. Faithful - Who deals truly and justly in all his transactions.

21. For - When a man hath once accustomed himself to take bribes, a very small advantage will make him sell justice.

22. Evil eye - Is uncharitable to persons in want, and envious to those who get any thing besides him. Poverty - And consequently that he shall need the pity and help of others.

24. The same - Is a thief and robber.

25. Fat - Shall live happily and comfortably.

26. Wisely - Distrusting his own judgment, and seeking the advice of others, and especially of God.

28. Men - Righteous men are afraid to appear publickly.

XXIX

4. Judgment - By the free and impartial exercise of justice. Gifts - Bribes.

8. Wrath - The wrath of God or of men, who were enraged against it.

9. Whether - Whether he, the wise man, deal sharply with him, or mildly, there is no rest, no end or fruit of the debate.

10. Seek - To preserve it.

15. Left - Suffered to follow his own will without restraint and chastening.

18. No vision - No prophecy; no publick preaching of God's word.

19. A servant - Who is so not only in condition, but also in the temper of his mind, disingenuous, and stubborn. Words - By mere words. Tho' - Though he know thy mind, and his own duty.

20. Hasty - Who is rash and heady in the management of his affairs.

21. Delicately - Allowing him too much freedom, and familiarity. A son - Will find him at last grow insolent, and forgetful of his servile condition.

24. Bewrayeth it not - Which he is bound to do for the publick good.

25. A snare - Is an occasion of many sins.

26. Judgment - The decision of his cause, and the success of all his endeavours.

XXX

1. Jakeh - Who lived either in Solomon's time, or rather afterwards, and was famous in his generation for wisdom and piety. The prophecy - The prophetical instruction; for as the prophets were public preachers as well as foretellers of things to come, so their sermons, no less than their predictions, are commonly called their prophecies. And Ucal - Two friends and co-temporaries of Agur, who desired his instructions.

2. Surely - This he utters from a modest and humble apprehension of his own ignorance.

3. I neither learned - I have not been taught in the schools of wisdom. Of the holy - Of the holy prophets. I have not such Divine inspirations as prophets strictly so called have received.

4. Who - What mere man? None at all. Ascended - To learn the mind of God who dwells there. Descended - To teach men below what he had learned above. No man can fully know and teach us these things unless he hath been in heaven, and sent down from thence to the earth for that end. In his fists - To hold them in, or let them out at his pleasure? And none but he who made and governs all creatures, can know and teach these things. The waters - Those above the clouds, and those below, the sea which God keeps as it were within doors, and the water which he shuts up in the bowels of the earth. The earth - The whole earth from one end to another, which God upholdeth in the air, by the word of his power. If - If thou thinkest there be any man who can do these things, produce his name; or if he be dead, the name of any of his posterity.

5. Pure - You must not expect the full knowledge of Divine mysteries from me, nor from any man, but from the word of God.

8. Vanity - All vanity of heart and life; a vain conversation, or a love of the vain things of this world. Lies - All falsehood and deceit in my words and carriage. Convenient - Moderate and suitable both to my natural necessities, and to that condition of life in which thou hast put me.

9. Deny thee - By trusting to riches, which is a denial of God, and by unthankfulness for, and abuse of his mercies. Who is the Lord - That I should serve him. Lest I take - Use false oaths either to vindicate myself when I am suspected, or to gratify others, as poor men frequently do.

10. Accuse not - Without sufficient cause: for otherwise, in some cases this may be a duty. Curse thee - Desire God to punish thee. Guilty - By God, who is ready to plead the cause of the afflicted.

11. A generation - A sort of men.

12. Not washed - Who imagine they are truly religious, when they live in a course of wickedness.

14. Devour - Extortioners, and cruel oppressors.

15. The horse-leach - An insatiable creature, sucking blood 'till it is ready to burst. Two daughters - The following things resemble the horse-leach in its insatiableness; nothing being more ordinary than to call those persons or things the sons or daughters of those whose examples they imitate. Three - Though he begins with two, yet he proceeds from thence to three, and four, all which are said to be the daughters of the horse-leach.

17. The eye - He that scorneth or derideth his parents, tho' it be but with a look or gesture, and much more when he breaks out into opprobrious words and actions.

18. Wonderful - The way whereof I cannot trace.

20. Such is - So secret and undiscernible. Eateth - The bread of deceit in secret.

21. Four - Which are intolerable in human societies.

22. A servant - For such an one is commonly ignorant, and therefore commits many errors; he is poor, and therefore insatiable, he is proud and imperious, and usually injurious and cruel. A fool - A conceited fool. When - When he abounds in wealth.

23. An odious - Proud, and perverse. Married - For then she displays all those ill humours, which before, she concealed. Is heir - Which great and sudden change transports her beside herself, and makes her insufferably proud and scornful.

27. Bands - Several companies, in exact order.

28. Hands - With her legs, which he calls hands, because they serve her for the same use, to do her work, to weave her web, and to catch gnats or flies. Palaces - Is not only in poor cottages, but many times in palaces also.

31. An he-goat - Which marches in the head of the flock in a grave and stately manner, conducting them with great courage and resolution, and being ready to fight for them, either with beasts or men that oppose him. A king - Hebrew. a king and his people with him, a king when he hath the hearts and hands of his people going along with him in his undertakings.

32. Thought - Designed any injury against thy neighbour. Lay thine hand - Do not open thy mouth to excuse it, but repent of it, and do so no more.

33. The forcing - The stirring up of wrath, either in a man's self towards others, by giving way to passion; or in others by reproaches, or any other provocations. Bringeth forth - Is the cause of many quarrels.

## XXXI

An exhortation to Lemuel, ver. 1-9. A description of good wife, ver. 10-31.

1. Lemuel - Of Solomon, by the general consent both of Jewish and Christian writers; this name signifies one from God, or belonging to God, and such an one was Solomon eminently, being given by God to David and Bathsheba, as a pledge of his reconciliation to them after their repentance. Possibly his mother gave him this name to mind him of his great obligations to God, and of the justice of his devoting himself to God's service.

2. What - A short speech, arguing her great passion for him; what words shall I take? What counsels shall I give thee? My heart is full, but where shall I begin? Of my womb - My son, not by adoption, but whom I bare in the womb, and therefore it is my duty to give thee admonitions, and thine to receive them. My vows - On whose behalf I have made many prayers and sacrifices, and solemn vows to God; whom I have, as far as in me lay, devoted to the work, and service, and glory of God.

3. Strength - The vigour of thy mind and body. Ways - Thy conversation, repeated in other words.

4. To drink - To excess.

6. To perish - To faint; for such need a cordial.

8. The dumb - For such as cannot speak in their own cause, either through ignorance, or because of the dread of their more potent adversaries. Destruction - Who, without such succor from the Judges, are like to be utterly ruined.

10. A virtuous woman - Here he lays down several qualifications of an excellent wife, which are delivered in alphabetical order, each verse beginning with a several letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

11. No need - He shall have no need to use indirect courses to get wealth.

13. Flax - That she may find employment for her servants. Worketh - She encourages them to work by her example; which was a common practice among princesses in those first ages. Not that it is the duty of kings and queens to use manual operations, but it is the duty of all persons, the greatest not excepted, to improve all their talents, and particularly their time, which is one of the noblest of them, to the service of that God to whom they must give an account, and to the good of that community to which they are related.

14. From afar - By the sale of her home-spun commodities she purchases the choicest goods which come from far countries.

15. Giveth - Distributes all necessary provisions.

16. Considereth - Whether it be fit for her use. The fruit - With the effects of her diligence. Planteth - She improves the land to the best advantage.

17. Girdeth - She uses great diligence and expedition in her employment; for which end, men in those times used to gird up their long and loose garments about their loins. Strengtheneth - Puts forth her utmost strength in her business.

18. Perceiveth - She finds great comfort in her labours. Her candle - Which is not to be taken strictly, but only signifies her unwearied care and industry.

19. She layeth - By her own example she provokes her servants to labour. And although in these latter and more delicate times, such mean employments are grown out of fashion among great persons, yet they were not so in former ages, neither in other countries, nor in this land; whence all women unmarried unto this day are called in the language of our law, Spinsters.

21. Not afraid - Of any injuries of the weather. Are clothed - She hath provided enough, not only for their necessity, but also for their delight and ornament.

22. Tapestry - For the furniture of her house. Silk - Which was agreeable to her high quality.

23. It known - Observed and respected, not only for his own worth, but for his wife's sake. Sitteth - In counsel or judgment.

24. Girdles - Curiously wrought of linen, and gold, or other precious materials.

25. Strength - Strength of mind, magnanimity, courage, activity. Her clothing - Her ornament and glory. Rejoice - She lives in constant tranquillity of mind, from a just confidence in God's gracious providence.

26. Openeth her mouth - She is neither sullenly silent, nor full of impertinent talk, but speaks discreetly and piously, as occasion offers. In her tongue - Her speeches are guided by wisdom and grace, and not by inordinate passions. And this practice is called a law in her tongue, because it is constant and customary, and proceeds from an inward and powerful principle of true wisdom.

27. Looketh well - She diligently observes the management of her domestick business, and the whole carriage of her children and servants.

30. favour - Comeliness, which commonly gives women favour with those who behold them. Deceitful - It gives a false representation of the person, being often a cover to a deformed soul; it does not give a man that satisfaction, which at first he promised to himself from it; and it is soon lost, not only by death, but by many diseases and contingencies.

31. Give her - It is but just, that she should enjoy those praises which her labours deserve. Let her works - If men be silent, the lasting effects of her prudence and diligence will trumpet forth her praises. In the gates - In the most publick and solemn assemblies.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

Three things are to be observed concerning this book.

1. The author; who was Solomon, as is manifest both from the common consent of Jewish and Christian writers, and from the express words of the first verse. That he wrote it in his old age, is more than probable from divers passages in it, as, that he did it after his buildings, chap. ii, 4, which yet took up twenty years of his life, 1 Kings ix, 10, and after some considerable enjoyment of them, and planting of gardens, and orchards, and reaping the fruit of them, chap. ii, 5, 6, and after long and much consideration and experience of all those methods in which men expect to find happiness, chap. vii, 27, &c. So this book was written by him, as a publick testimony of his repentance and detestation of those wicked courses to which he had addicted himself: wherein he followed the example of his father David, who, after his sad fall, penned the fifty-first psalm. And the truth of this opinion may be confirmed by that expression, 2 Chron. xi, 17. They walked in the way of David and Solomon; that is, wherein they walked, both before their falls, and after their repentance.
2. The method of it. For whereas there are some passages in it which seem impious; it must be considered, that it is in part dramatical; that Solomon speaks most things in his own name, but some things in the names of ungodly men, as is undeniably manifest both front the scope and design of the book, as it is expressed both in the beginning and in the conclusion of it, and from his serious and large disputation against those wicked

principles and courses. And this way of writing is not unusual among both sacred and profane writers.

3. The design of it; which is, to describe man's true happiness, and the way leading to it. This he does both negatively, proving, that it is not to be found either in secular wisdom, or in sensual pleasures, or in worldly greatness and glory, or in abundance of riches, or in a vain profession of religion: and positively, shewing, that it is to be had only in the fear of God and obedience to his laws, which alone can give a man a chearful enjoyment of his present comforts, and an assurance of his everlasting happiness.

## I

The title of the book, ver. 1. The general doctrine, All is vanity, ver. 2, 3. Proved from the shortness of life, and the perpetual changes of all the creatures, ver. 4-7. From the unsatisfying toil of men, and the return of the same things over again, ver. 8-11. The vanity of knowledge, ver. 12-18.

1. The preacher - Who was not only a king, but also a teacher of God's people: who having sinned grievously in the eyes of all the world, thought himself obliged to publish his repentance, and to give publick warning to all, to avoid those rocks upon which he had split.

2. Vanity - Not only vain, but vanity in the abstract, which denotes extreme vanity. Saith - Upon deep consideration and long experience, and by Divine inspiration. This verse contains the general proposition, which he intends particularly to demonstrate in the following book. All - All worldly things. Is vanity - Not in themselves for they are God's creatures and therefore good in their kinds, but in reference to that happiness, which men seek and expect to find in them. So they are unquestionably vain, because they are not what they seem to be, and perform not what they promise, but instead of that are the occasions of innumerable cares, and fears, and sorrows, and mischiefs. Nay, they are not only vanity but vanity of vanities, the vainest vanity, vanity in the highest degree. And this is redoubled, because the thing is certain, beyond all possibility of dispute.

3. What profit - What real and abiding benefit? None at all. All is unprofitable as to the attainment of that happiness which all men are enquiring after. His labour - Hebrew. his toilsome labour, both of body and mind in the pursuit of riches, or pleasures, or other earthly things. Under the sun - In all worldly matters, which are usually transacted in the day time, or by the light of the sun. By this restriction he implies that the happiness which in vain is sought for in this lower world, is really to be found in heavenly places and things.

4. Passeth - Men continue but for one, and that a short age, and then they leave all their possessions, and therefore they cannot be happy here, because happiness must needs be unchangeable and eternal; or else the certain knowledge of the approaching loss of all these things will rob a man of solid contentment in them. Abideth - Through all successive generations of men; and therefore man is more mutable than the very earth upon which he stands, and which, together with all the comforts which he enjoyed in it, he leaves behind to be possessed by others.

5. The sun - The sun is in perpetual motion, rising, setting, and rising again, and so constantly repeating its course in all succeeding days, and years, and ages; and the like he observes concerning the winds and rivers, ver. 6, 7, and the design of these similitudes seem to be; to shew the vanity of all worldly things, and that man's mind can never be satisfied with them, because there is nothing in the world but a constant repetition of the same things, which is so irksome, that the consideration thereof hath made some persons weary of their lives; and there is no new thing under the sun, as is added in the foot of the account, ver. 9, which seems to be given us as a key to understand the meaning of the foregoing passages. And this is certain from experience that the things of this world are so narrow, and the mind of man so vast, that there must be something new to satisfy the mind; and even delightful things by too frequent repetition, are so far from yielding satisfaction, that they grow tedious and troublesome.

6. The wind - The wind also sometimes blows from one quarter of the world, and sometimes from another; successively returning to the same quarters in which it had formerly been.

7. Is not full - So as to overflow the earth. Whereby also he intimates the emptiness of mens minds, notwithstanding all the abundance of creature comforts. Rivers come - Unto the earth in general, from whence they come or flow into the sea, and to which they return by the reflux of the sea. For he seems to speak of the visible and constant motion of the waters, both to the sea and from it, and then to it again in a perpetual reciprocation.

8. All things - Not only the sun, and winds, and rivers, but all other creatures. labour - They are in continual restlessness and change, never abiding in the same state. Is not satisfied - As there are many things in the world vexatious to men, so even those things which are comfortable, are not satisfactory, but men are constantly desiring some longer continuance or fuller enjoyment of them, or variety in them. The eye and ear are here put for all the senses, because these are most spiritual and refined, most curious and inquisitive, most capable of receiving satisfaction, and exercised with more ease and pleasure than the other senses.

9. There is - There is nothing in the world but a continued and tiresome repetition of the same things. The nature and course of the beings and affairs of the world, and the tempers of men, are the same that they ever were and shall ever be; and therefore, because no man ever yet received satisfaction from worldly things, it is vain for any person hereafter to expect it. No new thing - In the nature of things, which might give us hopes of attaining that satisfaction which hitherto things have not afforded.

11. No remembrance - This seems to be added to prevent the objection, There are many inventions and enjoyments unknown to former ages. To this he answers, This objection is grounded only upon our ignorance of ancient times which if we exactly knew or remembered, we should easily find parallels to all present occurrences. There are many thousands of remarkable speeches and actions done in this and the following ages which neither are, nor ever will be, put into the publick records or histories, and consequently must unavoidably be forgotten in succeeding ages; and therefore it is just and reasonable to believe the same concerning former ages.

12. I was king - Having asserted the vanity of all things in the general, he now comes to prove his assertion in those particulars wherein men commonly seek, and with greatest probability expect to find, true happiness. He begins with secular wisdom. And to shew how competent a judge he was of this matter, he lays down this character, That he was the preacher, which implies eminent knowledge; and a king, who therefore had all imaginable opportunities and advantages for the attainment of happiness, and particularly for the getting of wisdom, by consulting all sorts of books

and men, by trying all manner of experiments; and no ordinary king, but king over Israel, God's own people, a wise and an happy people, whose king he was by God's special appointment and furnished by God, with singular wisdom for that great trust; and whose abode was in Jerusalem where were the house of God and the most wise and learned of the priests attending upon it, and the seats of justice, and colleges or assemblies of the wisest men of their nation. All these concurring in him, which rarely do in any other men, make the argument drawn from his experience more convincing.

13. I gave my heart - Which phrase denotes his serious and fixed purpose, and his great industry in it. To search - To seek diligently and accurately. By wisdom - By the help of that wisdom wherewith God had endowed me. Concerning - Concerning all the works of God and men in this lower world; the works of nature; the works of Divine providence; and the works and depths of human policy. This travel - This difficult and toilsome work of searching out these things, God hath inflicted as a just punishment upon man for his eating of the tree of knowledge. To be exercised - To employ themselves in the painful study of these things.

14. Seen - Diligently observed. Vanity - Not only unsatisfying, but also an affliction or breaking to a man's spirit.

15. Crooked - All our knowledge serves only to discover our miseries, but is utterly insufficient to remove them; it cannot rectify those disorders which are either in our own hearts and lives, or in the men and things of the world. Wanting - In our knowledge. Or, counted out to us from the treasures of human learning. But what is wanting, will still be so. And that which is wanting in our own knowledge, is so much that it cannot be numbered. The more we know, the more we see of our own ignorance.

16. Communed - I considered within myself. Great - In wisdom. Have gotten - As I had a large stock of wisdom infused into me by God, so I have greatly improved it by conversation, and study, and experience. Than all - Whether governors, or priests, or private persons. In Jerusalem - Which was then the most eminent place in the world for wisdom.

17. To know - That I might throughly understand the nature and difference of truth and error, of virtue and vice.

18. Grief - Or, displeasure within himself, and against his present condition. Sorrow - Which he does many ways, because he gets his knowledge with hard and wearisome labour, both of mind and body, with the consumption of his spirits, and shortening of his life; because he is often deceived with knowledge falsely so called, and often mistakes error for truth, and is perplexed with manifold doubts, from which ignorant men are wholly free; because he hath the clearer prospect into, and quicker sense of his own ignorance, and infirmities, and disorders, and withal how vain and ineffectual all his knowledge is for the prevention or removal of them; and because his knowledge is very imperfect and unsatisfying, yet increasing his thirst after more knowledge; lastly, because his knowledge quickly fades and dies with him, and then leaves him in no better, and possibly in a much worse condition than the meanest and most unlearned man in the world.

## II

Solomon shews, that there is no true happiness to be had in mirth and the pleasures of sense, ver. 1-11. He considers wisdom again, and owns it to be an excellent thing, and yet insufficient to give happiness, ver. 12-16. He shews that business and wealth are only vanity and vexation of spirit, ver. 17-23. And that if there be any good therein, it is only to these who sit loose to them, ver. 24- 26.

1. I said - Being disappointed of my hopes from knowledge, I resolved to try another course. Go to - O my soul! I will try whether I cannot make thee happy, by the enjoyment of sensual delights. Vanity - Is vain, and unable to make men happy.

2. It is mad - This is an act of madness, more fit for fools who know nothing, than for wise men in this sinful, and dangerous, and deplorable state of mankind. What doth it - What good doth it? Or how can it make men happy? I challenge all the Epicures in the world to give me a solid answer.

3. To wine - To gratify myself with delicious meats and drinks. Yet - Yet resolving to use my wisdom, that I might try whether I could not arrive at satisfaction, by mixing wine and wisdom together. To lay hold - To pursue sensual pleasures, which was my folly. 'Till - 'Till I might find out the true way to contentment and satisfaction, during this mortal life.

6. The wood - The nurseries of young trees, which for the multitude of them were like a wood or forest.

8. Peculiar treasure - The greatest jewels and rarities of other kings, which they gave to me, either as a tribute, or by way of present. Of provinces - Which were imposed upon or presented by all the provinces of my dominions.

9. Great - In riches, and power, and glory. My wisdom remained - As yet I was not wholly seduced from God.

10. And - Whatsoever was grateful to my senses. Rejoiced - I had the comfort of all my labours, and was not hindered from the full enjoyment of them by sickness or war, or any other calamity. My portion - This present enjoyment of them, was all the benefit which I could expect from all my labours. So that I made the best of them.

11. Vexation - I found myself wholly dissatisfied. No profit - The pleasure was past, and I was never the better for it, but as empty as before.

12. I turned - Being frustrated of my hopes in pleasure, I returned to a second consideration of my first choice, to see whether there was not more satisfaction to be gotten from wisdom, than I discovered at my first view. Done - As by others, so especially by myself. They can make no new discoveries as to this point. They can make no more of the pleasures of sense than I have done. Let me then try once more, whether wisdom can give happiness.

13. I saw - I allowed thus much. Although wisdom is not sufficient to make men happy, yet it is of a far greater use than vain pleasures, or any other follies.

14. Head - In their proper place. He hath the use of his eyes and reason, and foresees, and so avoids many dangers and mischiefs. Yet - Notwithstanding this excellency of wisdom above folly, at last they both come to one end. Both are subject to the same calamities, and to death itself, which takes away all difference between them.

15. Why - What benefit have I by my wisdom?

16. For - Their memory, though it may flourish for a season, yet will in a little time be worn out; as we see it, most of the wise men of former ages, whose very names, together with all their monuments, are utterly lost. As the fool - He must die as certainly as the fool.

17. Life - My life was a burden to me. Is grievous - All human designs and works are so far from yielding me satisfaction, that the consideration of them increases my discontent.

18. All my labour - All these riches and buildings, and other fruits of my labour, were aggravations of my misery. Because - Because I must, and that everlastingly, leave them all behind me.

19. Or a fool - Who will undo all that I have done, and turn the effects of my wisdom into instruments of his folly. Some think he had such an opinion of Rehoboam.

20. Despair - I gave myself up to despair of ever reaping that satisfaction which I promised to myself.

21. Wisdom - Who uses great industry, and prudence, and justice too, in the use and management of his affairs. To a man - Who has spent his days in sloth and folly. A great evil - A great disorder in itself, and a great torment to a considering mind.

22. For what - What comfort or benefit remains to any man after this short and frail life is once ended?

23. Sorrows - Full of sorrows. Tho' he took great and unwearied pains all his days, yet the toils of his body were accompanied with vexation of mind. His heart - Because his sleep was broken with perplexing cares.

24. Enjoy - That he should thankfully take, and freely and chearfully enjoy the comforts which God gives him. It was - A singular gift of God.

25. More than I - Therefore he could best tell whether they were able of themselves, without God's special gift, to yield a man content, in the enjoying of them. Who can pursue them with more diligence, obtain them with more readiness, or embrace them with more greediness?

26. Wisdom - To direct him how to use his comforts aright; that so they may be blessings, and not curses to him. Joy - A thankful contented mind. To heap up - He giveth him up to insatiable desires, and wearisome labours, that he may leave it to others, yea to such as he least desired, to good and virtuous men.

## III

Solomon proves, that we ought to make use of what God has given us, by shewing the mutability of all human affairs, ver. 1- 10. The immutability and unsearchableness of the Divine counsels, ver. 11-15. The vanity of honour and power, often an instrument of oppression, for which God will judge the oppressors, ver. 16, 17. Whose condition in this world is no better than that of brutes, ver. 18-21. Therefore live well, ver. 22.

1. A season - A certain time appointed by God for its being and continuance, which no human wit or providence can alter. And by virtue of this appointment of God, all vicissitudes which happen in the world, whether comforts or calamities, come to pass. Which is here added to prove the

principal proposition, That all things below are vain, and happiness is not to be found in them, because of their great uncertainty, and mutability, and transitoriness, and because they are so much out of the reach and power of men, and wholly in the disposal of God. Purpose - Not only natural, but even the voluntary actions of men, are ordered and disposed by God. But it must be considered, that he does not here speak of a time allowed by God, wherein all the following things may lawfully be done, but only of a time fixed by God, in which they are actually done.

2. To die - And as there is a time to die, so there is a time to rise again, a set time when they that lie in the grave shall be remembered.

3. To kill - When men die a violent death. To heal - When he who seemed to be mortally wounded is healed.

4. To weep - When men have just occasion for weeping.

5. Stones - Which were brought together in order to the building of a wall or house. To embrace - When persons perform all friendly offices one to another.

6. To life - When men lose their estates, either by God's providence, or by their own choice. To cast away - When a man casts away his goods voluntarily, as in a storm, to save his life, or out of love and obedience to God.

7. To rent - When men rend their garments, as they did in great and sudden griefs.

8. To love - When God stirs up love, or gives occasion for the exercise of it.

9. What profit - Seeing then all events are out of man's power, and no man can do or enjoy any thing at his pleasure, but only when God pleaseth, as has been shewed in many particulars, and is as true and certain in all others, hence it follows, that all men's labours, without God's blessing, are unprofitable, and utterly insufficient to make them happy.

10. Seen - I have diligently observed mens various employments, and the different successes of them. Hath given - Which God hath imposed upon men as their duty; to which therefore men ought quickly to submit. Exercised - That hereby they might have constant matter of exercise for their diligence, and patience, and submission to God's will and providence.

11. He hath - This seems to be added as at apology for God's providence, notwithstanding all the contrary events and confusions which are in the world. He hath made (or doth make or do, by his providence in the government of the world) every thing (which he doth either immediately, or by the ministry of men, or other creatures) beautiful (convenient, so that, all things considered, it could not have been done better) in its time or station, (when it was most fit to be done). Many events seem to mens shallow judgments, to be very irregular and unbecoming, as when wicked men prosper, and good men are oppressed; but when men shall throughly understand God's works, and the whole frame and contexture of them, and see the end of them, they will say, all things were done wisely. He hath set - It is true, God hath put the world into mens hearts, or made them capable of observing all the dispensations of God in the world; but this is to be understood with a limitation, because there are some more mysterious works of God, which no man can fully, understand, because he cannot search them out from the beginning to the end.

12. Them - In creatures or worldly enjoyments. To do good - To employ them in acts of charity and liberality.

13. Should eat - Use what God hath given him.

14. For ever - All God's counsels or decrees are eternal and unchangeable. Nothing - Men can neither do any thing against God's counsel and providence, nor hinder any work or act of it. Fear

- That by the consideration of his power in the disposal of all persons and things, men should learn to trust in him, to submit to him, to fear to offend him, and more carefully study to please him.

15. Hath been - Things past, present, and to come, are all ordered by one constant counsel, in all parts and ages of the world. There is a continual return of the same motions of the heavenly bodies, of the same seasons of the year, and a constant succession of new generations of men and beasts, but all of the same quality.

16. Moreover - This is another argument of the vanity of worldly things, and an hindrance of that comfort which men expect in this life, because they are oppressed by their rulers. Judgment - ln the thrones of princes, and tribunals of magistrates. Solomon is still shewing that every thing in this world without the fear of God is vanity. In these verses he shews, that power, of which men are so ambitious, and life itself, are worth nothing without it.

17. I said - I was sorely grieved at this, but I quieted myself with this consideration. Shall judge - Absolving the just, and condemning the wicked. A time - God will have his time to rectify all these disorders. There - At the judgment-seat of God. For - For examining not only all men's actions, but all their thoughts and purposes.

18. I said - And further I considered concerning their condition in this present world. That God - God suffers these disorders among men, that he might discover men to themselves, and shew what strange creatures they are, and what vile hearts they have. Beasts - That altho' God made them men, yet they have made themselves beasts by their brutish practices, and that, considered only with respect to the present life, they are as vain and miserable creatures as the beasts themselves.

19. For - They are subject to the same diseases, pains, and calamities. So dieth - As certainly, and no less, painfully. One breath - One breath of life, which is in their nostrils by which the beasts perform the same animal operations. No pre-eminence - In respect of the present life.

20. One place - To the earth, out of which they were taken. All turn - All their bodies.

21. Who knoweth? - True it is, there is a difference, which is known by good men; but the generality of mankind never mind it: their hearts are wholly set on present and sensible things, and take no thought for the things of the future and invisible world.

22. Better - For a man's present satisfaction. Should rejoice - That he comfortably enjoys what God hath given him. His portion - This is the benefit of his labours. For - When once he is dead he shall never return to see into whose hands his estate falls.

## IV

The misery of the oppressed and the oppressor, ver. 1-3. Of being envied, which occasions sloth in others, ver. 4-6. The folly of hoarding up wealth, ver. 7, 8. The benefit of society, ver. 9-12. The mutability even of the royal dignity, thro' the foolishness of the prince, and the fickleness of the people, ver. 13-16.

1. I returned - I considered again. Oppressions - Whether by princes, magistrates, or other potent persons. No comforter - None afforded them pity or succor. But they, &c. - No comfort therein.

2. I praised - I judged them less miserable. For this is certain, that setting aside the future life, which Solomon doth not meddle with in the present debate; and considering the uncertainty, and vanity, and manifold calamities of the present life, a wise man would not account it worth his while to live.

3. Better is he - Who was never born. Not seen - Not felt: for as seeing good is put for enjoying it, so seeing evil is put for suffering it.

4. Right work - All the worthy designs of virtuous men. Envied - Instead of honour, he meets with envy and obloquy.

5. The fool - Is careless and idle: perceiving that diligence is attended with envy, he runs into the other extreme. Eateth - Wastes his substance, and brings himself to poverty, whereby his very flesh pines away for want of bread.

6. Better - These are the words of the sluggard, making this apology for his idleness, That his little with ease, is better than great riches got with much trouble.

8. Alone - Who has none but himself to care for. Brother - To whom he may leave his vast estate. Yet - He lives in perpetual restlessness and toil. For whom - Having no kindred to enjoy it. And bereave - Deny myself those comforts and conveniences which God hath allowed me? A sore travel - A dreadful judgment, as well as a great sin.

9. Two - Who live together in any kind of society. Because - Both have great benefit by such conjunction, whereby they support, encourage, and strengthen one another.

10. They - One of them. Fall - Into any mistake, or sin, or danger.

12. Prevail - Against either of them.

13. Better - More happy. Now he proceeds to another vanity, That of honour and power. Than a king - Who hath neither wisdom to govern himself, nor to receive the counsels of wiser men.

14. For he - The poor and wise child is often advanced to the highest dignity. Whereas - That old king is deprived of his kingdom.

15. I considered - The general disposition of common people, in all kingdoms, that they are fickle and inconstant. With the second child - This may be understood of the king's child, or son and heir, called second, in respect of his father, whose successor he is. Stand up - Arise to reign.

16. No end - This humour of the common people hath no end, but passes from one generation to another. Before them - Before the present generation. And so here are three generations of people noted, the authors of the present change, and their parents, and their children; and all are observed to have the same inclinations. In him - They shall be as weary of the successor, though a wise and worthy prince, as their parents were of his foolish predecessor.

## V

Solomon here discourses of the worship of God, as a remedy against all these vanities, but warns us of vanities therein, ver. 1-7. Directs us to eye God as our judge, ver. 8. Shews the vanity of riches, ver. 9-17. And recommends the chearful use of what God has given us, ver. 18-20.

1. Thy foot - Thy thoughts and affections, by which men go to God and walk with him. To hear - To hearken to and obey God's word. Of fools - Such as wicked men use to offer, who vainly think to please God with their sacrifices without obedience. For - They are not sensible of the great sinfulness of such thoughts.

2. Rash - Speak not without due consideration. To utter - Either in prayer, or vows. For God - Is a God of infinite majesty, holiness, and knowledge. Thy words - Either in prayer or in vowing.

3. A dream - When men are oppressed with business in the day, they dream of it in the night. Is known - It discovers the man to be a foolish, and rash, and inconsiderate man. Of words - Either in prayer, or in vowing, by making many rash vows, of which he speaks ver. 4, 5, 6, and then returns to the mention of multitude of dreams and many words, ver.

7, which verse may be a comment upon this, and which makes it probable that both that and this verse are to be understood of vows rather than of prayers.

4. In fools - In perfidious persons, who, when they are in distress, make liberal vows, and when the danger is past, break them.

6. Thy mouth - By any rash vow. Thy flesh - Thyself, the word flesh being often put for the whole man. The angel - The priest or ministers of holy things. Such persons are often called angels, or, as this Hebrew word is commonly rendered, messengers. And this title seems to be given to the priest here, because the vow made to God, was paid to the priest as one standing and acting in God's name and stead, and it belonged to him, as God's angel or ambassador, to discharge persons from their vows when there was just occasion. It was - I did unadvisedly in making such a vow. Angry - Why wilt thou provoke God to anger at these frivolous excuses? Destroy - Blast all thy labours, and particularly that work or enterprize for the success whereof thou didst make these vows.

7. For - There is a great deal of folly, as in multitude of dreams, which for the most part are vain and insignificant, so also in many words, in making many vows whereby a man is exposed to many snares and temptations. But - Fear the wrath of God, and therefore be sparing in making vows, and just in performing them.

8. If - Here is an account of another vanity, and a sovereign antidote against it. Marvel not - As if it were inconsistent with God's wisdom, and justice, to suffer such disorders. For - The most high God who is infinitely above the greatest of men. Regardeth - Not like an idle spectator, but a judge, who diligently observes, and will effectually punish them. Higher - God: it is an emphatical repetition of the same thing.

9. Profit - The fruits of the earth. For all - Necessary and beneficial to all men. The wise man, after some interruption, returns to his former subject, the vanity of riches, one evidence whereof he mentions in this verse, that the poor labourer enjoys the fruits of the earth as well as the greatest monarch. Is served - Is supported by the fruits of the field.

13. To their hurt - Because they frequently are the occasions both of their present and eternal destruction.

14. Perish - By some wicked practices, either his own, or of other men. Nothing - In the son's possession after his father's death.

15. To go - Into the womb of the earth, the common mother of all mankind. Take nothing - This is another vanity. If his estate be neither lost, nor kept to his hurt, yet when he dies he must leave it behind him, and cannot carry one handful of it into another world.

16. The wind - For riches, which are empty and unsatisfying, uncertain and transitory, which no man can hold or stay in its course, all which are the properties of the wind.

17. He eateth - He hath no comfort in his estate, but even when he eats, he doth it with anxiety and discontent. And wrath - When he falls sick, and presages his death, he is filled with rage, because he is cut off before he hath accomplished his designs, and because he must leave that wealth and world in which all his hopes and happiness lie.

18. Good - Good or comfortable to a man's self, and comely or amiable in the eye of other men. His portion - Of worldly goods; he hath a better portion in heaven. This liberty is given him by God, and this is the best advantage, as to this life, which he can make of them.

19. To take - To use what God hath given him.

20. Remember - So as to disquiet himself. The days - The troubles; days being put here for evil, or, sad days. Answereth - His desires, in giving him solid joy and comfort.

## VI

The vanity of riches without use, ver. 1-6. They are unsatisfactory, ver. 7-10. It is folly to think of happiness in the things of this world, ver. 11, 12.

2. Riches - All sorts of riches. To eat - Because God gives him up to a base and covetous mind.

3. With good - He hath not a contented mind and comfortable enjoyment of his estate. Is better - Which as it never enjoyed the comforts, so it never felt the calamities of life.

4. He - The abortive; of whom alone, that passage is true, hath not seen the sun, ver. 5. Cometh - Into the world. In vain - To no purpose; without any comfort or benefit by it. Departeth - Without any observation or regard of men. His name - Shall be speedily and utterly forgotten.

5. More rest - Because he is free from all those encumbrances and vexations to which the covetuous man is long exposed.

6. Tho' he live - Wherein he seems to have a privilege above an untimely birth. Seen - He hath enjoyed no comfort in it, and therefore long life is rather a curse, than a blessing to him. All - Whether their lives be long or short. Go - To the grave.

7. Is - For meat. And yet - Men are insatiable in their desires, and restless in their endeavours after more, and never say, they have enough.

8. More - In these matters. Both are subject to the same calamities, and partakers of the same comforts of this life. The poor - More than the poor that doth not know this. He means such a poor man as is ingenious and industrious; fit for service and business.

9. The fight - The comfortable enjoyment of what a man hath. Than - Restless desires of what a man hath not. This - Wandering of the desire.

10. Is named - This is added as a further instance of the vanity of all things in this life. That which hath been (man, who is the chief of all visible beings) is named already, by God, who, presently after his creation, gave him the following name, to signify what his nature and condition was. Man - A mortal and miserable creature, as his very name signifies, which God gave him for this very end, that he might be always sensible of his vain and miserable estate in this world. With him - With almighty God, with whom men are apt to contend upon every slight occasion, and against whom they are ready to murmur for this vanity, and mortality, and misery.

11. Seeing - This seems to be added as a conclusion from all the foregoing chapters; seeing not only man is a vain creature in himself, but there are also many other things, which instead of diminishing, do but increase this vanity, as wisdom, pleasure, power, wealth; seeing even the good things of this life bring so much toil, and cares, and fears, with them. The better - By all that he can either desire or enjoy here?

12. Who knoweth - No man certainly knows what is better for him here, whether to be high or low, rich or poor. Vain life - Life itself is a vain and uncertain thing, and therefore all things which depend on it must be so too. While - While it abides, hath nothing solid, or substantial in it, and which speedily passes away, and leaves no sign behind it. For - And as no man can be happy with these things while he lives, so he can have no content in leaving them to others, because he knows not either who shall possess them, or how the future owners will use or abuse them.

## VII

Solomon here recommends seriousness, ver. 1-6 Calmness of spirit, ver. 7-10. Wisdom, ver. 11, 12. Suiting ourselves to every condition, ver. 13, 14. The advice of an infidel answered, ver. 15-18. The praise of wisdom, ver. 19. All men are sinners, ver. 20. Mind not the censures of others, ver. 21, 22. Solomon's experience of men and women, ver. 23-29.

1. Of death - Seeing this life is so full of vanity, and vexation, and misery, it is more desirable for a man to go out of it, than to come into it.

2. The house - Where mourners meet to celebrate the funeral of a deceased friend. That - Death. The living - Will be seriously affected with it, whereas feasting is commonly attended with levity, and manifold temptations.

4. The wise - Are constantly meditating upon serious things.

6. Thorns - Which for a time make a great noise and blaze, but presently go out.

7. A gift - A bribe given to a wise man, deprives him of the use of his understanding. So this verse discovers two ways whereby a wise man may be made mad, by suffering oppression from others, or by receiving bribes to oppress others. And this also is an argument of the vanity of worldly wisdom that is so easily corrupted and lost.

8. The end - The good or evil of things is better known by their end, than by their beginning. The patient - Who quietly waits for the issue of things. The proud - Which he puts instead of hasty or impatient, because pride is the chief cause of impatience.

10. Better - More quiet and comfortable. For this is an argument of a mind unthankful for the many mercies, which men enjoy even in evil times. For - This question shews thy folly in contending with thy Lord and governor, in opposing thy shallow wit to his unsearchable wisdom.

11. Good - When wisdom and riches meet in one man, it is an happy conjunction. By it - By wisdom joined with riches there comes great benefit. To them - Not only to a man's self, but many others in this world.

12. Life - But herein knowledge of wisdom excels riches, that whereas riches frequently expose men to destruction, true wisdom doth often preserve a man from temporal, and always from eternal ruin.

13. Consider - His wise, and just, and powerful government of all events, which is proposed as the last and best remedy against all murmurings. For who - No man can correct or alter any of God's works; and therefore all frettings at the injuries of men, or calamities of times, are not only sinful, but also vain and fruitless. This implies that there is an hand of God in all mens actions, either effecting them, if they be good, or permitting them, if they be bad, and ordering and over-ruling them, whether they he good or bad.

14. Be joyful - Enjoy God's favours with thankfulness. Consider - Consider that it is God's hand, and therefore submit to it: consider also why God sends it, for what sins, and with what design. God also - Hath wisely ordained, that prosperity and adversity should succeed one another. That - No man might be able to foresee, what shall befall him afterwards; and therefore might live in a constant dependance upon God, and neither despair in trouble, nor be secure or presumptuous in prosperity.

15. All - All sorts of events. My vanity - Since I have come into this vain life. Perisheth - Yea, for his righteousness, which exposes him to the envy, anger, or hatred of wicked men. Wickedness - Notwithstanding all his wickedness.

16. Be not - This verse and the next have a manifest reference to ver. 15, being two inferences drawn from the two clauses of the observation. Solomon here speaks in the person of an ungodly man, who takes occasion to dissuade men from righteousness, because of the danger which attends it. Therefore, saith he, take heed of strictness, zeal, and forwardness in religion. And the next verse contains an antidote to this suggestion; yea, rather saith he, be not wicked or foolish overmuch; for that will not preserve thee, as thou mayest imagine, but will occasion and hasten thy ruin.

18. Take hold of - Embrace and practice this counsel. Shall come - Shall be delivered from all extremes, and from all the evil consequences of them.

19. Strengthen - Supports him in, and secures him against troubles and dangers.

20. Sinneth not - Who is universally and perfectly good.

21. Also - Do not strictly search into them, nor listen to hear them.

23. Proved - I have found to be true, by the help of that singular wisdom which God had given me. I said - I determined that I would attain perfection of wisdom. But - I found myself greatly disappointed.

24. It - God's counsels and works, and the reasons of them.

25. And seek - He useth three words signifying the same thing, to intimate his vehement desire, and vigourous, and unwearied endeavours after it. The reason - Both of God's various providences, and of the counsels and courses of men. The wickedness - Clearly and fully to understand the great evil of sin.

26. I find - By my own sad experience. Shall escape - Shall be prevented from falling into her hands.

27. To find - That I might make a true and just estimate.

28. Yet seeketh - I returned to search again with more earnestness. I find not - That it was so, he found, but the reason of the thing he could not find out. One man - A wise and virtuous man. A woman - One worthy of that name; one who is not a dishonour to her sex. Among - In that thousand whom I have taken into intimate society with myself.

29. Lo, this - Though I could not find out all the streams of wickedness, and their infinite windings and turnings, yet I have discovered the fountain of it, Original sin, and the corruption of nature, which is both in men and women. That - God made our first parents, Adam and Eve. Upright - Hebrew. right: without any imperfection or corruption, conformable to his nature and will, after his own likeness. They - Our first parents, and after them their posterity. Sought out - Were not contented with their present state, but studied new ways of making themselves more wise and happy, than God had made them. And we, their wretched children, are still prone to forsake the certain rule of God's word, and the true way to happiness, and to seek new methods of attaining it.

## VIII

The benefit of wisdom, ver. 1. honour the king and obey God, ver. 2-5. Prepare for sudden evils, and for death, ver. 6-8. Marvel not at oppression, or the present impunity of the wicked, ver. 9-11. It shall be well with the good, and ill with the wicked, though not immediately, ver. 12-14. Therefore chearfully use the gifts of God, and acquiesce in his will, ver. 15-17

1. Who is wise - There are few wise men in this world. Who knoweth - How few understand the reasons of things and can rightly expound the word and works of God. Wisdom - Makes a man venerable, chearful, mild, and amiable. The face is put for the mind, because the mind discovers itself in the countenance. Boldness - The roughness or fierceness. Changed - Into gentleness and humility.

2. The oath - Because of that oath which thou hast taken to keep all God's laws, whereof this of obedience to superiors is one.

3. To go - In discontent, withdrawing thyself from the king's service or obedience. Stand not - if thou hast offended him, persist not in it. For - His power is uncontrollable.

5. The commandment - Solomon passes to a new subject. Shall feel - Shall be delivered from those mischiefs which befall the disobedient. Discerneth - Both when, and in what manner he must keep the commands of God.

6. Because - There is a fit way and season for the accomplishment of every business, which is known to God, but for the most part hidden from man. Therefore - Because there are few who have wisdom to discern this, most men expose themselves to manifold miseries.

7. For - Men are generally ignorant of future events, and therefore their minds are disquieted.

8. To retain - To keep it in the body. This is added as another evidence of man's misery. No discharge - In that fatal conflict between life and death, when a man is struggling with death, though to no purpose, for death will be always conqueror. Neither - And although wicked men, who most fear death, use all possible means, to free themselves from it, yet they shall not escape it. The most subtle wickedness cannot outwit death, nor the most daring wickedness out-brave it.

9. To his hurt - There are some kings, who use their power tyrannically, whereby they not only oppress their people, but hurt themselves, bringing the vengeance of God upon their own heads.

10. And so - In like manner. The wicked - Wicked princes or rulers. Buried - With state and pomp. Who - Had administered publick justice, which is frequently signified by the phrase of

coming in and going out before the people. The holy - The throne or tribunal seems to be so called here, to aggravate their wickedness, who being advanced by God into so high and sacred a place, betrayed so great a trust. Where - They lived in great splendour, and were buried with great magnificence. This - That men should so earnestly thirst after glory, which is so soon extinct.

11. Therefore - God's forbearance makes them presumptuous and secure.

13. A shadow - His life, though it may seem long, yet in truth is but a shadow, which will quickly vanish and disappear.

14. Done - Either by wicked potentates, who do commonly advance unworthy men, and oppress persons of greatest virtue and merit: or, by God's providence, who sees it fit for many weighty reasons so to manage the affairs of the present world. To whom - Who meet with such usage as the worst of men deserve. It happeneth - Who, instead of those punishments which they deserve, receive those rewards which are due to virtuous men.

15. To be merry - This he speaks of sensual delights.

16. To see - To observe mens various designs and employments, and their unwearied labours about worldly things. For there is - Having now mentioned the business which is done, or which man doth, upon earth, he further adds, as an evidence of man's eagerness in pursuing his business, for even by day and by night he (the busy man) seeth not sleep with his eyes. He grudges himself necessary refreshments, and disquiets himself with endless cares and labours.

17. I beheld - I considered the counsels and ways of God, and the various methods of his providence, and the reasons of them. Find out - No man, though ever so wise, is able fully and perfectly to understand these things. And therefore it is best for man not to perplex himself with endless enquiries, but quietly to submit to God's will and providence, and to live in the fear of God, and the comfortable enjoyment of his blessing.

## IX

Outward things come to good and bad men alike, ver. 1-3. Death puts an end to all, ver. 4-6. Therefore enjoy the comforts and mind the business of life while it lasts, ver. 7-10. God's providence dispenses all things, ver. 11, 12. Wisdom often makes men very useful, and yet gains them little respect, ver. 13-18.

1. Their works - All events which befall them are governed by his providence, and therefore although we cannot fully understand the reasons of all, yet we may be assured they are done righteously. No man - No man can judge by their present outward condition, whether God loves or hates them; for whom he loves he chastens, and permits those whom he hates to prosper in the world.

2. All things - The good and evil things of the world equally happen to good and bad men.

3. An evil - A great trouble to a good man. Is full - Of wickedness. Madness - They go on madly and desperately in evil courses. They go - After all, they die in the same manner as the best men do.

4. Joined - That continues with living men. Hope - He hath not only some comfort for the present, but also hopes of further happiness in this world. Better - Much happier as to the comforts of this world.

5. Die - Whereby they are taught to improve life. Any thing - Of the actions and events of this world. Reward - The fruit of their labours in this world, are utterly lost as to them. Forgotten - Even in those places where they had lived in great power and glory.

6. Also - They neither love, nor hate, nor envy any thing in this world, but are unconcerned in what is done under the sun.

7. Go - Make this use of what I have said. Eat - Chearfully and thankfully enjoy thy comforts. Accepteth - Allows thee a comfortable enjoyment of his blessings.

8. White - The eastern people of the best sort, used white garments, especially in times of rejoicing. Ointment - Which upon joyful occasions was poured upon mens heads.

9. Vanity - Of this vain and frail life.

10. Whatsoever - Whatever thou hast opportunity and ability to do, do it with unwearied diligence, and vigour and expedition. For - Thou canst neither design nor act any thing there tending to thy own comfort or advantage.

11. But time - There are times or seasons, casual to men, but known by God, in which alone he will give men success.

12. His time - The time of his death, or other distress which God is bringing upon him. Are taken - While they are sporting and feeding themselves. When - When they are most careless and secure.

13. This wisdom - I have observed this among many other instances of wisdom. Which he adds for the commendation of wisdom, notwithstanding its insufficiency for man's happiness without God's blessing.

15. Yet - He was soon neglected and his great service forgotten.

17. Of wise men - Though poor. In quiet - Uttered with a modest and low voice. The cry - The clamourous discourses of a rich and potent, but foolish man.

## X

Observations on wisdom and folly, ver. 1-3. On rulers, ver. 4-7. Miscellany observations, ver. 8-11. On governing the tongue, ver. 12-14. More miscellany observations, ver. 15-20.

2. Heart - His understanding is always present with him and ready to direct him. He mentions the right hand, because that is the common instrument of action. A fool's - His understanding is not effectual to govern his affections and actions.

3. Walketh - In his daily conversation. He saith - He discovers his folly to all that meet him.

4. The spirit - The passion. Leave not - In anger or discontent. Continue in a diligent and faithful discharge of thy duty, and modestly and humbly submit to him. Yielding - A gentle and submissive carriage.

6. The rich - Wise and worthy men, rich in endowments of mind.

8. An hedge - Whereby another man's fields or vineyards are distinguished, that he may either take away their fruits, or enlarge his own fields.

9. Whoso removeth - Stones too heavy for them: who rashly attempts things too high and hard for them.

10. Wisdom - As wisdom instructs a man in the smallest matters, so it is useful for a man's direction in all weighty affairs.

11. Without - If not prevented by the art and care of the charmer; which practice he does not justify, but only mentions by way of resemblance.

12. Gracious - Procure him favour with those who hear him.

14. Full of words - Forward to promise and boast what he will do, whereas none can be sure of future events, even during his own life, much more after his death.

15. Wearieth - Fools discover their folly by their wearisome and fruitless endeavours after things which are too high for them. Because - He is ignorant of those things which are most easy, as of the way to the great city whither he is going.

16. A child - Either in age, or childish qualities. Eat - Give up themselves to eating and drinking. Morning - The fittest time for God's service, for the dispatch of weighty affairs, and for sitting in judgment.

17. Nobles - Not so much by birth, as by their noble dispositions.

20. Thy thought - In the most secret manner. The rich - Princes or governors. A bird - The king will hear of it by unknown and unsuspected hands, as if a bird had heard and carried the report of it.

## XI

An exhortation to works of charity, ver. 1-6. An admonition to prepare betimes for death and judgment, ver. 7-10.

1. The waters - Freely and liberally bestow it upon the waters; upon those poor creatures, on whom it may seem to be as utterly lost, as the seed which a man casts into the sea or river. Find it - It shall certainly be restored to thee, either by God or men. This is added to prevent an objection, and to quicken us to the duty enjoyned. After - The return may be slow, but it is sure, and will be so much the more plentiful.

2. Give - A part of thy estate or provisions. He alludes to the ancient custom, whereby the master of the feast distributed several parts to each guest, and withal sent portions to the poor. To eight - To as many as thou art able. For - Great calamities may come whereby thou mayest be brought to poverty, and so disabled from doing good.

3. The clouds - Learn, O man, the practice of liberality from the very lifeless creatures, from the clouds; which when they are filled with water, do not hoard it up, but plentifully pour it forth for the refreshment both of the fruitful field and the barren wilderness. Therefore, let us just not bring forth the fruits of righteousness, because death will shortly cut us down, and we shall then be determined to unchangeable happiness or misery, according as our works have been.

4. He - He who neglects the necessary works of sowing and reaping, because the weather is not exactly suitable to his desires will lose his harvest. Whereby he intimates, that men will never do good here, which is expressed by sowing, and consequently not receive good hereafter, which is called reaping, if they be discouraged from it by every doubt and difficulty.

5. The spirit - Of the soul of man, how it comes into the child in the womb; or how it is united with the body; or how and whether it goes out of the body. The works - What God is doing and will do with thee or others; the counsels and methods of God's providence. Therefore use the present opportunity.

6. In the morning - Early and late, in all seasons and occasions; do it speedily and continually, be not weary of it. Sow - Do all good works. With-hold not - From working or giving.

7. Truly - It cannot be denied that life is in itself desirable.

8. Rejoice - Enjoy all the comforts, and escape all the embitterments of human life, all his days. Darkness - Of death, or of the state of the dead. Many - Far more than the days of this short life. All - All things which befall any man belonging only to this life, are but vain, because they are short and transitory.

9. Rejoice - Indulge thy humour, and take thy fill of delights. And walk - Whatsoever thine eye or heart lusteth after, deny it not to them. But know - But in the midst of thy jollity consider thy reckoning.

10. Sorrow - Sensual and disorderly lusts, which he elegantly calls sorrow, to intimate, that although such practices at present gratify mens senses, yet they will shortly bring them to intolerable sorrows. Evil - All evil desires, tho' now they seem good to thee. Vanity - Most vain. The time of youth is vanishing and transitory, and old age and death will speedily come, against which every wise man will take care to lay in solid provisions and comforts.

## XII

An exhortation to remember God in youth, enforced from the calamities of old age, and the change which death will make, ver. 1-7. The conclusion, All is vanity, ver. 8. The preacher's end in this book, ver. 9-12. The sum of all, to fear God and keep his commandments, in consideration of the judgment to come, ver. 13, 14.

1. Now - For now thou art most able to do it; and it will be most acceptable to God, and most comfortable to thyself, as the best evidence of thy sincerity, and the best provision for old age and death. Evil days - The time of old age, which is evil; burdensome in itself, and far more grievous when it is loaded with the sad remembrance of youthful follies, and with the dreadful prospect of approaching death and judgment. No pleasure - My life Is now bitter and burdensome to me: which is frequently the condition of old age.

2. Which - Hebrew. While the sun, and the light, and the moon, &c. That clause, and the light, seems to be added to signify that he speaks of the darkening of the sun, and moon, and stars; not in themselves, but only in respect of that light which they afford to men. And therefore the same clause which is expressed after the sun, is to be understood after the moon and stars. And those

expressions may be understood of the outward parts of the body, and especially of the face, the beauty of the countenance, the pleasant complexion of the cheeks, the liveliness of the eyes, which are compared to the sun, and moon, and stars, and which are obscured in old age, as the Chaldee paraphrast understands it. Or of external things, of the change of their joy, which they had in their youth, into sorrow, and manifold calamities, which are usually the companions of old age. This interpretation agrees both with the foregoing verse, in which he describes the miseries of old age, and with the following clause, which is added to explain those otherwise ambiguous expressions; and with the scripture use of this phrase; for a state of comfort and happiness is often described by the light of the sun, and a state of trouble is set forth, by the darkening of the light of the sun. Nor the clouds - This phrase denotes a perpetual succession of rain, and clouds bringing rain, and then rain and clouds again. Whereby he expresses either the rheums or destructions which incessantly flow in old men; or the continual vicissitude of infirmities, diseases, and griefs; one deep calling upon another.

3. The house - Of the body: whose keepers are the hands and arms, which are man's best instruments to defend his body; and which in a special manner are subject to his trembling. The strong men - The thighs and legs, in which the main strength of the body consists. Grinders - The teeth, those especially which are commonly so called, because they grind the meat. Cease - To perform their office. And those, &c. - The eyes. By windows he understands either the eye-lids, which like windows, are either opened or shut: or, those humours and coats of the eyes, which are the chief instruments by which we see.

4. In - Or, towards the streets: which lead into the streets. This may be understood either of the outward senses, which, as doors, let in outward objects to the soul: or rather the mouth, the two lips, here expressed by a word of the dual number, which like a door, open or shut the way that leads into the streets or common passages of the body; which also are principal instruments both of speaking and eating. And these are said to be shut, not absolutely, but comparatively, because men in old age grow dull and listless, having little appetite to eat, and are very frequently indisposed for discourse. When the sound - When the teeth are loose and few, whereby both his speech is low, and the noise which he makes in eating is but small. Shall rise - From his bed, being weary with lying, and unable to get sleep. The bird - As soon as the birds begin to chirp, which is early in the morning, whereas young men, can lie and sleep long. The daughters - All those senses which are employed in music. Brought low - Shall be cast down from their former excellency, and become incapable either of making musick, or of delighting in it.

5. Afraid - The passion of fear is observed to be most incident to old men. High - When they walk abroad they dread to go up high or steep places. Fears - Lest as they are walking, they should stumble, or fall. The almond-tree - Their heads shall be as full of gray hairs, as the almond-tree is of white flowers. The grasshopper - They cannot endure the least burden, being indeed a burden to themselves. Desire - Of meats, and drinks, and music, and other delights, which are vehemently desired by men in their youth. Goeth - is travelling towards it, and every day nearer to it. Long home - From this place of his pilgrimage into the grave, from whence he must never return into this world, and into the state of the future life, which is unchangeable and everlasting. Mourners - Accompany the corpse thro' the streets to the grave.

6. The silver cord - By the silver cord he seems to understand the marrow of the back-bone, which comes from the brain, and goes down to the lowest end of it. And this is aptly compared to a cord, both for its figure, which is long and round, and for its use, which is to draw and move the

parts of the body; and to silver, both for its excellency and colour, which is white and bright, in a dead, much more in a living body. This may properly be said to be loosed, or dissolved, because it is relaxed, or otherwise disabled for its proper service. And answerably hereto by the golden bowl we may understand, the membranes of the brain, and especially that inmost membrane which insinuates itself into all the parts of it, following it in its various windings, keeping each parcel of it in its proper place, and dividing one from another, to prevent disorder. This is not unfitly called a bowl, because It is round, and contains in it all the substance of the brain; and a golden bowl, partly for its great preciousness, partly for its ductility, being drawn out into a great thinness or fineness; and partly for its colour, which is some-what yellow, and comes nearer to that of gold than any other part of the body does. And this, upon the approach of death, is commonly shrivelled up, and many times broken. and as these clauses concern the brain, and the animal powers, so the two following respect the spring of the vital powers, and of the blood, the great instrument thereof is the heart. And so Solomon here describes the chief organs appointed for the production, distribution, and circulation of the blood. For tho' the circulation of the blood has been hid for many generations, yet it was well known to Solomon. According to this notion, the fountain is the right ventricle of the heart, which is now acknowledged to be the spring of life; and the pitcher is the veins which convey the blood from it to other parts, and especially that arterious vein by which it is transmitted to the lungs, and thence to the left ventricle, where it is better elabourated, and then thrust out into the great artery, called the Aorta, and by its branches dispersed into all the parts of the body. And the cistern is the left ventricle of the heart, and the wheel seems to be the great artery, which is fitly so called, because it is the great instrument of this circulation. The pitcher may be said to be broken at the fountain, when the veins do not return the blood to the heart, but suffer it to stand still and cool, whence comes that coldness of the outward parts, which is a near fore-runner of death. And the wheel may be said to be broken at the cistern, when the great arteries do not perform their office of conveying the blood into the left ventricle of the heart, and of thrusting it out thence into the lesser arteries, whence comes that ceasing of the pulse, which is a certain sign of approaching death.

8. Vanity - This sentence, wherewith he began this book, he here repeats in the end of it, as that which he had proved in all the foregoing discourse, and that which naturally followed from both the branches of the assertion laid down, ver. 7.

9. Taught - As God gave him this wisdom, that he might be a teacher of others. So he used it to that end. Gave heed - He did not utter whatever came into his mind, but seriously pondered both his matter and words.

10. Acceptable - Such as would comfort and profit the readers.

11. Nails - Piercing into men's dull minds, which make powerful and abiding impressions in them. Masters - By the teachers of God's church, appointed of God for that work. Shepherd - From Christ, the great Shepherd of the church in all ages.

12. By these - By these wise men, and their writings.

13. The conclusion - The sum of all that hath been said or written by wise men. Fear God - Which is put here, for all the inward worship of God, reverence, and love, and trust, and a devotedness of heart to serve and please him. The whole - It is his whole work and business, his whole perfection and happiness; it is the sum of what he need either know, or do, or enjoy.

14. For - All men must give an account to God of all their works, and this alone will enable them to do that with joy. Every secret - Not only outward and visible actions, but even inward and secret thoughts.

## NOTES ON THE SONG OF SOLOMON

THAT this book was of Divine inspiration is so clear, that as the Jewish writers note, none ever questioned it, although some doubted of some other of Solomon's writings. And the same arguments which prove the divinity of other books, are found here, such as the quality of the pen-man, who was confessedly a man inspired by God; the excellency and fulness of the matter; the sacred and sublime majesty of the style; and the singular efficacy of it upon the hearts of sober and serious persons. The form of this book is dramatical, wherein several parts are uttered in the name of several persons, who are chiefly, the bridegroom and the bride, and the friends or companions of, the one, and of the other. And is it declared what and when each of them speak, but that is left to the observation of the prudent reader. The design of the book in general is to describe the love and happy marriage of two persons, but it is not to be understood concerning Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, (although the occasion may be taken from that, or rather he makes an allusion to that) but concerning God, or Christ, and his church and people. This is sufficiently evident from the descriptions of this bridegroom and bride, which are such as could not with any decency be used or meant concerning Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter. There are many expressions and descriptions, which being applied to them, are absurd and monstrous. Hence it follows, that this book is to be understood allegorically concerning that spiritutal love and marriage which is between Christ, and his church. And this will be more than probable to any man who shall consider the following particulars;

1. That the scriptures both of the Old and New Testament are full of allegorical passages; which being known and confessed, it is needless to prove:
2. That the doctrine of Christ, being the head, and husband, of God's church or people, was well known, at least to the prophets, and the wise and pious Israelites in the time of the Old Testament:
3. That God compares himself to a bridegroom, and his church to a bride, Isaiah lxii, 5, and calls, and owns himself the husband of his people, Isaiah liv, 5 Hosea ii, 16, 19, 20. In which places, by comparing these with many other texts of scripture, by God, or the Lord, is meant Christ, the second person in the Godhead, who then was to come down, and since did come from heaven to earth, for the consummation of that eternal design of marriage between God and his people:
4. That the forty-fifth Psalm, which is a kind of abridgment of this book, although it alludes to the marriage between Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, was written concerning the Messiah, as all interpreters, both Christian and Jewish agree. From these considerations, and many others which might be suggested, it is sufficiently manifest, that the scope of this book is to describe the mutual love, union and communion which is between Christ and his church, in the various conditions to which it is liable in this world.

## I

After the title, the church, the bride, speaks to Christ, the bridegroom, ver. 1-4. To the daughters of Jerusalem, and to Christ again, ver. 5-7. Christ answers her complaints and requests, ver. 8-11. The church expresses her value for Christ, and her delight in him, ver. 12-14. Christ commends the church, ver. 15. And the church, Christ, ver. 16, 17.

1. The song - The most excellent of all songs. And so this might well be called, whether you consider the author of it, who was a great prince, and the wisest of all mortal men; or the subject of it, which is not Solomon, but a greater than Solomon, even Christ, and his marriage with the church; or the matter of it, which is most lofty, containing in it the noblest of all the mysteries contained either in the Old or the New Testament; most pious and pathetical, breathing forth the hottest flames of love between Christ and his people, most sweet and comfortable, and useful to all that read it with serious and Christian eyes.

2. Let him - The beginning is abrupt; but is suitable to, and usual in writing of this nature, wherein things are not related in an historical and exquisite order, but that which was first done is brought in, as it were accidentally, after many other passages: as we see in Homer, and Virgil, and others. These are the words of the spouse, wherein she breathes forth her passionate love to the bridegroom, whom she does not name; because it was needless, as being so well known to the persons, to whom she speaks, and being the only person who was continually in her thoughts. By kisses, the usual tokens of love and goodwill, she means the communications of his love and favour, his graces and comforts breathed into her from the Spirit of Christ. Thy love - This sudden change of the person is frequent, in pathetic discourses. First she speaks of him as absent, but speedily grows into more acquaintance with him, and by ardent desire and faith, embraces him as present. Wine - Than the most delicious meat or drink, or than all sensible delights, one kind being put for all.

3. Ointments - Because of those excellent gifts and graces of God's Spirit wherewith thou art replenished. Thy name - Thy report, the very mention of thee, and all those things by which thou makest thyself known to men, thy word, particularly thine offers of pardon and salvation to sinners; and all thy works, especially that great work of redemption is most acceptable, and refreshing. The virgins - called the companions of the bride, Psalm xlv, 14, particular believers, who are called virgins, 2Cor xi, 2 Rev. xiv, 4, who have their senses exercised to perceive this sweetness and fulness of Christ.

4. Draw me - By thy grace and Holy Spirit. We - Both I, thy spouse, and the virgins, my companions. And this change of numbers teaches us that the spouse is one great body, consisting of many members. Run - Will follow thee readily, chearfully, and swiftly. The king - Christ, the king of his church, hath answered my prayer. Chambers - Where I may freely converse with him, and enjoy him. He hath taken me into intimate communion with himself. Remember - This shall be the matter of our thoughts and discourses.

5. Black - I confess, as to myself, I am contemptible and deformed. She alludes to the complexion of Pharaoh's daughter. Comely - Yet I am glorious within, and comely through the beauty which my husband hath put upon me, by his graces conferred upon me, in justification and sanctification.

Daughters - By which she understands particular believers, whose mother, Jerusalem is called, Gal. iv, 26. The tents - Of the wild Arabians, the posterity of Kedar, Gen. xxv, 13, who dwelt in tents, and were black and uncomely. The curtains - As the hangings wherewith Solomon's house was furnished, which none can doubt were most beautiful and glorious. So these two last clauses answer to the two first, and that in the same order in which they lie.

6. Look not - With wonder and disdain. Mother's children - False brethren, who pretend that the church is their mother, when their actions demonstrate, that God, the husband of the church, is not their father; hypocritial professors, who are, and ever were, the keenest enemies; false teachers, and their followers, who by their corrupt doctrines, and divisions, and contentions, bring great mischief to the church. Made me - Having prevailed against me, they used me like a slave, putting me upon the most troublesome services, such as the keeping of the vineyards was esteemed, 2 Kings xxv, 12 Isaiah lxi, 5 Matt. xx, 1-7. Not kept - They gave me such a full employment in the drudging work about their vineyards, that they left me no time to mind my own; they hindered me from doing my own duty, and from minding my own concerns. And therefore it is no wonder if I be uncomely and scorched by the sun.

7. Tell me - Notwithstanding all these discouragements and afflictions which I suffer for thy sake, and for my love to thee. Being reproached and persecuted by others, I flee to thee, O my only refuge and joy. Feedest - Thy flock, discover to me which is thy true church, and which are those assemblies and people where thou art present. This is the request of particular believers. At noon - In the heat of the day, when the shepherds in those hot countries used to lead their flocks into shady places. Whereby he means the time of persecution, when it is hard to discover the true church, because she is deformed by it, and because she is obscured and driven into the wilderness. That turneth - Or, a wanderer, or vagabond; like a neglected and forlorn creature exposed both to censure and danger. The flocks - The assemblies of corrupt teachers and worshippers. These he calls Christ's companions because they profess the name of Christ, and their conjunction with him in God's worship.

8. If - This is Christ's answer. Go - Observe and follow the paths which my sheep have trodden before thee, my faithful servants, Abraham, and others. For the church in all ages is one and the same, and there is but one way for the substance, in which all the saints from the beginning of the world walk, Christ being the same yesterday, and to day, and forever. Feed - Take care for the feeding of all, and especially young and weak Christians. Beside - Under the conduct, and according to the instruction of my faithful shepherds, chiefly those who have gone before thee, the prophets and apostles, and in subordination to them, and to their writings, and to others whom I shall raise from time to time to feed my people.

9. Compared thee - For strength and courage, to overcome all thine enemies. For horses are famous for that property, and the strength of the battle was then thought to consist much in horses, and chariots, especially in a company or multitude of them. And the church in this book is represented not only as fair and beautiful, but also as terrible to her enemies.

10. Jewels - Which being fastened to the heads of brides, used to hang down upon their cheeks, in those times. He mentions the cheeks, as the chief seat of beauty. Chains - Whereby, as well as by the rows of jewels: he may seem to design all those persons and things wherewith the church is made beautiful in the eyes of God, and of men, such as excellent ministers, and saints, righteous laws, holy ordinances, and the gifts and graces of God's spirit.

11. We - I and my father. Will make - Beautiful and honourable ornaments.

12. The king - My royal husband. Sitteth - With me in his ordinances. Spikenard - The graces of his spirit conferred upon me, here compared to those sweet ointments, which the master of the feast caused to be poured out upon the heads of the guests, Luke vii, 38, in which ointments, spikenard was a chief ingredient. Sendeth - This denotes the exercise and manifestation of her graces, which is a sweet smelling savour in the nostrils of her husband, and of her companies.

13. Myrrh - Myrrh, was ever reckoned among the best perfumes. Shall lie - This phrase may denote the churches intimate union with, and hearty affection to Christ.

14. Camphire - We are not concerned to know exactly what this was; it being confessed, that it was some grateful plant, and that it sets forth that great delight which the church hath in the enjoyment of Christ. Engedi - A pleasant and well-watered place in the tribe of Judah, where there were many pleasant plants.

15. Behold - This is the speech of Christ. The words are doubled to manifest his fervent affection for her. Doves eyes - Which are mild and harmless, chaste and faithful. And by the eyes he seems to design both her outward behaviour, and the inward disposition of her mind.

16. Behold - The church here again speaks, and retorts Christ's words; thou, and thou only art fair indeed. Pleasant - As thou art beautiful in thyself, so thou art amiable and pleasant in thy condescention to me. Bed - This seems to denote the place where the church enjoys sweet fellowship with Christ, by his spirit accompanying his ordinances. Green - Is pleasant, as that colour to the eye.

17. Cedar - Not only strong, but also fragrant and delightful. Cypress - Which also was strong and fragrant, and therefore suits well with cedar.

## II

Christ speaks of himself and his church, ver. 1, 2. The church declares the delightful fellowship she had with Christ, ver. 3, 4. Rejoices in his favour, and takes care that nothing may displease him, ver. 5-7 Triumphs in his love and gracious call, ver. 8-13. Christ's care of the church, ver. 14, 15. Her faith and hope in him, ver. 16, 17

1. I - These are the words of the bridegroom. He compares himself to the rose and lilly, for fragrancy and beauty. Sharon, was a very fruitful place, and famous for roses.

2. Among - Compared with thorns, which it unspeakably exceeds in glory and beauty. So - So far, doth my church or people, excel all other assemblies. The title of daughter, is often given to whole nations. These are Christ's words, to which the spouse makes the following reply.

3. The apple-tree - Whose fruit is very pleasant and wholesome. The trees - Which are barren. I sat - I confidently reposed myself under his protection. His fruit - The benefits which I received by him, remission of sins, faith, grace, and assurance of glory.

4. Banquetting house - The places in which believers receive the graces and blessings of Christ. His banner - By the lifting up whereof I was invited to come to him, and to list myself under him. Love - The love of Christ crucified, which, like a banner, is displayed in the gospel.

5. Stay me - Or, support me, keep me from fainting. The spouse speaks this to her bride-maids, the daughters of Jerusalem: or to the bridegroom himself. Flaggons - With wine, which is a good cordial. Apples - With odouriferous apples, the smell whereof was grateful to persons ready to faint. By this understand the application of the promises, and the quickening influences of the Spirit.

6. His hand - No sooner did I cry out for help, but he was at hand to succor me.

7. I charge you - This is spoken by the bride. By the roes - By the example of those creatures, which are pleasant and loving in their carriage towards one another. Nor awake - That you do not disturb nor offend him. 'Till - Never, as this word, until, in such phrases, is commonly used. For neither can sin ever please him, nor can the church bear it that Christ should ever be offended.

8. The voice - Christ's voice, the word of grace revealed outwardly in the gospel, and inwardly by the Spirit of God. Leaping - He saith, leaping and skipping, to denote that Christ came readily, and swiftly, with great desire and pleasure and adds, upon the mountains and hills, to signify Christ's resolution to come in spite of all difficulties.

9. Like a roe - In swiftness. He is coming to me with all speed and will not tarry a moment beyond the proper season. He standeth behind - And while he doth for wise reasons forbear to come; he is not far from us. Both this and the following phrases may denote the obscure manner of Christ's manifesting himself to his people, under the law, in comparison of his discoveries in the gospel. The window - This phrase, and that through the lattess, intimate that the church does indeed see Christ, but, as through a glass, darkly, as it is said even of gospel-Revelations, 1 Cor. xiii, 12, which was much more true of legal administrations.

10. Spake - Invited me outwardly by his word, and inwardly by his Spirit. Rise up - Shake off sloth, and disentangle thyself more fully from all the snares of this world. Come - Unto me, and with me; follow me fully, serve me perfectly, labour for a nearer union, and more satisfying communion with me.

11. The winter - Spiritual troubles arising from a deep sense of the guilt of sin, the wrath of God, the curse of the law; all which made them afraid to come unto God. But, saith Christ, I have removed these impediments, God is reconciled; therefore cast off all discouragements, and excuses, and come to me.

12. The flowers - The communications of God's grace, the gifts, and graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit, are vouchsafed unto, and appear in believers, as buds and blossoms do in the spring. The turtle - This seems particularly to be mentioned because it not only gives notice of the spring, but aptly represents the Spirit of God, which even the Chaldee paraphrast understands by this turtle, which appeared in the shape of a dove, and which worketh a dove-like meekness, and chastity, and faithfulness, in believers.

13. Her figs - Which it shoots forth in the spring.

14. My dove - So the church is called, for her dove-like temper, and for her dove-like condition, because she is weak, and exposed to persecution, and therefore forced to hide herself in rocks. The stairs - In the holes of craggy and broken rocks, which resemble stairs. Let me see - Be not afraid to appear before me. Hear - Thy prayers and praises. For - Thy person and services are amiable in my sight.

15. Take us - The bridegroom gives this charge to his bridemen or friends. By whom he understands those magistrates and ministers to whom, under Christ, the custody of the vineyards, the churches, principally belong. These he commands to take the foxes, to restrain them from doing this mischief. Foxes - The disturbers of the vineyard, or the church, seducers or false teachers. Little

foxes - This he adds for more abundant caution, to teach the church to prevent errors and heresies in the beginnings. Spoil vines - Which foxes do many ways, by gnawing and breaking the little branches and leaves, by digging holes in the vineyards, and so spoiling the roots. Tender grapes - Which are easily spoiled, if great care be not used to prevent it.

16. My beloved - These are the words of the bride, who having come to him upon his gracious invitation, now maketh her boast of him. He feedeth - Abideth and refresheth himself amongst his faithful people, who are compared to lillies, ver. 2.

17. Until - Until the morning of that blessed day of the general resurrection, when all the shadows, not only of ignorance, and sin, and calamity, but even of outward administrations, shall cease. Turn - Return to me. For although Christ had come to her, and she had gladly received him, yet he was gone again, as is here implied, and evidently appears from the following verse. Which sudden change is very agreeable to the state of God's people in this world, where they are subject to frequent changes. A roe - In swiftness; make haste to help me. Of Bether - A place in the land of promise, where it seems those creatures were in great abundance.

## III

The church seeks Christ, finds him, and resolves not to displease him again, ver. 1-5. Christ's coming out of the wilderness; his bed, guard and chariot, ver. 6-10. An invitation of the church to the kingdom of glory, ver. 11.

1. By night - When others compose themselves to sleep, my affections were working towards him. I sought - I sought for Christ's gracious and powerful presence. I sought - This repetition denotes her perseverance and unweariedness in seeking him. Found him not - For he had withdrawn the manifestations of his love from me, either because I had not sought him diligently, or because I had abused his favour.

2. The city - The city of God, the church in which Christ resides. Broadways - Not finding him in private prayer, and meditation, I sought him in the places of public assemblies and ordinances. Found not - He saw fit still to delay the discoveries of his grace.

3. The watch-men - The ministers of Christ, and rulers of the church. Go about - To prevent disorders and dangers. Him - She does not name him, because she thought it needless, as supposing a person of such transcendent excellency could not be unknown to men in that capacity. Their answer is not mentioned, either because they gave her no satisfactory answer, or because by their silence she gathered that they were unable to inform her; and being eager in the pursuit, she would not lose time.

4. Found him - Christ met me, and manifested his love to me. Mother's house - As the spouse here, signifies particular believers, so her mother is the universal church, or the true Jerusalem, which hath its rise from above, which is the mother of us all, Gal. iv, 26, in which Christ and believers are united, and have sweet communion together in holy ordinances, into which believers are said to bring Christ, by faith and prayer. Conceived me - Christ is as it were the father that begets, and the church the mother that conceives and brings forth believers.

6. Who - The persons speaking seem to be the daughters of Jerusalem, who upon occasion of the bride's speech to them, make this reply. The person spoken of is the spouse. Wilderness - Believers were to be called, not only out of the holy land, which was as the garden of God, but also out of the Gentile-world, which in prophetical writings is frequently described under the notion of a wilderness. Pillars - Being conducted out of the wilderness as by a pillar of smoak going before them, as the Israelites were led through the wilderness to Canaan, by a pillar of cloud and fire. Perfumed - The spouse is said to be thus perfumed, for her excellent virtues and religious services which are pleasant and acceptable to God, and for the merits and graces of Christ, which are a sweet savour to God, wherewith she is enriched and beautified. Of merchants - Which are fetched by the merchants from Arabia, or other remote parts.

7. Behold - The bride-men continue their speech, and from the admiration of the bride, proceed to the admiration of the bridegroom. Bed - The bed seems to denote the church, which is comely through Christ's beauty, and safe by his protection, in which Christ is glorified, and believers enjoy sweet fellowship with him. Solomon's - Which is the bed, not of an ordinary man, but of a great king, whom Solomon typifies, and who is greater than Solomon. Threescore - Very many, the certain number being put for an uncertain. He alludes to Solomon's guard, whereby he designs all those creatures, whether angels, princes, ministers, or others, whose ministry God uses for the protection of his church.

8. Every man - Is prepared and ready to fight, to prevent those dangers which are frequent in the night season. The night may denote the whole time of this life, which may well be called night in respect of that ignorance and error wherewith it is attended, (as the future life is compared to day) this life being the only time wherein such a guard is necessary.

9. A chariot - In which the royal bridegroom and bride might ride together in state. By this chariot he seems to understand the word of Christ dispensed by his ministers, whereby Christ rides triumphantly in the world, and believers are carried into heavenly glory. Of Lebanon - Of cedars, which wood being incorruptible, doth fitly signify the word of the gospel, which endureth forever, 1 Pet. i, 25.

10. He made - There is no necessity that either this or the following particulars should be distinctly applied to several things in the gospel; this in the general may suffice, that as all the particulars are added to shew the perfection and beauty of the chariot, so they do imply that Christ's word is every way amiable and perfect. The bottom - The under and lower part. Whereby he may seem to understand the foundation of the word and promises, which is either God's covenant, or Christ's mediation, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. Covering - The uppermost part of it. Midst - The inward parts. Paved - Covered and adorned. Love - The love of Christ to the sons of men. For the daughters - For their delight and comfort, who all bear a part in this marriage.

11. Go - The church bids particular believers go forth to see this sight. Solomon - The Messiah, of whom Solomon was an illustrious type. The crown - Which being applied to Solomon, may design that garland or crown which was usually worn in nuptial solemnities: but being applied to Christ, it denotes the honour that was given him, which though principally done by his Father, yet is here ascribed to his mother, the universal church, which in respect to his humanity may be called his mother, because he was born in, and of her, and one of her members. In the day - When the church is married to him, which is done when the covenant is confirmed between them, or when persons are converted to Christ, and more compleatly when they are received by Christ into his immediate fellowship in the kingdom of glory. Gladness - When he rejoiceth over his bride.

## IV

Christ commends his church, for her beauty, ver. 1-7. He calls her to go with him, ver. 8. Manifests his love and affection for her, ver. 9. A farther commendation of her, ver. 10-15. She prays for the effectual operation of his Holy Spirit on her to make her fruitful, ver. 16.

1. Behold - These words are evidently spoken by the bridegroom. Fair - Being clothed with my righteousness, and adorned with all the graces of my spirit. Fair - He repeats it both to confirm his assertion, and to shew the fervency of his affection. Dove's eyes - Whereas the beauty of the spouse is here described in her several parts, we need not labour much about the application of each particular to some distinct grace of the church, this being the chief design of the description to shew that compleatness and absolute perfection which the church hath in part received, and shall more fully receive in the future life. Goats - Which in these parts was of extraordinary length, and softness, and comeliness. Mount Gilead - A very fruitful place, fit for breeding all sorts of cattle, and especially of goats, because it was an hilly and woody country.

2. A flock - Numerous, and placed in due order. Even - Smooth and even, as also clean and white. Twins - Which seems to denote the two rows of teeth. Barren - Not one tooth is lacking.

3. Thy speech - Which is added as another ingredient of an amiable person; and to explain the foregoing metaphor. The discourse of believers is edifying and comfortable, and acceptable to God, and to serious men. Temples - Under which he comprehends the cheeks. Pomegranate - In which there is a lovely mixture of red and white.

4. Thy neck - This may represent the grace of faith, by which we are united to Christ, as the body is to the head by the neck. By which Christians receive their spiritual food, and consequently their strength and ability for action. The tower - Upright, firm, and strong; and moreover adorned with chains of gold or pearl, or the like ornaments. Of David - Some tower built by David, when he repaired, and enlarged his royal city, and used by him as an armoury. Bucklers - Such as are reserved for the use of mighty men. A thousand is put indefinitely for a great number.

5. Lillies - In the fields where lillies grow.

6. Until - These words are uttered by the bride, chap. ii, 17, and here returned by the bridegroom as an answer to that request. And this place may be understood of the day of glory, when all shadows and ordinances shall cease. To the hill - To my church upon earth, which was typified by the mountain of Moriah and the temple upon it. This in prophetic writings is called a mountain, and may well be called a mountain of myrrh and frankincense, both for the acceptable services which are there offered to God, and for the precious gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, which are of a sweet smelling savour to God and men. Thus Christ directs believers, where they may find him, namely in his church and ordinances.

8. Come - Unto the mountains of myrrh. Look - To the place to which I invite thee to go, which from those high mountains thou mayest easily behold. Of Leopards - From these or other mountains, which are inhabited by lions and leopards. This seems to be added as an argument to move the spouse to go with him, because the places where now she was, were not only barren, but also dangerous.

9. My sister - So he calls her to shew the greatness of his love, which cannot sufficiently be expressed by any one relation. With one - With one glance. One chain - With one of those other graces and perfections wherewith thou art adorned.

10. Fair - How amiable and acceptable to me. Ointments - Of the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, wherewith thou art anointed.

11. Thy lips - Thy speeches both to me in prayer and praises, and to men for their edification, are highly acceptable to me. Milk - Words more sweet and comfortable than honey or milk. Garments - Of that righteousness wherewith I have adorned thee. Lebanon - Which was very sweet and grateful in regard of the great numbers of sweet-smelling spices and trees which grow on that mountain.

12. A garden - For order and beauty, for pleasant walks, and flowers, and fruits. Inclosed - Defended by the care of my providence: and reserved for my proper use. Shut up - To preserve it from all pollution, and to reserve it for the use of its owner, for which reason, springs were shut up in those countries where water was scarce and precious.

13. Plants - Believers, which are planted in thee, are like the plants or fruits of an orchard, which are pleasant to the eye, and delicious to the taste or smell, whereby he signifies the variety and excellency of the gifts and graces in the several members of the church. Spikenard - Which he mentions here with camphire, and in the next verse with saffron, because it is mixed with both these, and being so mixed, yields. the more grateful smell.

14. All trees - Such trees as produce frankincense.

15. Living water - Though my spouse be in some sort a fountain shut up, yet that is not so to be understood as if she kept her waters to herself, for she is like a fountain of living or running water, which flows into gardens, and makes its flowers and plants to flourish. The church conveys those waters of life which she receives from Christ to particular believers. Streams - Like those sweet and refreshing rivers which flow down from mount Lebanon, of which Jordan is one.

16. North wind - These winds may signify the several dispensations of God's spirit. My garden - This verse is spoken by the spouse. And he calls the garden both hers and his, because of that oneness which is between them, chap. ii, 16. May flow - That my graces may be exercised. Let - Let Christ afford his gracious presence to his church. And eat - And let him delight himself in that service which is given him, both by the religious worship, and by the holy conversation of his people.

## V

Christ answers the church's invitation, and shews her the delight he took in her fruit, ver. 1. She acknowledges her negligence to Christ in not opening the door, ver. 2-6. Of the harsh usage she met with, ver. 7. She tells the daughters of Jerusalem she is sick of love to Christ, ver. 8. Their question concerning him, ver. 9. A description of Christ by his graces, ver. 10-15. In whom she boasteth, ver. 16

1. I come - This is the bridegroom's answer. I have - I have eaten of my pleasant fruits, I have taken notice of, and delight in the service and obedience of my people. O friends - Believers are here encouraged with freedom and chearfulness to eat and drink their spiritual food.

2. Asleep - I was dull, and sluggish. But - Yet in my very sleep my thoughts were running upon my beloved. It is - Between sleeping and waking, I heard his voice. Knocketh - By his word, and providence, and spirit, at the door of my heart. Open - Inviting me to let him into my soul. My love - This heap of kind compellations signifies Christ's fervent affection to his people. With dew - While I wait without thy door, which signifies his sufferings for the church's good. The drops - The dew which falls in the night.

3. My coat - My day clothes, as persons use to do when they go to rest. How - It is inconvenient and troublesome to do it at this time. Washed my feet - Which the eastern people commonly did when they went to bed.

4. By the hole - He assayed to open the door. When his word would not prevail, his spirit, which is called the finger of God, Luke xi, 20, wrought inwardly upon my conscience. Were moved - With compassion for him and his sufferings, and with affection to him.

5. I rose - I went forth to receive him. Dropped - With oil or ointment made of myrrh, which dropped from the bridegroom's hand upon the door in great abundance, when he put it into the hole of the door, and consequently upon her hands and fingers when she touched the door to open it. By which she signifies, that Christ, though he withdrew himself from her, yet left a sweet savour behind him. The handles - Hebrew. with myrrh passing or flowing upon the handles of the lock, which place the bridegroom had touched when he attempted to open it.

6. With-drawn - Denied me his comfortable presence, as a just punishment for my former neglect. Faded - Hebrew. went out of me: I fainted and was ready to die away, for those endearing expressions related, ver. 2, which then I did not heed. I sought - By diligent enquiry and importunate prayer.

7. Watch-men - The governors of the church, who, though by their place they are obliged to comfort the faithful, do frequently discourage them. Smote - With bitter calumnies and persecutions. The keepers - The same with the watchmen, whose office it is to keep the gates and walls of the city. My vine - Which was an ornament of her sex, and an ensign of her relation to Christ. And so the taking of this veil away, signifies their contemptuous usage of her, and endeavours to represent her, as one that had no relation to Christ.

8. O daughters - The church having passed the watchmen, proceeds in the pursuit of her beloved, and inquires of every particular believer whom she meets concerning him. Tell him - That I am ready to faint for want of his presence.

9. What is - Wherein doth he excel them? Believers might ask this, that they might be more fully informed of it.

10. White - The white may denote his pure and spotless innocency, and the ruddy colour his bloody passion.

11. As gold - It shines like gold, by reason of the crown of pure gold upon his head. We need not aim at a distinct application of this and the following particulars, unto some special excellency of Christ, because such things are mere conjectures, and the only design of this description is, to set forth the beauty of Christ under the notion of a most amiable person, in whom there is no defect or blemish, from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet.

12. Of doves - Lovely and pleasant, chaste and innocent. Rivers - Where they delight to abide. Milk - Doves of a milk white colour.

13. Cheeks - His face or countenance, an eminent part whereof is the cheeks. Spices - Of aromatic flowers which delight both the eye with a pleasant prospect, and the smell with their fragrancy. Lillies - Beautiful and pleasant.

14. Beryl - Beautiful, and precious, and richly adorned, as it were with gold rings set with precious stones. Belly - Which seems to be here used, for the whole body, reaching from the neck to the bottom of the belly. Saphires - Of a pure and bright white colour, intermixt with blue veins; for some saphires are of a bright blue colour.

15. Marble - White, and strait, and well shaped and strong. Gold - His feet are compared to gold, for their singular brightness, for which they are compared to fine-brass, Rev. i, 15. Countenance - Hebrew. his aspect or appearance, his form or person. Lebanon - In respect of its cedars, tall, and upright, and stately.

16. Altogether - Not to run out into more particulars.

## VI

An enquiry after Christ, ver. 1. The churches answer, ver. 2. The church confesses her faith in Christ, ver. 3. Christ shews the graces of his church, ver. 4. And the beauty of her several parts, ver. 5-10. He acquaints her where he had been, and what he had been doing, ver. 11. And discovers his affection to her, ver. 12. With an invitation of her to return to him again, ver. 13.

1. Gone - From thee.

2. Is gone - The spouse had hitherto been at a loss for her beloved, but having diligently sought him, now at last she meets with a gracious answer from God, directing her where to find him. The garden may signify the church catholic, and the gardens, as it follows, as also the beds, the particular assemblies of the faithful, in which Christ affords his presence. Spices - In which the gifts and graces of God's spirit, fitly compared to spices, grow. To feed - To refresh and delight himself. Lillies - Which may denote either, particular believers, whom Christ gathers to himself in his church; or, the prayers and praises of his people in the publick congregations.

4. Thou - These are the words of Christ, who had now again manifested himself to his church. Tirzah - A very pleasant city, the royal seat of the kings of Israel. Jerusalem - Which was beautiful both for its situation, and for its goodly buildings. Terrible - To her enemies, whom God will certainly destroy.

5. Turn away - It is a poetical expression, signifying how beautiful the church was in Christ's eyes. Thy hair - This clause, and the whole following verse are repeated from, chap. iv, 1, 2. And this repetition is not vain but confirms what was said before, that the churches miscarriage had not alienated Christ's affection from her.

8. Threescore - A certain number for an uncertain. The sense seems to be this, there are many beautiful queens and concubines in the world, in the courts of princes, but none of them is to be compared with my spouse.

9. But one - The only beloved of my soul, my only spouse. The only one - She is as dear and as precious to me as only children use to be to their parents, and especially to their mothers. Daughters - Called virgins, ver.

8. Praised - As more beautiful and worthy than themselves.

10. Who - These are the words of the queens and concubines. Who, what manner of person is this, how excellent and glorious! Morning - As the morning light, which coming after the darkness, is very pleasant and amiable.

11. I went - When I went away from thee these are the words of the bridegroom. Valley - Which being low, and well watered is very fruitful. To see - What beginnings or appearances there were of good fruits or works among believers.

12. Or ever - I was surprized with a vehement desire of my spouse, which is to be understood figuratively, and so as to agree with the majesty and omnisciency of Christ. Ammi-nadib - Eager in my desire, and swift in my motion towards the church. Ammi- nadib is supposed to be some eminent charioteer then well known, and famous for his speed in driving chariots.

13. Return - Christ recalls his spouse, who as when Christ was gone, she pursued after him, so now when Christ was coming to her, she was ready to wander from him. Return - This word is repeated four times, to signify both Christ's passionate love to her, and her backwardness. Shulamite - This title signifies, the wife of Solomon, thus called after her husband's name, and as Christ is called by the name of Solomon, so the church is fitly described by the title of Solomon's wife. May look - That I and my companions may contemplate thy beauty. What - But what do you my friends expect to discover in her? Christ proposes the question, that they might take special notice of this as a very remarkable thing in her. The company - Whereby he intimates that this one spouse was made up of the whole multitude of believers. Two armies - Confederate together, and so this may signify the union of Jews and Gentiles, and the safety and strength of the church, which is compared to a numerous host, distributed into two armies.

## VII

A farther description of the church's his graces, ver. 1-7. His design to visit the church, with the blessed effect thereof, ver. 8-9. She professes her faith, and desire, ver. 10. She invites him to communion with her, ver. 11. The end thereof, ver. 12, 13.

1. Shoes - Were anciently evidences of a free and comfortable state, whereas slaves and mourners used to go bare-foot.

4. Like fishpools - Full, and clear, and quiet, and pleasant. Heshbon - A pleasant and well watered city, beyond Jordan. The tower - Which was in all probability built by Solomon in the mountain of Lebanon, the northern border of the land of Israel towards Damascus; and therefore a very fit place for a watch- tower. Which looketh - There was another tower or building in or near Jerusalem, which was called the house of the forest of Lebanon, 1 Kings vii, 2.

5. Carmel - Eminent and pleasant to the eye, and fruitful as mount Carmel was. Which may denote that her mind was replenished with knowledge, and other excellent gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Purple - Which colour was anciently much esteemed. Is held - In which he walks, and having once espied thee, is unable to take off his eyes from thee.

6. Delights - For those various lovely features which, are in thee.

7. Palm-tree - Tall and strait, or upright. And he seems to mention the palm-tree, rather than any other, because it is constantly green and flourishing, and grows upward in spite of all pressures.

8. I said - Within myself, I resolved. I will - Climb up, that so I may take hold of the boughs, which do not grow out of the sides, as in other trees, but only at the top of it. Take hold - Partly to prune and dress them, and partly to gather the fruit. The smell - Of thy breath; which is often called the breath of a man's nostrils.

9. Thy mouth - Thy speech, the palate being one of the principal instruments of speech. Wine - Grateful and refreshing for thee my beloved, who reapest the comfort and benefit of that pleasure which I take in thee. Causing - The most dull, and stupid, and sleepy persons to speak.

10. I am - This and the following verses contain the words of the bride, in answer to the bridegroom's endearing expressions delivered in the foregoing verses.

11. Go forth - That being retired from the crowd, we may more freely and sweetly converse together.

12. Early - The church having lost her beloved by her former laziness, now doubles her diligence. Vineyards - To particular congregations. Let us see - Let us inquire into the success of our labours, what souls are brought in and built up, and how they prosper and grow in grace. There - There I will discover the fervency of my affections to thee, and maintain communion with thee in thy holy ordinances.

13. Mandrakes - This Hebrew word is used Gen. xxx, 14, 15, and the signification of it is very much doubted and disputed by interpreters. The word here signifies sweet and pleasant flowers, and therefore if it be understood of mandrakes, they were of another sort than ours, as flowers of the same kind in several climates have very different natures and qualities. At our gates - Brought thither by divers persons to congratulate our nuptials. All fruits - Fruits of this year and of the former. Which seems to be meant of the various fruits and operations of the Spirit, and degrees of grace in several believers.

## VIII

The church expresses her desire of familiarity with Christ, ver. 1. By the entertainment she would make him, ver. 2, 3. She charges the daughters of Jerusalem not to disturb her beloved, ver. 4. A commendation of the church for her faith in Christ, ver. 5. She prays for full assurance of his love, her invincible desire, ver. 6. Which is insatiable, ver. 7. The calling of the Gentiles with their intent, and her condition, ver. 8-13. Christ's coming prayed for, ver. 14.

1. O that - The church here expresses her desire of a stricter union, and closer communion with Christ. Without - In the open streets.

2. Instruct me - Or, where she did instruct or educate me. I would - My gifts and graces should all be employed to serve and glorify thee.

5. Who - This and the next clause are the words of the bridegroom, who proposes the question, that he may give the answer following. Her beloved - He speaks of himself in the third person, which is usual in the Hebrew language. I raised - When thou wast dead in trespasses and in the depth of misery. Under - Under my own shadow; for she had compared him to an apple tree, and declared, that under the shadow of the tree she had both delight and fruit, chap. ii, 3, which is the same thing with this raising up. There - Under that tree, either the universal or the primitive church, did conceive and bring thee forth.

6. Set me - These are undoubtedly the words of the bride. Let thy heart be constantly set upon me. He seems to allude to the engraven tablets which are frequently worn upon the breast, and to the signet on a man's arm or hand, which they prized at a more than ordinary rate, and which are continually in their sight. For love - My love to thee. Jealousy - Or, zeal; my ardent love to thee. Cruel - Hebrew. hard, grievous and terrible, and sometimes ready to overwhelm me; therefore have pity upon me, and do not leave me. Fire - It burns and melts my heart like fire.

7. Many waters - My love to thee cannot be taken off, either by terrors and afflictions, which are commonly signified in scripture by waters and floods; or by temptations and allurements. Therefore, give me thyself, without whom, and in comparison of whom, I despise all other persons and things.

8. We - These are still the words of the bride. The present church, which was that of the Jews, speaks of a future church, which was to consist of the Gentiles, which she calls little, because she was the younger sister, and then scarce had a being; and she calls her sister to intimate that the Gentile-church should be admitted to the same privileges with the Jews. She hath - No grown and full breasts, as virgin have when they are ripe for marriage, Ezek xvi, 7. This signifies the present state of the Gentiles, which as yet were not grown up, and wanted the milk or food of life, as for itself, so also for its members. When spoken for - In order to her marriage. How shall we supply that defect?

9. If - This seems to be Christ's answer to the foregoing question of the Jewish church. Christ engages himself to provide for her, as suits best with her condition. If the Gentiles when they are converted shall be like a wall, strong and firm in faith; We, my Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost, as the principal builders, and my ministers as workers with, and under us, will build upon her a palace of silver, will add more strength and beauty to her, will enlarge and adorn her; and if she be as a door, which is weaker than a wall; if she be weak in faith, yet we will not therefore reject her, but we will inclose or (as many others render the word) strengthen or fortify her with boards of cedar, which are not only beautiful, but also strong and durable.

10. I am - These seem to be the words of the Jewish church. O Lord, by thy grace I am what thou wouldst have my sister to be, and therefore humbly hope, according to thy promise to her in that case, thou wilt build upon me a palace of silver. Towers - Which stand out from and above the wall, and are an ornament and defense to it. Then - When by his grace I was made a wall, he was well-pleased with me, and with his own workmanship in me.

11. Baal-hamon - A place not far from Jerusalem. A thousand - Whereby he signifies both the vast extent of the vineyard which required so many keepers, and its singular fertility.

12. My vineyard - My church, which is here opposed to Solomon's vineyard. Possibly we may ascribe the first clause to Christ, and the latter to the spouse: such interlocutions being familiar in this book. Mine - This repetition is very emphatical, to shew that Christ had a more eminent title to his vineyard, the church, than Solomon had to his vineyard, because it was purchased not by his

money, but by his blood. Before me - Is under my own eye and care. Thou - These words are the church's return to Christ, who is here called Solomon, as he was chap. iii, 9, 11, as elsewhere he is called David. Dost thou, O Christ, keep thine own vineyard, which Solomon did not? Then surely it is meet that thou shouldst receive as large a revenue from thy vineyard, as he did from his. Two hundred - Though the chief revenue is justly given to thee, yet thy ministers, who serve thee in thy vineyard, are allowed by thee to receive some encouragement for their service.

13. Thou - Christ speaks here to his spouse. The gardens - Not in the wilderness of the world, but in the church, the garden of God. He saith, gardens, because of the many particular congregations, into which the church is divided. Companions - The friends of the bride and bridegroom. Hearken - Diligently observe all thy words towards me. Cause me - When I am gone from thee, let me hear thy prayers, and praises, and the preaching of my gospel in the world.

14. Make haste - Seeing we must part for a time, make haste, O my beloved bridegroom, and speedily finish the work which thou hast to do in the world, that so thou mayest take me to thyself, that I may live in thine everlasting embraces.

# NOTES ON THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

THE holy prophets, whose writings are contained in the sacred scripture, are sixteen. Of these Isaiah, is first in place, and, as may seem probable, in time also. But undoubtedly he was cotemporary with Hosea. Compare Isaiah i, 1, with Hosea i, 1. The Jews tell us that he was of the blood royal of Judah. But undoubtedly he was the prince of all the prophets, whether we consider the great extent and variety of his prophecies, the excellency and sublimity of those mysteries which were revealed to him and by him, the majesty and elegancy of his style, or the incomparable liveliness and power of his sermons. He so evidently and fully describes the person, and offices, and sufferings, and kingdom of Christ, that some of the ancients called him the fifth Evangelist. And it is observed, that there are more quotations in the New Testament taken out of Isaiah, than out of all the other prophets.

## I

Judah's sins, ver. 1-4. Her judgments, ver. 5-9. Her worship is rejected, ver. 10-15. Exhortations to repentance, promises of grace and mercy, threatenings of sore judgments, and complaints by reason of their backsliding, ver. 16-31

1. Vision - Or, the visions; the word being here collectively used: the sense is, this is the book of the visions or prophecies. As prophets were called Seers, 1 Sam. ix, 9, so prophecies are called visions, because they were as clearly and certainly represented to the prophets minds, as bodily objects are to mens eyes. Saw - Foresaw and foretold. But he speaks, after the manner of the

prophets, of things to come, as if they were either past or present. Judah - Principally, but not exclusively. For he prophecies also concerning Egypt and Babylon, and divers other countries; yet with respect to Judah. The days - ln the time of their reign. Whence it may be gathered, that Isaiah exercised his prophetical office above fifty years altogether.

2. Hear - He directs his speech to those senseless creatures, that he might awaken the Israelites, whom he hereby proclaims to be so dull and stupid that they were past hearing, and therefore calls in the whole creation of God to bear witness against them. The Lord - This is his plea against them, of the equity whereof he is willing that all the creatures should be Judges.

3. Know - Me their owner and master. Knowing is here taken practically, as it is usually in scripture, and includes reverence and obedience.

4. A seed - The children of wicked parents, whose guilt they inherit, and whose evil example they follow. Corrupters - Hebrew. that corrupt themselves, or others by their counsel and example. Backward - Instead of proceeding forward and growing in grace.

5. Head - The very head and heart of the body politick, from whence the plague is derived to all the other members.

7. In your presence - Which your eye shall see to torment you, when there is no power in your hands to deliver you. As - Hebrew. as the overthrow of strangers, that is, which strangers bring upon a land which is not likely to continue in their hands, and therefore they spare no persons, and spoil and destroy all things, which is not usually done in wars between persons of the same, or of a neighbouring nation.

8. Is left - Is left solitary, all the neighbouring villages and country round about it being laid waste.

10. Of Sodom - So called for their resemblance of them in wickedness. The law - The message which I am now to deliver to you from God, your great lawgiver. 11. To me - Who am a spirit, and therefore cannot be satisfied with such carnal oblations, but expect to have your hearts and lives, as well as your bodies and sacrifices, presented unto me. Blood - He mentions the fat and blood, because these were in a peculiar manner reserved for God, to intimate that even the best of their sacrifices were rejected by him.

12. To appear - Upon the three solemn feasts, or upon other occasions. Who required - The thing I commanded, was not only, nor chiefly, that you should offer external sacrifices, but that you should do it with true repentance, with faith in my promises, and sincere resolutions of devoting yourselves to my service.

13. The solemn meeting - The most solemn day of each of the three feasts, which was the last day.

15. Blood - You are guilty of murder, and oppression.

16. Wash - Cleanse your hearts and hands.

17. Learn - Begin to live soberly, righteously, and godly. Judgment - Shew your religion to God, by practicing justice to men. Judge - Defend and deliver them.

19. If - If you are fully resolved to obey all my commands. Shall eat - Together with pardon, you shall receive temporal and worldly blessings.

21. The city - Jerusalem, which in the reign of former kings was faithful to God. An harlot - Is filled with idolatry. Murderers - Under that one gross kind, he comprehends all sorts of unrighteous men and practices.

23. Rebellious - Against me their sovereign Lord. Companions of thieves - Partly by giving them connivance and countenance, and partly by practicing the same violence, and cruelty, and injustice that thieves used to do. Gifts - That is, bribes given to pervert justice.

25. And purge - I will purge out of thee, those wicked men that are incorrigible, and for those of you that are curable, I will by my word, and by the furnace of affliction, purge out all that corruption that yet remains in you.

26. Thy counsellors - Thy princes shall hearken to wise and faithful counsellors. Called faithful - Thou shalt be such.

27. Redeemed - Shall be delivered from all their enemies and calamities. With - Or, by judgment, that is, by God's righteous judgment, purging out those wicked and incorrigible Jews, and destroying their unmerciful enemies. Converts - Hebrew. her returners, those of them who shall come out of captivity into their own land. Righteousness - Or, by righteousness, either by my faithfulness, in keeping my promise, or by my goodness.

29. The oaks - Which, after the manner of the Heathen, you have consecrated to idolatrous uses. Gardens - In which, as well is in the groves, they committed idolatry.

31. The strong - Your idols, which you think to be strong and able to defend you. As tow - Shall be as suddenly and easily, consumed by my judgments, as tow is by fire. The maker - Of the idol, who can neither save himself nor his workmanship.

## II

A prophecy of Christ's kingdom, and the calling of the Gentiles, ver. 1-5. And rejection of the Jews for their idolatry and pride, ver. 6-9. The great majesty and power of God, and his terrors on the wicked; with an exhortation to fear God, and not to trust in man, ver. 10-22.

1. The word - Or, the matter or thing, as this Hebrew word commonly signifies; the prophecy or vision.

2. In the last days - In the times of the Messiah. For Christ's institutions were to continue to the end of the world. The mountain - The temple of the Lord which is upon mount Moriah; which yet is not to be understood literally of that material temple, but mystically of the church of God; as appears from the flowing of all nations to it, which was not to that temple, nor indeed was fulfilled 'till that temple was destroyed. Exalted - Shall be placed and settled in a most conspicuous and glorious manner, being advanced above all other churches and kingdoms.

3. The law - The new law, the doctrine of the gospel, which is frequently called a law, because it hath the nature and power of a law, obliging us no less to the belief and practice of it, than the old law did.

4. He - Christ shall set up his authority among all nations, not only giving laws to them, but doing what no other can do, convincing their consciences, changing their hearts, and ordering their lives. Rebuke - By his word and Spirit, convincing the world of sin; and by his judgments upon his implacable enemies, which obstruct the propagation of the gospel.

5. The light - Take heed that you do not reject that light which is so clear that even the blind Gentiles will discern it.

6. Therefore - For the following reasons. Thou - Wilt certainly forsake and reject. Thy people - The body of that nation. Because - Their land is full of the idolatrous manners of the eastern nations, the Syrians and Chaldeans. Philistines - Who were infamous for those practices. They please - They delight in their company, and conversation, making leagues, and friendships, and marriages with them.

7. Treasures - They have heaped up riches, and still are greedily pursuing after more.

9. The great man - Men of all ranks fall down and worship idols.

10. Enter - Such calamities are coming upon you, that you will be ready to hide yourselves in rocks and caves of the earth, for fear of the glorious and terrible judgments of God.

12. The day - The time of God's taking vengeance upon sinners.

13. The cedars - The cedars and oaks on the mountains shall be either thrown down by furious winds or earthquakes, or torn in pieces by thunder and lightning; and the stately houses built with cedars and oaks, shall be destroyed.

14. Hills - To which men used to betake themselves in times of danger.

15. Wall - To which you trusted for your defense.

16. Tarshish - The ships of the sea, as that word is used, Psalm xlviii, 7, whereby you fetched riches from the remote parts of the world.

19. They - The idolatrous Israelites.

20. Shall cast - Into the meanest and darkest places, in which moles and bats have their abode.

22. Cease ye - Never admire or place your trust in man. Breath - Whose breath is quickly stopped and taken away. Wherein - What excellency is in him, considered in himself, and without dependence on God?

## III

Great confusion on both people and rulers for their sin and impudence in it, ver. 1-9. Peace to the righteous, and misery to the wicked, ver. 10, 11. The oppression and covetousness of the rulers, ver. 12-15. The pride of women, and its judgments, ver. 16-26.

2. The judge - The civil magistrates. The ancient - Whose wisdom was increased by long experience.

5. Oppressed - By thy command or permission of such childish rulers.

6. Thou hast - We are utterly undone, and have neither food nor raiment; but thou hast something left to support the dignity which we offer to thee. Under thine hand - To heal it.

7. An healer - A repairer of the ruins of the state.

9. The shew - Their pride, and wantonness, and impiety m manifestly shews itself in their very looks. They declare - They act it publickly, casting off all fear of God and reverence to men. Rewarded - Procured a fit recompense for their wickedness, even utter ruin.

10. Say ye - O ye priests and Levites, that God will be their safeguard and portion.

12. Women - Weak and effeminate rulers. They - Thy rulers civil and ecclesiastical.

13. Standeth - He will shortly and certainly stand up as a judge, to inquire into the cause, and to give sentence. To judge - To defend and deliver them.

14. Ancients - The princes or rulers; such were commonly chosen out of those who were in ripe years. Eaten - Destroyed instead of preserving the church and commonwealth of Israel. Spoil - The goods which you have violently taken away from the poor.

16. The daughters - The women; (hitherto he reproved the men). A tinkling - By some ornaments which they wore upon their shoes.

17. Secret paths - By giving her into the power of those enemies that shall strip her of all her raiment.

18. Cauls - It is agreed by all, that this and several words that follow, were ornaments used in those times. And it is of no concern, exactly to understand the nature and differences of them. The moon - There were in ancient times, and at this day there are some ornaments worn, which carry a manifest resemblance to the moon or half moon.

20. Tablets - He seems to mean boxes of perfumes.

21. Nose-jewels - Which were fastened to the head, and hung down upon the forehead to the beginning of the nose.

22. Pins - Of silver or gold, either used to curl the hair, or fastened and worn in the hair.

23. Glasses - The looking-glasses, as we call them, tho' in truth they were not made of glass, but of bright and burnished brass.

24. Girdle - Which were fine and costly, and useful to gird their garments about them. A rent - Torn and tattered garments. Burning - By the heat of the sun, to which they are now commonly exposed, from which they used formerly to guard themselves with the utmost care.

26. Gates - The gates of Zion or Jerusalem, which, by a figure, are said to lament, to imply the great desolation of the place; that there would be no people to go out and come in by the gates, as they used to do. Shall sit - Like a mournful woman bewailing the loss of her husband and children.

## IV

In the extremity of evils, Christ's glorious kingdom should appear to those who are left alive, ver. 1, 2. They shall be holy, ver. 3. Purged, ver. 4. A glory and a defense upon them, ver. 5. A sanctuary from evils, ver. 6.

1. In that day - In that calamitous time. Seven - Many. A certain number for an uncertain. One man - Because few men shall survive that dreadful stroke. Only - Own us for thy wives. Our reproach - Virginity was esteemed a reproach; children, the usual fruit of marriage, being both an honour to their parents, and a blessing of God, especially to that people, from some of whose loins the Messiah was to spring.

2. In that day - About that time: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of Zion, by those dreadful judgments now described. The branch - The Messiah. The earth - The land which for the sins of the people was made barren, upon their return to Christ shall recover its fertility.

Under this one mercy he includes all temporal blessings, together with spiritual and eternal. For them - That shall survive all the forementioned calamities.

3. Holy - Shall be really holy. Jerusalem - Of the people living in or belonging to Jerusalem.

4. When - This shall be accomplished when God hath throughly cleansed the Jewish nation from their sins. The blood - The blood- guiltiness, and especially that of killing the Lord of life. Burning - This is opposed to the former legal way of purification, which was by water. The Holy Spirit of old accompanied the preaching of the gospel, and did this work in part, and will do it fully. This spirit may well be called a spirit of judgment, because it executes judgment in the church, and in the consciences of men, separating the precious from the vile, convincing men of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. And the same spirit may be fitly called the spirit of burning, because he doth burn up and consume the dross which is in the church, and in the hearts of men, and inflames the souls of believers with love to God, and zeal for his glory.

5. Create - Will in a marvelous manner produce, as it were by a new creation. A cloud - A pillar of cloud and fire, like that wherewith he directed the Israelites, when they came out of Egypt: whereby he implies, that God would be their protector, and their glory. The glory - Upon all that church and people, which God will make so glorious; upon all holy assemblies of sincere Christians.

6. And there - Or, he, the Lord, shall be a tabernacle, to defend them from the heat of the sun, and other injuries of the weather.

## V

Israel, God's vineyard, his mercies, and their faithfulness, should be laid waste, ver. 1-7. Judgments upon covetousness, ver. 8-10. Upon drunkards, and the lascivious, ver. 11, 12. The great misery of the Jews, ver. 13-17. Judgments on impiety, scoffers at God's threatnings, those who corrupt the notions of good and ill, strong-drinkers, and unjust Judges, ver. 18-23. God's anger, and the Chaldeans army against them, ver. 24-30.

1. Now - I will record it to be a witness for God, and against you, as Moses did his song, Deut. xxxi, 19; xxxii, 1. To - To the Lord of the vineyard. Of my beloved - Not devised by me, but inspired by God. Vineyard - His church. Hill - Hills being places most commodious for vines.

2. He gathered - He removed all hindrances, and gave them all the means of fruitfulness. A tower - For the residence of the keepers.

6. Nor digged - Vine-dressers use to dig up and open the earth about the roots of the vines. The meaning is, I will remove my ministers, who used great care and diligence to make you fruitful. Thorns - I will give you up to your own lusts. No rain - I will deprive you of all my blessings.

7. Pleasant - In whom God formerly delighted. A cry - From the oppressed, crying to men for help, and to God for vengeance.

8. Alone - That they alone may be the lords and owners, and all others only their tenants and servants.

9. In mine ears - I heard God speak what I am about to utter.

10. One bath - Of wine. The bath contained about eight gallons. Thus an acre did not yield one gallon. An ephah - Which was of the same quantity with the bath, only the bath was the measure of liquid things, the ephah of dry things; and a ephah was the tenth part of an homer. So instead of the increase which that fruitful land commonly yielded, they should loose nine parts of their seed.

12. The harp - They give up themselves wholly to luxury. The work - What God hath lately done, and is yet doing, and about to do among them; his grievous judgments, partly inflicted, and partly threatened, which required another course of life.

13. No knowledge - No serious consideration of God's works, and of their own duty and danger. honourable men - Who thought themselves quite out of the reach of famine.

14. And he - That spends all his days in mirth and jollity.

15. The mighty - All of them, both high and low, shall be brought to destruction.

16. Exalted - By the execution of this just judgment. Sanctified - Shall appear to be an holy God, by his righteous judgments.

17. Then - When God shall have finished that work of judgment. The lambs - The poor and harmless people, who shall be left in the land when the rich are carried into captivity. Manner - Or, by their fold, as this word is manifestly used, Micah ii, 12, the only place of scripture, except this, in which this word is found. Waste places - The lands left by their owners. Fat ones - Of the rich and great men. Strangers - The poor Israelites, who were left to be vine-dressers and husbandmen, 2 Kings xxv, 12, who are called strangers, because they were so, in reference to that hand, not being the proper owners of it.

18. That draw - That are not only drawn to sin by the allurements of the world; but are active and illustrious in drawing sin to themselves. Cords - Or, with cords of lying, as the last word frequently signifies, with vain and deceitful arguments and pretenses, whereby sinners generally draw themselves to sin. A rope - With all their might, as beasts commonly do that draw carts with ropes.

19. Let him - God, in whose name thou and other prophets are always threatening us. This was the plain language of their actions; they lived as if they were of this opinion. The Holy One - They scornfully repeated the title usually given by the prophets to God.

20. To them - That take away the difference between good and evil; that justify wicked men and things, and condemn piety, or righteous persons.

22. To mingle - To drink: the antecedent being put for the consequent: for they mingled it in order to drinking.

23. Take away - Pronounce sentence against him.

24. Rottenness - They shall be like a tree which not only withers in its branches, but dies and rots at the roots, therefore is past recovery. Dust - Shall be resolved into dust, and yield no fruit.

26. An ensign - To call them together for his service. From far - To the Chaldeans; for even Babylon is called a far country, chap. xxxix, 3. And he saith nations, because the Chaldean army was made up of several nations. Will hiss - Or, will whistle unto, or for them: will gather them together by his word. as shepherds gather their sheep. He intimates how easily and speedily God can do this work. From the ends - Which is not to be understood strictly, but with a latitude, from very remote places.

27. Nor sleep - They shall all be watchful and diligent to take all opportunities of executing my judgments. Nor latchet - I will take all impediments out of their way.

28. Bent - Who are every way furnished and ready for my work, waiting only for my command. Flint - Because they shall not be broken or battered by the length or stonyness and ruggedness of the way. Whirlwind - For the swiftness of their march, and for the force and violence of their chariots in battle.

29. Roar - Which signifies both their cruelty, and their eagerness to devour the prey.

30. Sorrow - Darkness; that is, sorrow; the latter word explains the former. The heavens - When they look up to the heavens, as men in distress usually do, they see no light there.

## VI

The glory of the Lord, ver. 1-4. Isaiah is terrified, ver. 5. Is confirmed for his message, ver. 6-8. The people's obstinacy unto desolation, ver. 9-12. A remnant shall be saved, ver. 13.

1. I saw - In a vision. The Lord - The Divine Majesty as he subsisteth in three persons. His train - His royal and judicial robe; for he is represented as a judge.

2. Stood - As ministers attending upon their Lord. Seraphim - An order of holy angels, thus called from fire and burning, which this word properly signifies; to represent either their nature, which is bright and glorious, subtile, and pure; or their property, of fervent zeal for God's service and glory. Covered - Out of profound reverence.

3. Cried - Singing in consort. Holy - This is repeated thrice, to intimate the Trinity of persons united in the Divine essence. Glory - Of the effects and demonstrations of his glorious holiness, as well as of his power, wisdom, and goodness.

4. The posts - Together with the door itself. Such violent motions were commonly tokens of God's anger. Smoak - Which elsewhere is a token of God's presence and acceptance, but here of his anger.

5. l am - I am a great sinner, as many other ways, so particularly by my lips. I am an unclean branch of an unclean tree; besides my own uncleanness, I have both by my omissions and commissions involved myself in the guilt of their sins. Have seen - The sight of this glorious and holy God gives me cause to fear that he is come to judgment against me.

6. Flew - By God's command. A coal - Both a token and an instrument of purification. The altar - Of burnt-offering.

7. Laid it - So as only to touch my lips, and not to burn them; which God could easily effect. Lo - This is a sign that I have pardoned and purged the uncleanness of thy lips.

8. Who - To deliver the following message. The change of the number, I and us, is very remarkable; and both being meant of one and the same Lord, do sufficiently intimate a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

9. Perceive not - The Hebrew words are imperative; yet they are not to be taken as a command what the people ought to do, but only as a prediction what they would do. The sense is, because you have so long heard my words, and seen my works, to no purpose, and have hardened your hearts, and will not learn nor reform, I will punish you in your own kind, your sin shall be your

punishment. I will still continue my word and works to you, but will withdraw my Spirit, so that you shall be as unable, as now you are unwilling, to understand.

10. Fat - Stupid and senseless. This making of their hearts fat, is here ascribed to the prophet, as it is ascribed to God in the repetition of this prophecy, John xii, 40, because God inflicted this judgment upon them by the ministry of the prophet, partly by way of prediction, foretelling that this would be the effect of his preaching; and partly by withdrawing the light and help of his Spirit. Heavy - Make them dull of hearing. Lest - That they may not be able, as before they were not willing to see. Convert - Turn to God.

11. Lord - An abrupt speech, arising from the prophet's great passion and astonishment: how long shall this dreadful judgment last? Until - Until this land be totally destroyed, first by the Babylonians, and afterward by the Romans.

12. Removed - Hath caused this people to be carried away captive into far countries. A forsaking - 'Till houses and lands be generally forsaken of their owners.

13. A tenth - A small remnant reserved, that number being put indefinitely. Return - Out of the Babylonish captivity, into their own land. Eaten - That remnant shall be devoured a second time, by the kings of Syria, and afterwards by the Romans. Yet - Yet there shall be another remnant, not such an one as that which came out of Babylon, but an holy seed, who shall afterwards look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn over him. When - Who when their leaves are cast in winter, have a substance within themselves, a vital principle, which preserves life in the root of the tree, and in due time sends it forth into all the branches. The support - Of the land or people, which, were it not for the sake of these, should be finally rooted out.

## VII

Ahaz afraid of Rezin and Pekah, is comforted by Isaiah, ver. 1-9. Refusing to chuse a sign, Christ is promised for one, ver. 10- 16. His judgment should come by Assyria, ver. 17-25.

1. Ahaz - A most wicked king: yet no prophecies are more comfortable than those which were delivered in his time; God so ordering it for the encouragement of the faithful that lived under his impious reign.

2. David - Ahaz, and his relations. He calls them the house of David, to intimate that the following comfortable message was sent to Ahaz, not for his own sake, but for the sake of his worthy progenitor David. Ephraim - The kingdom of the ten tribes, commonly called Ephraim, because that was the most numerous of all. Moved - With fear, arising from a consciousness of their own guilt, and their enemies strength.

3. Thy son - Whose very name carried in it a sign and pledge of the promised deliverance, signifying, The remnant shall return. Fuller's field - Whither he probably went to take care about the waters which thence were brought into the city, to secure them to himself, or keep them from the enemy, as Hezekiah afterward did, 2 Chron. xxxii, 3, 4.

4. Be quiet - Settle thy mind by the belief of that joyful message which I am now to deliver thee from the Lord. Fire-brands - They are not whole fire-brands, but small pieces or ends of them,

taken out of the fire, in which there is more smoak than fire. They have more of shew and terror, than of strength. Pekah, king of Israel, he calls only the son of Remaliah, to intimate, that he was unworthy the name of king, as having got that title by usurpation, and the murder of his master, 2 Kings xv, 25.

6. Let us - Break their power and kingdom and subdue it to ourselves.

7. It - Their evil counsel.

8. Damascus - Damascus shall still continue the capital of the kingdom of Syria; and therefore Jerusalem shall not become a part of Rezin's dominion: but he shall keep within his own bounds, and be king of Damascus only.

9. Samaria - Samaria shall continue to be the chief city if the kingdom of Israel, and Pekah shall not conquer Jerusalem. If - If you do not believe this, but seek to the Assyrians for succor, ye shall be consumed thereby.

12. I will not - By asking a sign, as if I questioned the truth of his word: but this was deep hypocrisy.

13. David - He reproves them all, because they were the king's counsellors. Is it a small thing - Is it not wickedness enough. My God - To vex God's prophets and people, with your oppressions and horrid impieties. And by your ingratitude and unbelief, and disobedience of his commands.

14. Therefore - Because you despise me, and the sign which I now offer to you, God of his own free grace will send you a more honourable messenger, and give you a nobler sign. A sign - Of your deliverance. But how was this birth, which was not to happen 'till many ages after, a sign of their deliverance from present danger? This promised birth supposed the preservation of that city, and nation and tribe, in and of which the Messiah was to be born; and therefore there was no cause to fear that ruin which their enemies now threatened. Immanuel - God with us; God dwelling among us, in our nature, John i, 14. God and man meeting in one person, and being a mediator between God and men. For the design of these words is not so much to relate the name by which Christ should commonly he called, as to describe his nature and office.

15. Butter - The common food of children in that country. He - The virgin's son. Know - To discern between things good and evil.

16. Yea - Not only this land shall be preserved until the virgin's son shall be born, but thine enemies land shall be sorely scourged, and these two kings destroyed within a very little time. This child - Shear-Jashub, whom in all probability the prophet pointed at, and who was brought hither by God's special command, ver. 3. for this very use. The land - The lands of Syria and Israel. Forsaken - So far shall Pekah and Rezin be from conquering thy land, that they shall lose their own lands, and their lives too; which they did within two years after this time, being both slain by the king of Assyria.

17. Shall bring - But altho' God will deliver you at this time, yet he will requite all your wickedness. Thee - For part of this Assyrian storm fell in Ahaz's reign. And - Upon thy sons and successors, the kings of Judah. Days - Calamities. Departed - When ten tribes revolted from thy father's house. The king - Who may well be called their plague or calamity, as he is called the rod of God's anger, chap. x, 5.

18. The fly - The flies. So he calls these enemies, to imply their great numbers. In - In their extremity, where they go out into the sea. Rivers - Of the river Nile, which may be called rivers, either for its greatness, or because towards the end of it, it is divided into seven streams. When the Chaldeans had in good measure subdued the Egyptians, it is probable great numbers of the Egyptian

soldiers listed themselves in the Chaldean army, and with them invaded the land of Judah. The bee - The Assyrian army, compared to bees, as for their numerous forces and orderly march, so for their fierce attempts and mischievous effects. Assyria - In the empire of Assyria, or Babylon; for these two were united into one empire, and therefore in scripture are promiscuously called sometimes by one title, and sometimes by the other.

19. Valleys - Such as they found fruitful, but made desolate. Rocks - To which possibly the Israelites fled for refuge. Bushes - Which he mentions because flies and bees use frequently to rest there; and to intimate, that no place should escape their fury.

20. Shave - Utterly spoil, as shaving takes away the hair. Hired - By Ahaz, who did hire them, 2 Kings xvi, 7, 8. And so the prophet notes the just judgment of God, in scourging them with a rod of their own making. By - By the successive kings of the Assyrian empire, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and especially by Nebuchadnezzar. The head - By these metaphorical expressions he signifies the total destruction of their state, from head to foot, from the highest to the lowest.

21. Sheep - They who formerly used to keep great herds of cattle, and many flocks of sheep, shall esteem it a happiness if they can keep but one cow and two sheep.

22. Abundance - Because they shall have large pastures, by reason of the great scarcity of cattle. Butter - Which the poorer sort had formerly used to sell, to procure them cheaper food for themselves: but now the land should be so destitute of people, that there were none to whom they could sell them.

23. Of silver - Each of the thousand vineyards might have been sold or let for a thousand shekels, which was the yearly rent of some excellent vineyards.

24. With arrows - Either to hunt, or to defend themselves from wild beasts, which commonly abide in desolate grounds.

25. Digged - That used to be digged and dressed for the planting of vines, or other choice fruit-trees. The fear - That they might be freed from briars and thorns. Cattle - All sorts of cattle may enter, and feed there, the fences being broken down, and the owners slain, or carried into captivity.

## VIII

Syria and Israel should be subdued by Assyria, ver. 1-4. Judah also should be afflicted, ver. 5-8. God's judgments irresistible, and to be feared, ver. 9-13. The Lord is a sanctuary to the godly, a stone of stumbling to the wicked, ver. 14, 15. The prophecy sure, God to be waited on, necromancers not to be consulted, but the prophecy, their misery, ver. 16-22.

1. A roll - Or, a great volume, because the prophecy to be written in it was large, and God would have it written in large and legible characters. Pen - With such a pen as writers use. Concerning - Concerning that thing which is signified by the name of the child, which is here mentioned by way of anticipation.

3. Prophetess - To his own wife, so called, because the wife of a prophet.

4. To cry - To speak and to know his parents; which is within the space of two years. And his agrees with the other prophecy, chap. vii, 16. Before the child shall know to refuse the evil and chuse the good, which requires a longer time than to distinguish his parents, and suits well to Shear-Jashub, who, being born some years before, was capable of that farther degree of knowledge, as soon as this was capable of the lower degree. Before - In his presence, and by himself and his forces.

6. This people - The people of Israel, of whom he last spake, who rejoiced not only in their own king, but also in the assistance of so powerful an ally as Rezin. Shiloah - That small brook which ran by Jerusalem. Hereby he understands the munitions and strength of the Jews, which their enemies derided.

7. The river - Of Euphrates, called the river, for its eminent greatness; whereby he understands the Assyrian forces. Glory - His numerous and puissant army. He - This great river shall overflow its own proper channels. That is, this great monarch shall enlarge his dominions, and add the lands of Syria and Israel to them.

8. Reach - So that they shall be in great danger of being desired. He persists in the metaphor of a river swelling so high as to reach to a man's neck, and be ready to overwhelm him. Such was the danger of Judah's land, when Sennacherib took all the fenced cities of Judah, 2 Kings xviii, 13, and sent his army against Jerusalem. Wings - Of his forces, or of the wings of his army, as they still are called. My land - Of the land of Judah, so called because the Messiah, who is called Immanuel, should be born there. And this is added emphatically for the consolation of God's people, to assure them, that notwithstanding this dreadful scourge, yet God would make a difference between Israel and Judah, and whereas Israel should not be a people, Judah should be restored, for the sake of the Messiah, to be the place of his birth and ministry.

9. Ye people - Syrians and Israelites. All ye - Whosoever you be, who conspire against Immanuel's land. Gird - Prepare yourselves for war. Broken - This is repeated for the greater assurance of the thing, and the comfort of God's people.

11. Spake - With a vehement and more than ordinary inspiration. In the way - Of the generality of the people of Judah; whose eminent danger and calamity he foretells.

12. Say not - Thou Isaiah, and my children, do not consent to this confederacy with the king of Assyria. Their fear - That thing which they fear, that, if they do not call in the Assyrian succors, they shall be destroyed by those two potent kings.

13. Sanctify - Give him the glory of his power, and goodness, and faithfulness, by trusting to his promises. Let him - Let God, and not the kings of Syria and Israel be the object of your fear.

14. Sanctuary - A sure refuge to all that truly fear him, and rely upon him. A stone - An occasion of sin and ruin, at whom they will take offense and stumble, so as to fall and be broken. To both - To the two kingdoms, that of the ten tribes, and that of the two tribes. Jerusalem - Which are distinctly mentioned, as a wonderful thing, because Jerusalem was the seat of the temple, and of God's solemn worship, where all the means of knowledge and grace were in greatest plenty, where the thrones of civil and ecclesiastical judicature were established, where the most wise and learned doctors had their constant abode. And that such a place and people should reject Immanuel when he should appear, was so strange an occurrence, that the prediction of it was highly necessary, lest otherwise, when it came to pass, it should shake the faith of all who did believe on him; whereas now the accomplishment hereof was a notable confirmation of their faith.

15. Many - Not all; for there shall be a remnant, as was foretold, chap. iv, 2; vi, 13. Stumble - At that stone or rock, mentioned, ver. viii, 14. This was accomplished at the coming of the Messiah, whom the Jews rejected to their own destruction.

16. The testimony - By the testimony and the law or doctrine, he understands one and the same thing, as he doth also, ver. 20, the word of God, and especially that which is the main scope thereof, the doctrine of the Messiah, which, though now professed by all the Israelites, shall be disowned by the generality of them, when the Messiah shall come. Bind up and seal are to be understood prophetically, declare and prophesy, that it shall be bound up and sealed. Moreover, bind up and seal, design the same thing. Security and secrecy, signifying, that it should certainly be fulfilled, yet withal kept secret from the unbelieving Jews. By the disciples he means those who were taught of God.

17. Yet - Yet, notwithstanding this dreadful prophecy concerning the rejection of Israel. Wait - I will cast my care upon him, and expect the accomplishment of his promise, in sending the Messiah, and in conferring upon me and all believing Israelites all his mercies and blessings. Hideth - That now withdraws his favour and blessings, from the people of Israel.

18. Behold - These words are literally spoken by Isaiah concerning himself, but mystically concerning Christ; and therefore they are fitly ascribed to Christ, Heb. ii, 13. The children - His spiritual children, whom he had either begotten or brought up by his ministry. Wonders - Are a gazing flock, for our folly in believing God's promises. From the Lord - Which comes to pass by the wise providence of God. Zion - Where the temple now was, and where the Messiah was to set up his kingdom.

19. And when they - The Israelites, who are fallen from God, into superstition and idolatry. You - My children, whom the prophet arms against the common temptation. Mutter - That speak with a low voice, as these two words signify, which they affected to do, speaking rather inwardly in their bellies, than audibly with their mouths. Should not - This answer the prophet puts into their mouths, doth not every nation, in cases of difficulty, seek to their gods? Much more should we do so, that have the only true God for our God. For the living - That is, for living men to inquire of the living God, is proper and reasonable; but it is highly absurd for them to forsake him, and to seek dead idols, either to the images, or to the spirits of dead men, which are supposed to speak in them.

20. To the law - Let this dispute between you and them be determined by God's word, which is here and in many other places called the law, to signify their obligation to believe and obey it; and the testimony, because it is a witness between God and man, of God's will, and of man's duty. They - Your antagonists. No light - This proceeds from the darkness of their minds, they are blind, and cannot see.

21. It - Their own land. Hungry - Sorely distressed, and destitute of food, and all necessaries. Their king - Either because he doth not relieve them; or because by his foolish counsels, he brought them into these miseries. God - Their idol, to whom they trusted, and whom they now find unable to help them. Look - To heaven for help.

22. Earth - Finding no help from heaven, they turn their eyes downward, looking hither and thither for comfort.

## IX

Joy in the midst of affliction, ver. 1-5. The birth, person, office, and kingdom of Christ, ver. 6, 7. Judgments for their pride, ver. 8-12. For their impenitency and hypocrisy, ver. 13-21.

1. Nevertheless - The calamity of this land and its inhabitants shall be great, yet not such as that which was brought upon it by the king of Assyria, who at first indeed dealt more gently with them, but afterwards rooted them out. He - God. Zebulun - These parts are particularly mentioned, because this storm fell most heavily upon them; but under them the other parts of the land are understood. Afterward - By Shalmaneser, who took Samaria, and carried Israel into captivity, 2 Kings xvii, 5, 6. Of which calamity, though yet to come, he speaks as if it were past, as the manner of the prophet is. The sea - In that part of the land which borders upon the sea, the lake Genesareth, upon which the portions of Zebulun and Naphtali bordered. Galilee - Or, Galilee of the Gentiles, namely, the upper Galilee, so called because it bordered upon the Gentiles.

2. The people - Israel and Judah. Darkness - The expression is general and so may well comprehend both calamity and ignorance, idolatry and profaneness, in which those parts were eminently involved. Have seen - Shall see at the coming of the Messiah.

3. Thou hast - Thou hast made good thy promise to Abraham concerning the multiplication of his seed, by gathering in the Gentiles to the Jews. Before thee - In thy presence, and in the place of thy worship.

4. The yoke - His burdensome yoke. The staff - The staff or staves by which he was forced to carry burdens upon his shoulders. The rod - Wherewith he beat him. Oppressor - Of all his oppressors, but especially of sin and the devil. As - When God destroyed the Midianites in so admirable a manner by three hundred men.

5. Noise - With the triumphant exclamations of the conqueror, and the bitter Lamentations of the conquered, and the different cries of the same persons, sometimes conquering, and sometimes conquered. Blood - With great difficulty and slaughter. But - But this victory which God's people shall have over all their enemies, shall be more terrible to their adversaries, whom God will utterly consume, as it were by fire.

6. For - Having spoken of the glorious light, and joy, and victory of God's people, he now proceeds to shew the ground of it. Us - Unto us Jews, of whom Christ was born, and to whom he was primarily sent. A child - The Messiah by the consent of interpreters, not only Christian, but Jewish: for so the ancient Hebrew doctors understood the place, and particularly the Chaldee paraphrast; although the latter Jews, out of opposition to Christ, wrest it to Hezekiah. Which extravagant conceit, as it hath no foundation in this or any other text of scripture, so it is fully confuted by the following titles, which are such as cannot without blasphemy and nonsense be ascribed to Hezekiah, nor indeed to any mere mortal man, as we shall see. Is born - Or, shall be born, as the prophets generally speak. The government - Of God's people, to whom he is given. Shoulders - Upon him, or in his hands. He mentions shoulders, because great burdens are commonly laid upon men's shoulders. His name - This is not to be taken for a description of his name, but of his glorious nature and qualities. Wonderful counsellor - And so Christ is, because he hath been the counsellor of his church in all ages, and the author and giver of all those excellent counsels

delivered not only by the apostles, but also by the prophets, and hath gathered and enlarged, and preserved his church, by admirable counsels and methods of his providence, and, in a word, hath in him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Colossiansii, 3. Mighty God - This title can agree to no man but Christ, who was God as well as man, to whom the title of God or Jehovah is given, both in the Old and New Testament. And it is a true observation, that this Hebrew word El is never used in the singular number, of any creature, but only of the almighty God. The father - The father of eternity. Who, though as man he was then unborn, yet was and is from everlasting to everlasting.

7. No end - His peaceable and happy government shall be extended to all the ends of the earth. The throne - Which was promised to David, and to his seed for ever. For ever - From the beginning of it to all eternity. The zeal - This great work shall be brought to pass by almighty God, out of that fervent affection which he hath to his own glory, to the honour of his son, and to his people.

8. The Lord - The prophet, having inserted some consolatory passages for God's faithful people, returns to his former comminution against the rebellious Israelites. And - Hebrew. it fell, that is, it shall fall, in the prophetical style. It shall certainly be accomplished.

9. Know - They shall know whether my word be true or false. Even - The people of the ten tribes, and particularly Ephraim, the proudest of them all. Samaria - The strongest place, and the seat of the king and court.

10. Stones - We have received some damage; but, we doubt not we shall quickly repair it with advantage.

11. Therefore - To chastise your pride, and defeat your hopes. Set up - The Assyrians, who, presently after this prophecy, prevailed against him, 2 Kings xvi, 7. He mentions Rezin, because he was confederate with Ephraim. Join - So that they shall invade him from several quarters. His - Not Rezin's, but Ephraim.

12. Syrians - For though Rezin, king of Syria was destroyed, yet the body of the nation survived, and submitted themselves to the king of Assyria, and upon his command invaded Israel afterwards. Before - Hebrew. on the east: for Syria stood eastward from Israel. Behind - On the western side of the land of Israel. Devour - Like wild beasts.

13. Him - To God.

14. Head - High and low. Branch - The goodly branches of tall trees, the mighty and noble. Rush - The bulrush, the weakest and meanest persons. One day - All together, one as well as another.

15. The prophet - Whose destruction he mentions, not as if it were a punishment to them to be deprived of such persons, but partly to shew the extent of the calamity, that it should reach all sorts of persons; and partly to beat down their vain presumptions of peace and prosperity, by shewing that those false prophets, which had fed their vain hopes, should perish, and their false prophecies with them. Tail - The basest part of the whole people.

16. The leaders - Their false prophets. Cause - By false doctrines and evil counsels and persuasions. Destroyed - Shall certainly perish.

17. No joy - Shall not rejoice over them to do them good. Fatherless - Who are the special objects of his care and pity, and much less upon others. Every one - Not precisely; for there were seven thousand elect persons among them, when they seemed to Elijah to be universally corrupt, but the body of the people. Hypocrite - For though they professed to worship God, yet indeed they had forsaken him. Folly - Wickedness.

18. Burneth - Shall burn you, as it follows, shall devour. Thorns - The low and mean persons; for these are opposed to the thickets of the forest, in the next clause. Forest - In the wood, where the trees are tall, and stand thick, having their bows entangled together, which makes them more ready both to catch and to spread the fire. Smoak - Sending up smoak like a vast furnace.

21. Manasseh - Though more near and dear to one another than any other tribe, being both sons of Joseph.

## X

The woe of unjust oppressors, ver. 1-4. Of Assyria for their pride and ambition, his folly in it, ver. 5-19. A remnant of Israel shall be saved, and that speedily, ver. 20-27. Sennacherib marching toward Jerusalem, ver. 28-31. His judgment, ver. 32-34.

1. Woe - Unto those magistrates who make unjust laws, and give unjust sentences. Grievousness - Grievous things, such unjust decrees as cause grief and vexation to their subjects.

2. Judgment - From obtaining a just sentence.

3. From far - From the Assyrians. This he adds, because the Israelites, having weakened the Jews and being in amity with the Assyrians their next neighbours, were secure. Leave - To be kept safe for your use. Glory - Your wealth.

4. Without me - Without my favour and help, which you have forfeited. Shall bow down - Notwithstanding all your succors.

5. O Assyrian - This is God's invitation to him to take the charge, and set upon the work. The rod - The instrument of mine anger, wherewith I shall chastise my people. Anger - Mine anger against my people puts the weapons of war into their hand.

6. Send him - By my providence, giving him both occasion and inclination to this expedition.

7. Howbeit - He doth not design the execution of my will, but only to enlarge his own empire. Which is seasonably added, to justify God in his judgments threatened to the Assyrian. To cut off - To sacrifice multitudes of people to his own ambition and covetousness.

8. Kings - Equal for power and wealth, and glory, to the kings of other nations.

9. Is not - Have not I conquered one place as well as another, the stronger as well as the weaker? Samaria - Or, shall not Samaria be as Damascus? Shall I not take that, as I have done this city?

10. The kingdoms - Which worshipped their own idols, and vainly imagined that they could protect them from my power. He calls the gods of the nations, not excepting Jerusalem, idols, by way of contempt, because none of them could deliver their people out of his hands, and because he judged them to be but petty gods, far inferior to the sun, which was the God of the Assyrians.

12. Wherefore - Because of this impudent blasphemy. His work - Of chastising his people so long as he sees fit. Looks - His insolent words and carriage.

13. Removed - I have invaded their lands, and added them to my own dominions, Prov. xxii, 28. Put down - Deprived of their former glory and power.

14. Eggs - Which the dam left in her nest. Gathered - All the riches of the earth. An hyperbole not unusual in the mouths of such persons. Peeped - As birds do, which, when they see the robbing of their nest, express their grief and anger, by hovering about them, and by mournful cries.

15. The ax - How absurd is it, for thee, who art but an instrument in God's hand, to blaspheme thy Lord and master, who has as great power over thee, as a man hath over the ax wherewith he heweth?

16. The Lord - The sovereign Lord of thine and all other armies, shall strip him and all his princes, of their wealth, and might, and glory; and destroy his numerous army, as the fire doth those combustible things which are cast into it.

17. The light - That God who is and will be a comfortable light to his people. A fire - To the Assyrians. Thorns - His vast army, which is no more able to resist God, than dry thorns and briars are to oppose the fire.

18. The glory - Of his great army, which may not unfitly be compared to a forest, for the numbers of men, who stood as thick as trees do in a forest. Field - Of his soldiers, who stood as thick as ears of corn in a fruitful field. Soul and body - Totally, both inwardly and outwardly. They shall be - Like that of an army when their standard-bearer is slain or flees away, which strikes a panic into the whole army.

19. The rest - The remainder of that mighty host.

20. And such - Such Jews as shall be preserved from that sweeping Assyrian scourge. Stay - Shall no more trust to the Assyrians for help.

22. A remnant - Or, a remnant only. The consumption - The destruction of Israel was already decreed by the fixed counsel of God, and therefore must needs be executed, and like a deluge overflow them. Righteousness - With justice, and yet with clemency, inasmuch as he has spared a considerable remnant of them, when he might have destroyed them utterly.

23. In the midst - In all the parts of the land, not excepting Jerusalem, which was to be preserved in the Assyrian invasion.

24. Therefore - This is an inference, not from the words immediately foregoing, but from the whole prophecy. Seeing the Assyrian shall be destroyed. Smite - He shall afflict, but not destroy thee. Egypt - As the Egyptians formerly did.

25. Indignation - Mine anger towards the Assyrian. Cease - As anger commonly does when vengeance is fully executed.

26. Stir up - Shall send a destroying angel. Midian - Whom God slew suddenly and unexpectedly, in the night. Oreb - Upon which one of their chief princes was slain, and nigh unto which the Midianites were destroyed. The sea - To divide it, and make way for thy deliverance, and for the destruction of the Egyptians.

27. Burden - The burden of the Assyrian. The anointing - Possibly this may be understood of David, who is often mentioned in scripture by the name of God's anointed; and for whose sake, God gave many deliverances to the succeeding kings and ages, as is expressly affirmed, 1 Kings xi, 32, 34. God declares that he would give this very deliverance from the Assyrian, for David's sake, 2 Kings xix, 34; xx, 6. But the Messiah is principally intended, of whom David was but a type; and who was in a particular manner anointed above his fellows, as is said, Psalm xlv, 7. For he is the foundation of all the promises, 2Cor i, 20, and of all the deliverances and mercies granted to God's people in all ages.

28. He - Here the prophet returns to the Assyrian invasion; which he describes, after the manner of the prophets, as a thing present, and sets down the several stages by which he marched towards Jerusalem. He, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, is come, in his way to Jerusalem. Laid up - Leaving such things there as were less necessary, that so he might march with more expedition.

29. Fled - The people fled to Jerusalem for fear of the Assyrian.

30. Daughter - Jerusalem was the mother city, and lesser towns are commonly called her daughters.

32. Shake - By way of comminution.

33. The bough - The top-bough, Sennacherib, with a most terrible stroke.

34. Iron - Or, as with iron, as the trees of the forest are cut down with instruments of iron. Lebanon - Or, his Lebanon, the Assyrian army, which being before compared to a forest, and being called his Carmel in the Hebrew text, ver. 18, may very fitly upon the same ground, be called his Lebanon here.

## XI

Christ, a branch cut of the root of Jesse, endued with the spirit of the Lord, should set up a kingdom by the preaching of his word, ver. 1-5. The members of his church should live in peace and unity, ver. 6-9. And be victorious over their enemies: and to him should the Gentiles seek, ver. 10-16.

1. And - And having said that the Assyrian yoke should be destroyed because of the anointing, he now explains who that anointed person was. The stem - Or, stump: for the word signifies properly a trunk cut off from the root. By which he clearly implies, that the Messiah should be born of the royal house of David, at that time when it was in a most forlorn condition, like a tree cut down, and whereof nothing is left but a stump or root under ground. Of Jesse - He doth not say of David, but of Jesse, who was a private and mean person, to intimate, that at the time of Christ's birth the royal family should be reduced to its primitive obscurity.

2. Wisdom - It is not needful, exactly to distinguish these two gifts; it is sufficient that they are necessary qualifications for a governor, and a teacher, and it is evident they signify perfect knowledge of all things necessary for his own and peoples good, and a sound judgment, to distinguish between things that differ. Counsel - Of prudence, to give good counsel; and of might and courage, to execute it. Knowledge - Of the perfect knowledge of the whole will and counsel of God, as also of all secret things, yea of the hearts of men. Fear - A fear of reverence, a care to please him, and lothness to offend him.

3. In the fear - He shall not judge rashly and partially, but considerately and justly, as the fear of God obliges all Judges to do. Judge - Of persons or causes. After the sight - According to outward appearance, as men do, because they cannot search mens hearts. Reprove - Condemn or pass sentence against a person. His ears - By uncertain rumours or suggestions.

4. Judge - Defend and deliver them. Reprove - Or condemn their malicious enemies. Thy rod - With his word, which is his scepter, and the rod of his power, Psalm cx, 2, which is sharper than

a sword, Heb. iv, 12, by the preaching whereof he subdued the world to himself, and will destroy his enemies, 2Thes ii, 8. This he adds farther, to declare the nature of Christ's kingdom, that it is not of this world.

5. The girdle - It shall adorn him, and be the glory of his government, as a girdle was used for an ornament, chap. iii, 24, and as an ensign of power, Job xii, 18, and it shall constantly cleave to him in all his administrations, as a girdle cleaveth to a man's loins.

6. The wolf - The creatures shall be restored to that state of innocency in which they were before the fall of man. Men of fierce, and cruel dispositions, shall be so transformed by the grace of Christ, that they shall become gentle, and tractable. A child - They will submit their rebellious wills to the conduct of the meanest persons that speak to them in Christ's name.

7. Feed - Together, without any danger or fear. Straw - The grass of the earth, as they did at first, and shall not devour other living creatures.

9. My holy mountain - In Zion, in my church. The sea - The channel of the sea.

10. A root - A branch growing upon the root. Ensign - Shall grow up into a great tree, shall become an eminent ensign. The people - Which not only the Jews, but all nations, may discern, and to which they shall resort. Rest - His resting-place, his temple or church, the place of his presence and abode. Glorious - Shall be filled with greater glory than the Jewish tabernacle and temple were; only this glory shall be spiritual, consisting in the plentiful effusions of the gifts, and graces, of the Holy Spirit.

11. The second - The first time, to which this word second relates, seems to be the deliverance out of Babylon: and then this second deliverance must be in the days of the Messiah. To recover - From all places far and near, into which either the ten tribes or the two tribes were carried captives. Pathros was a province in Egypt.

12. Nations - All nations, Jews and Gentiles. Out-casts - That were driven out of their own land, into foreign parts. Israel - Of the ten tribes.

13. Ephraim - Of the ten tribes, frequently called by the name of Ephraim. Of enemies they shall be made friends. The adversaries - Not the body of Ephraim, for they are supposed to be reconciled, and they shall not be cut off, but live in love with Judah, as we see by the next clause; but those few of them who continue in their enmity together with all the rest of their adversaries.

14. Fly - It is a metaphor from birds and beasts of prey. Spoil - They shall subdue them, which is to be understood of the spiritual victory which the Messiah shall obtain by his apostles and ministers over all nations.

15. Destroy - Shall not only divide it, as of old, but dry it up, that it may be an high-way. The sea - The Red Sea, which may well be called the Egyptian sea, both because it borders upon Egypt, and because the Egyptians were drowned in it, which is called a tongue in the Hebrew text, Josh. xv, 2, 5, as having some resemblance with a tongue: for which reason the name of tongue hath been given by geographers to promontories of land which shoot forth into the sea, as this sea did shoot out of the main ocean into the land. Rivers - Nile. Seven streams - For which it is famous in all authors.

16. As it was - As there was another high-way from Egypt. All impediments shall be removed, and a way made for the return of God's Israel from all parts of the world. He mentions Assyria, because thither the ten tribes were carried, whose case seemed to be most desperate.

## XII

A thanksgiving of the faithful for their redemption, ver. 1-6.

1. In that day - When this great work of the reduction of Israel, and conversion of the Gentiles is fulfilled.

2. God - My salvation hath not been brought to pass by man, but by the almighty power of God.

3. With joy - Your thirsty souls shall be filled with Divine graces and comforts, which you may draw from God, in the use of gospel-ordinances.

## XIII

God's armies, ver. 1-5. The destruction of Babylon by the Persians and Medes, their great distress, anguish, and utter desolation, ver. 6-22.

1. The burden - This title is commonly given to sad prophecies, which indeed are grievous burdens to them on whom they are laid. Babylon - Of the city and empire of Babylon by Cyrus.

2. A banner - To gather soldiers together. Mountain - Whence it may be discerned at a considerable distance. Withal he seems to intimate, that their enemies should come from the mountainous country of Media. Them - To the Medes. Shake - Beckon to them with your hand, that they may come to this service, that they may go and fight against Babylon, and take it, and so enter in to the palaces of the king, and his princes.

3. Sanctified ones - The Medes and Persians, so called, because they were set apart by God, for this holy work of executing his just vengeance. Mighty ones - Those whom I have made mighty for this work. Highness - Or, as others render it, in my glory, in the doing of that work which tends to the advancement of my glory. Tho' the Medes had no regard to God, but only to their own ends.

4. Nations - The Medes and Persians and other nations, which served under them in this war.

5. Thy come - From the ends of the earth under heaven, which is not to be understood strictly. The weapons - The Medes and Persians, who were but a rod in God's hand, and the instruments of his anger. Land - Of Babylon.

7. Amazed - To see so impregnable a city as Babylon, so easily and unexpectedly taken. Flames - Hebrew. faces of flame, inflamed with rage and torment.

9. Behold - Divers words are heaped together, to signify the extremity of his anger.

10. Constellations - Which consist of many stars, and therefore give a greater sight. Darkened - All things shall look darkly and dismally; men shall have no comfort or hope. Going forth - As soon as he rises. As soon as they have any appearance or hope of amendment, they shall be instantly disappointed.

11. The world - The Babylonish empire, which is called the world, as the Roman empire afterwards was, because it was extended to a great part of the world.

12. More precious - The city and nation shall be so depopulated.

13. Therefore - A poetical and prophetical description of great horrors and confusions, as if heaven and earth were about to meet together.

14. It - Babylon. A roe - Fearful in itself, especially when it is pursued by the hunter. A sheep - In a most forlorn condition. Every man - Those soldiers of other nations, whom she had hired to assist her.

15. Found - In Babylon, at the taking of it.

17. Medes - Under whom he comprehends the Persians. Not delight - Which is to be understood comparatively. They shall more eagerly pursue the destruction of the people, than the getting of spoil.

18. Bows - Under which are comprehended, other weapons of war. Dash - Or, shalt pierce the young men through, as the Chaldee, renders it.

19. Glory - Which once was the most noble of all the kingdoms. Beauty - The beautiful seat of the Chaldean monarchy shall be totally and irrecoverably destroyed.

20. Inhabited - After the destruction threatened shall be fully accomplished. Arabian - Who dwelt in tents, and wandered from place to place, where they could find pasture.

21. Satyrs - The learned agree, that these are frightful and solitary creatures.

22. Prolonged - Beyond the time appointed by God.

## XIV

Israel shall be delivered from the Babylonish captivity, their triumph over Babylon, ver. 1-13. God's purpose against Assyria, ver. 14-27. Palestina threatened, ver. 28-32.

1. Chuse - Will renew his choice of them; for he had rejected them.

2. Rule - Which they literally did, after their return into their own land. But this was more eminently verified in a spiritual sense, in the days of the gospel.

4. Golden city - As they used to call themselves; which therefore he expresses here in a word of their own language.

6. Anger - With rigor and not with clemency. None - Neither the Babylonians themselves, nor their confederates.

7. The earth - The subjects of that vast empire, who groaned under their cruel bondage.

8. The trees - Which were felled for the service of her pride and luxury, but now are suffered to stand.

9. Thrones - From their graves, which he seems to call their thrones by way of irony: the only thrones now left to them. Thrones both paved and covered with worms, instead of their former thrones, adorned with gold and precious stones.

11. Thy pomp - All thy glory is buried with thee. Viols - All thy musical instruments, which were much used in Babylon, and were doubtless used in Belshazzar's solemn feasts, Dan. v, 1, at which time the city was taken; to which possibly the prophet here alludes. The worm - Instead of those stately carpets upon which thou didst frequently tread.

12. Fallen - From the height of thy glory. Lucifer - Which properly is a bright star, that ushers in the morning; but is here metaphorically taken for the mighty king of Babylon. Son - The title of son is given in scripture not only to a person or thing begotten or produced by another, but also to any thing which is related, to it, in which sense we read of the son of a night, Jonah iv, 10, a son of perdition, John xvii, 12, and, which is more agreeable, to the present case, the sons of Arcturus, Job xxxviii, 32.

13. I - I will advance myself above the state of a weak man. Above - Above all other kings and potentates; or, above the most eminent persons of God's church. North - This is added as a more exact description of the place of the temple; it stood upon mount Moriah, which was northward from the hill of Zion strictly so called.

14. Like - In the uncontrolableness of my power, and the universal extent of my dominion.

17. Cried not - Whereby he signifies both his irresistible power, and his continued cruelty.

18. All - That is, other things most commonly do. Lie - Are buried in their own sepulchres, having stately monuments erected to their memory.

19. Cast out - Or, cast from thy grave or burying-place. Which very probably happened to Belshazzar, when his people had neither opportunity nor heart to bestow an honourable interment upon him, and the conquerors would not suffer them to do it. Like - Like a rotten twig of a tree, which he that prunes the trees, casts away. Raiment - Which, being mangled, and besmeared with mire, and blood, was cast away with contempt. Go down - Who being slain, are cast into some pit. He saith, to the stones of the pit, because when dead bodies are cast in thither, men use to throw an heap of stones upon them. Trodden - Neglected, like such a carcase. And this might literally happen to Belshazzar's dead body.

20. Joined - Not buried as they are. Slain - Thou hast exercised great tyranny and cruelty, not only to thine enemies, but even to thine own subjects. The seed - Such as Belshazzar was, being descended from that Nebuchadnezzar who had made such horrid slaughters and devastations in the world, merely to gratify his own insatiable lusts, and who had been so impious towards God and his temple, and so bloody towards his church and people. Renowned - Or, shall not be renowned for ever: although I have long born with thee and thy family.

21. Children - Cut off all the branches of the royal family. Rise - Not recover their former power.

22. Remnant - The remembrance of those that are dead, and the persons of those who yet survive.

23. Bittern - A great water fowl, which delights in solitary places, as also in watery grounds. Such as those were about Babylon. Pools - The ground about Babylon was of itself very moist, because of the great river Euphrates, running by it, which was kept from overflowing the country with charge and labour; this being neglected, when the city was destroyed, it was easily turned into pools of water.

24. Saying - This verse does not only concern Babylon's destruction, but also the overthrow of Sennacherib and the Assyrian host, which was a pledge of the destruction of the city and empire of Babylon.

25. My land - In Judea, which is my land in a peculiar manner. Mountains - In my mountainous country, for such Judea was, especially about Jerusalem.

26. The earth - Upon this vast empire, now in the hands of the Assyrians, and shortly to come into the hands of the Babylonians. The hand - The providence of God executing his purpose.

28. This burden - This following burdensome prophecy concerning the Philistines, who in Ahaz's time, made an inroad into Judah, and took divers of their cities.

29. Of him - Most understand this of Uzziah, who did then much mischief, 2 Chron. xxvi, 3, 6. But he was dead thirty-two years before this time, and therefore their joy for his death was long since past. Others understand it of Ahaz: but he was so far from smiting them, that he was smitten by them. We may understand this of the royal race of Judah, who had been a terrible scourge to them, whose rod might be said to be broken, because that scepter was come into the hands of slothful princes. A serpent - From the root of David shall come Hezekiah, who, like a serpent, shall sting thee to death, as he did, 2 Kings xviii, 8.

30. The poor - The people of the Jews, who are brought to extreme poverty. The title of first-born is given to persons or things which are most eminent in their kinds, as to the people of Israel, Exod. iv, 22, to David, Psalm lxxxix, 27 Job xviii, 13, and here to persons eminently poor. Feed - Shall have plenty of provisions. Kill - I will utterly destroy thee both root and branch.

31. Gate - The gate is put for the city. City - City is here put collectively for their cities. The north - From Chaldea. A smoak - A grievous judgment and calamity. Times - When God's appointed time shall come, not one of all that numerous army shall desert his colours, or lag behind the rest.

32. What - What shall a Jew say to the people of other nations, who shall inquire concerning the state of Zion, when not only the Philistines, but even the Jews themselves, shall fall by the hands of the same enemy? That - They shall give them this answer, That although Zion at present be in a very distressed condition, yet she stands upon a firm foundation, and God who first founded her, will restore her, and his poor despised people shall resort to her, as to a strong refuge.

## XV

The Destruction of Moab, ver. 1-9.

1. The burden - A prophecy of the destruction of the Moabites, the inveterate enemies of the Jews, begun by the Assyrian, and finished by the Babylonian emperors. In a night - Suddenly and unexpectedly. Ar - The chief city of Moab. Kir - Another eminent city of Moab.

2. Bajith - Which signifies an house. It is supposed to be some eminent house or temple of their idols. Dibon - Another city of Moab. To weep - To offer their supplications with tears to their idols for help. Medeba - Two considerable cities, anciently belonging to the Moabites. Beard - The hair of their heads and beards was shaved, as was usual in great mournings.

3. On the tops - Which were made flat, to which men used to go up, to cry to God in heaven, or to men for help.

4. Heshbon - Two other Moabitish cities. Jahaz - Another city in the utmost borders of Moab. Soldiers - Who use to be the most courageous.

5. Moab - Tho' they are a most vile nation. Zoar - Zoar was a town bordering upon Moab. Of destruction - Such a cry as men send forth when they are just falling into the pit of destruction.

6. Waters - Watery grounds being very fruitful, are commonly most inhabited; but now they also, much more the dry and barren grounds, shall be desolate and without inhabitant.

7. They - Their enemies. Brook - Possibly he means some such river which ran into Euphrates, and so gave them opportunity of carrying their spoils by water unto Babylon.

8. The cry - Their cry fills all the parts of the country.

9. More - More than hath been already mentioned. Lions - God shall send lions to find out those that escape the fury of men.

## XVI

The Moabites exhorted to entertain kindly the banished Jews, ver. 1-5. They are threatened for their pride and arrogance, ver. 6- 8. The prophet bewaileth them, ver. 9-11. Their judgment, ver. 12-14.

1. Send - The prophet continues his prophecy against Moab, and gives them counsel what to do, to prevent, if possible, the desolation. Make your peace with God, by sacrifice, for all your injuries done to him, and to his people. Sela - An eminent city of Moab, seated upon a rock. Unto the mount - Unto the temple upon mount Zion.

2. Cast out - Which knows not whither to go. Arnon - Which was the border of the land of Moab, where they were, with design to flee out of their land, tho' they knew not whither.

3. Take counsel - Consider seriously what course to take. Shadow - Or, as the shadow of the night, large and dark, as the shadow of the earth is in the night-season. Conceal and protect my people in the time of their distress. The out-casts - Those of my people who are driven out of their land. Wandereth - Unto their enemies.

4. Mine out-casts - Whom tho' I have sorely chastened, yet I own for my people. At an end - Shall shortly be destroyed, and then thou wilt not lose the fruit of thy kindness. The present tense is put for the future.

5. In mercy - By my mercy. I am now punishing their sins, yet I will deliver them for my own mercy's sake. The throne - The kingdom of Judah. He - Their king. In truth - That is, firmly and constantly; for truth is often put for the stability and certainty of a thing, as 2 Chron. xxxii, 1 Prov. xi, 18. Tabernacle - ln the house, or palace, which is called a tent, or tabernacle, with respect to the unsettledness of David's house, which now indeed was more like a tabernacle than a strong palace. Seeking - Searching out the truth of things with care and diligence. Hasting - Neither denying, nor yet delaying justice.

6. We - The prophet having spoken to the Moabites, now turns his speech to God's people. The sense is, I do not expect that my counsels will have any good effect upon Moab; they will still carry themselves insolently and outrageously. His lies - His vain imaginations, and false and crafty counsels, shall not take effect.

7. Moab - One Moabite shall howl or lament to or for another. Kirhareseth - An ancient and eminent city of Moab, which was preserved when their other cities were ruined, and therefore the destruction of it was more lamented. Stricken - Or, broken, overthrown or destroyed.

8. The lords - The Assyrians or Chaldeans, the great rulers of the eastern nations. Plants - The choicest vines. Under which one particular he seems to understand, not only all other fruits and goods, but even their choicest people. They - The lords of the heathen are come as far as Jazer, which is the utmost border of Moab. Wandered - The Moabites fled for their lives, and wandered

hither and thither in the wilderness of Moab. Branches - Her people, called plants before. Stretched - Driven from their own homes, and dispersed into several countries. The sea - Over the Dead-sea, which was the border of Moab. They were forced to flee out of their own country to save their lives.

9. Sibmah - I will bewail Sibmah, as I did bewail Jazer, which was destroyed before Sibmah. Fallen - Those joyful shouts which were customary in the time of harvest and vintage, shall cease.

10. Treaders - In those times they used to squeeze out the juice of their grapes by treading them with their feet.

11. My bowels - Thro' compassion. In excessive grief, the bowels are sometimes rolled together, so as to make an audible noise.

12. When - When it shall appear that all their other devotions are vain. His sanctuary - To the temple of his great God Chemosh. But - His God can neither hear nor help him.

13. Since - Since the beginning of God's Revelation to me concerning Moab, hitherto.

14. The Lord - Hath made this farther discovery of his mind to me. Three years - This may well be understood of some great blow given to the Moabites, either by Sennacherib, or his son Esarhaddon, from which notwithstanding they recovered and flourished again 'till Nebuchadnezzar compleated their destruction. Hireling - Within three years precisely counted; for hirelings are very punctual in observing the time for which they are hired. The glory - Their strength, and wealth, and other things in which they glory, shall be made contemptible to those who formerly admired them. With - With the great numbers of their people, of which they boasted.

## XVII

Damascus, Samaria, Israel, and their cities, to be ruined by the Assyrians, ver. 1-5. A remnant shall consider and repent, ver. 6-8. The rest plagued for their impiety, ver. 9-11. The woe of Israel's enemies, ver. 12-14.

1. Damascus - Both of that city and kingdom. A heap - This was fulfilled by Tiglath-pilneser, 2 Kings xvi, 9, although afterwards it was re-edified.

2. Aroer - Of that part of Syria, called Aroer, from a great city of that name. These cities were possessed by the Reubenites and Gadites, whom Tiglath-pilneser carried into captivity, 1 Chron. v, 26. These he mentions here, as he doth Ephraim in the next verse, because they were confederate with Syria against Judah. Afraid - Because the land shall be desolate, and destitute of men who might disturb them.

3. The fortress - All their fortresses; the singular number being put for the plural. Remnant - The remainders of Damascus and Syria shall be an headless body, a people without a king. Of Israel - Syria shall have as much glory as Israel; that is, neither of them shall have any at all.

5. Gathereth - Taking care, as far as may be, that all may be gathered in, and nothing left. So shall the whole body of the ten tribes be carried away captive, some few gleanings only being left. Rephaim - A very fruitful place near Jerusalem.

6. Yet - Some few Israelites were left after their captivity, who joined themselves to Judah, and were carried captive to Babylon with them, from whence also they returned with them.

7. A man - Those few men that are left. Look - They shall sincerely respect, and trust, and worship God, and God only.

8. Not look - Not trust to them, or to worship offered to idols upon them. The work - Their own inventions. Groves - Which were devised by men, as fit places for the worship of their gods. Images - Worshipped in their groves.

9. In - The day of Jacob's trouble, of which he spake ver. 4. Uppermost branch - Which he that prunes the tree neglects, because he esteems it useless and inconsiderable. Left - Which they (the Canaanites) left or forsook because of (or for fear of) the children of Israel. And this was a fit example, to awaken the Israelites to a serious belief of this threatening, because God had inflicted the same judgment upon the Canaanites, for the same sins of which they were guilty.

10. Thou - O Israel. The rock - That God who was thy only sure defense. Plants - Excellent flowers and fruit-trees. Strange - Fetched from far countries, and therefore highly esteemed.

11. In the day - Thou shalt from day to day, beginning early in the morning, use all diligence that what thou hast planted may thrive. But - When this grievous calamity shall come, all your harvest shall be but one heap.

12. Woe - This is a new prophecy, added for the comfort of God's people. Many - Combined together against Judah. Seas - Who invade my land and people with great force, as the sea does when it enters into the land by a breach.

14. Behold - At even there is great terror among God's people, for fear of their enemies; and before the morning comes, their enemies are cut off.

## XVIII

God in defense of his church and punishing her enemies, will destroy the Ethiopians, ver. 1-6. An access thereby shall be to the church, ver. 7.

1. The Lord - Either Ethiopia beyond Egypt; or of Egypt. Wings - The title of wings is given, in scripture, to divers things which have some kind of resemblance to wings, as to the battlements of an house or temple, to an army, and to the sails of a ship, as this word is here commonly understood. And shadowing with wings is nothing else but overspread or filled with them. Which title may be given either to Ethiopia or Egypt, in regard of the great numbers either of their armies, or of their ships or vessels sailing upon the sea or rivers. Besides - Situated on both sides of the Nile. Rivers - Called rivers, in the plural number, either for its greatness, or for the many rivulets that run into it, or for the various streams into which it is divided.

2. Sendeth - That at this time are sending ambassadors, to strengthen themselves with alliances. Bulrushes - Both the Egyptians and Ethiopians, used boats of rushes or reeds, which were more convenient for them than those of wood, because they were both cheaper and swifter, and lighter for carriage from place to place. These seem to be the words of the prophet, who having pronounced a woe against the land hitherto described, here continues his speech, and gives a commission from

God to these messengers, to go to this nation scattered, &c. Then he calls to all nations to be witnesses of the message sent, ver. 3, and then the message follows in the succeeding verses. Messengers - Whom I have appointed for this work, and tell them what I am about to do with them. Scattered - Not by banishment but in their habitations. Which agrees well to the Ethiopians, for the manner of their habitation, which is more scattered than that of other people. Peeled - Having their hair plucked off. This is metaphorically used in scripture, for some great calamity, whereby men are stripped of all their comforts. And this title may be given to them prophetically, to signify their approaching destruction. Terrible - Such were the Egyptians, and Ethiopians, as appears both from sacred and profane histories. Meted - Meted out as it were with lines to destruction. Trodden - By Divine sentence, and to be trodden down by their enemies. The rivers - Which may be understood of the Assyrians or Babylonians breaking in upon them like a river, and destroying their land and people.

3. When - When God shall gather together the nations, as it were by the lifting up of an ensign, or by the sound of a trumpet, to execute his judgments upon this people.

4. Rest - I will not bestir myself, to help this people. God is said in scripture to rest, or sit still, when he doth not work on the behalf of a person or people. Dwelling-place - In heaven, the place where God dwells. Harvest - The sense is, that God would look upon them with as uncomfortable an influence as the sun with a clear heat upon the herbs, which are scorched and killed by it; and as a cloud of the dew, which brings dew or rain, in the heat of harvest, when it is unwelcome and hurtful.

5. For - Before they receive the end of their hopes. When - When the bud or flower is turned into a grape, which gives hopes of good vintage. He - The Lord. The branches - Instead of gathering the grapes, shall cut down the tree, and throw it into the fire.

6. Thy - The branches being cut down and thrown upon the ground, with the unripe grapes upon them. Left - They shall lie upon the earth, so that either birds or beasts may shelter themselves with them, or feed on them, both summer and winter.

7. In that time - At or after that time, when the judgment shall be compleatly executed. A people - The people of whom I am speaking shall present themselves, and their sacrifices, to the true God.

## XIX

The confusion of Egypt, their intestine dissention, their idols deceive them, cruel lords over them, waters fail them, their trade dead, their princes and counselors made foolish, their terror before the Lord, ver. 1-17. The calling of Egypt to the church, ver. 18-22. The covenant of Egypt, Assyria and Israel, ver. 23-25.

1. Rideth - As a general in the head of his army. A swift cloud - This phrase shews that the judgment should come speedily, unexpectedly, and unavoidably. Shall be moved - So far shall they be from helping the Egyptians, that they shall tremble for themselves.

2. I will set - Egypt was now one kingdom, but not many years after this time it was divided into twelve kingdoms, between whom there were many and cruel wars.

3. The spirit - Their courage.

4. A fierce king - Psammetichus, who being at first one of those twelve kings, waged war with the rest, and subdued them, and conquered all the land of Egypt and ruled it with rigor.

5. The waters - Which may be understood either,

1. Metaphorically, of the taking away of their dominion or commerce, &c. or rather,
2. Properly, as may be gathered from the following words. For as the river Nile, when it had a full stream, and free course, did pour forth a vast quantity of waters by its seven famous mouths into the sea, so when that was dried up, which is expressed in the next clause, those waters did truly and properly fail from the sea. So there is no need of understanding by sea either the river Nile, or the great lake of Maeris, which, after the manner of the Hebrew, might be so called. The river - Nile: upon whose fulness and overflow both the safety and the wealth of the land depended; and therefore this was a very terrible judgment. Dried up - Not totally, but in a very great measure.

6. Rivers - The rivers (those rivulets by which the waters of Nile were distributed into several parts of the land) shall be turned far away, as they must needs be, when the river which fed them was dried up. Brooks - The several branches of the river Nile, which were a great defense to Egypt. Reeds - Which were useful to them for making their boats. Whither - As they commonly do for want of water.

7. Paper-reeds - These by a needle, or other fit instrument, were divided into thin and broad leaves, which being dried and fitted, were used at that time for writing; and consequently was a very good commodity. By brooks - And much more what was sown in more dry and unfruitful places.

8. Mourn - Because they could catch no fish; which was a great loss to the people, whose common diet this was.

9. They - That make fine linen, which was one of their best commodities.

10. Thereof - Of Egypt, or of the Egyptians. They shall lose their hopes; for the fishes in them shall die for want of water.

11. Zoan - The chief city, in which the king and court frequently resided. How - Why do you put such foolish words into Pharaoh's mouth? I am the son - Wisdom is heredity and natural to me.

13. Noph - Another chief city, and one of the kings seats, called also Moph, and by latter authors, Memphis. The stay - Their chief counsellors. Tribes - Of the provinces, which he calls by a title borrowed from the Hebrew, in whose language he spake and wrote this prophecy.

14. Mingled - Or, hath poured out or given them to drink. To err - In all their designs and undertakings. Staggereth - When he is so drunk, that he reels to and fro, and vomits up his drink.

15. Head, &c. - All people, both high and low, shall be at their wits end.

16. Women - Feeble and fearful. Because - Because they shall perceive that they do not fight with men only, but with the Lord of hosts, who now lifts up his hand against them, as he did against their forefathers.

17. A terror - Because of their manifold injuries against Judah, for which they now apprehend God is calling them to account. Determined - Because God is now about to execute his appointed judgments. It - Against Egypt.

18. In that day - After that time. In the times of the gospel. Five - A considerable number of their chief cities: a certain number being put for an uncertain. Speak - Profess the Jewish religion,

agree with them in the same mind; which is fitly signified by speaking the same language. Swear - This implies the dedication, and yielding up of a person or thing to the Lord, by a solemn vow, or covenant. One - Not one of the five, but another city, the sixth city. As divers cities shall be converted and saved, so some other cities shall continue in their impenitency, and be destroyed.

19. An altar - The altar is put for the worship of God, as it is in many places both of the Old and New Testament. And nothing is more common in the prophets than to speak of gospel-worship in the phrases of the law. Pillar - A monument of the true religion. Here also he alludes to the ancient custom of erecting pillars to God. The border - As before, in the midst of it. The meaning is, There shall be evidences of their piety in all places.

20. It - The altar or pillar last mentioned. A witness - To testify that they own the Lord for their God. Cry - Being sorely distressed, they shall turn unto the true God. A great one - A great or mighty saviour, even Christ.

21. Shall sacrifice - Shall worship God spiritually; which yet is signified by typical phrases.

22. Smite - God will afflict them and by those afflictions will convert and save them.

23. Assyria - They who were implacable enemies one to another, and both to the church of God, shall now be reconciled and united together in the service of God, and love to his church. Serve - The Lord.

24. The third - The third party, in that sacred league, whereby all of them oblige themselves to serve God. Egypt - These are named, because they were the most obstinate enemies to God's church, but they are here put for all the Gentiles. A blessing - This is peculiar to Israel, who is not only a third party, but is the most eminent of the three, as being the fountain, by which the blessing is conveyed to the other two; because Christ was to be born of them, and the gospel-church and ordinances were first established among them, and from them derived to the Gentiles. The land - Or, of those lands, Egypt and Assyria, between which Israel lay.

25. Whom - That is, which people, Israel, Egypt, and Assyria; of whom he speaks as of one people, because they are all united into one church. My people - This title, and those which follow, that were peculiar to the people of Israel, shall now be given to these and all other nations.

## XX

The captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia represented, to take off the Jews from seeking to them for help, ver. 1-6

1. Sargon - Sennacherib, who, before he came to Jerusalem, came up against and took all the walled cities of Judah, of which Ashdod might be reckoned one, as being in the tribe of Judah.

2. Sackcloth - Which he wore in token of his grief for the calamities that were already come upon Israel, and were coming upon Judah. Naked - Not wholly naked, but without his upper garment, as slaves and prisoners used to do, whose posture he was to represent. Bare-foot - After the manner of mourners and captives.

3. Three years - Not constantly, but when he went abroad among the people, to whom this was appointed for a sign. A sign - When this judgment should come, namely, three years after this prophecy.

4. Uncovered - Having their garments cut off by the middle.

5. They - All that shall trust to them. But under this general expression the Israelites, seem to be principally intended.

6. Of the country - Of this land, in which the prophet was, and to whose inhabitants, these words were uttered. Such - So vain is our hope placed upon such a people as are unable to deliver themselves.

## XXI

The prophet's fear and trouble at his vision of Babylon's ruin, the Medes and Persians, ver. 1-4. He mocketh Babel, ver. 5-9. Edom scorning the prophet is called to repentance, ver. 11, 12. The time of Arab's calamity set, ver. 13-17.

1. The plain - Of Babylon, which lay in a very plain country. And the title of the sea might well be given to the waters of Babylon, because of the great plenty and multitude of them. South - In those parts which lay southward from Judea, where there were many and great deserts. Pass through - As meeting with no opposition. It - The burden or judgment. Desert - From Media and Persia; a great desert lay between them and Chaldea. A terrible land - From the Medes, a warlike and formidable people.

2. A vision - A vision or prophecy, containing dreadful calamities which were to fall upon Babylon. The spoiler - The Medes and Persians used treachery as well as force against Babylon. Elam - Persia, so called, because Elam was an eminent province of Persia, bordering upon the Medes. Besiege - Namely, Babylon, ver. 9. The sighing - The sighing and groaning of God's people, and other nations under the oppressions of that cruel empire.

3. My loins - Which he mentions with respect to the following similitude of child-bearing. Pangs - Sharp and grievous pains.

4. The night - In which I used to have sweet repose. He seems to have had this vision in a night. But withal this signified that horror and destruction, which should befall the Babylonians in a night of feasting and jollity. He - God, who shewed him that vision.

5. Prepare - Furnish it with meats and drinks. The prophet foretells what the Babylonians would be doing when their enemies were at their doors. Watch - To give us notice of any approaching danger, that in the meantime we may more securely indulge ourselves. Princes - Of Babylon: arise from the table and run to your arms. Shield - Prepare yourselves and your arms for the approaching battle. The shield is put for all their weapons of offense and defense. They used to anoint their shields with oil, to preserve and polish them, and to make them slippery.

6. Go set - This was now done only in a vision, but it signified what should be done really afterwards.

7. A chariot - Hereby he signifies the variety and abundance of warlike provisions which the Medes and Persians should have for their expedition, and particularly of chariots, whereof some were for the carriage of necessary things, and others for the battle.

8. A lion - The watchmen cried out, I see also a lion marching before the horsemen and chariots: which they suppose to represent Cyrus or Darius marching in the head of their armies. My Lord - The watchman speaks to the prophet, who had set him in this station. Whole nights - According to thy command I have stood, and do yet stand continually, both day and night, upon my watch- tower.

9. Men - Not fitted with goods, but provided with men to fight. He - The prophet, who here gives an explication of the vision. He - God, by the hands of Cyrus.

10. Threshing - Threshing is put for the corn threshed; and the corn threshed for people sorely afflicted. This is probably spoken of Babylon. The corn - Which I will cause to be threshed upon the floor. You - Unto you my people; for all the prophecies, even concerning other nations, were published to them, and for their use and comfort.

11. Dumah - Of Edom or Idumea. He - The people of Dumah, one of them in the name and by the appointment of the rest. Me - To the watchman: the prophet delivers his prophecy in the form of a dialogue between the people and the watchman. Seir - Out of Edom, which is frequently called Seir. Watchman - The watchman of Edom, whom they had set as people use to do in times of great danger. Night - The people are supposed to come to him very early in the morning, to inquire what had happened in the night; which shews a state of great perplexity and fear. Night - The repetition of the words, shew the greatness of their solicitude.

12. The night - The night is past without any mischief, and the light of the morning is approaching; but tho' the morning is coming, it will be gone, and the night will return, and your fears with it. Come - If you will inquire, inquire: I perceive your danger is not past, and there will be occasion for farther enquiries. Therefore return, come - Come to me the next morning, and so from morning to morning.

13. Forest - Not as you used to do, in the houses or tents of the Arabians: whereby he implies, that that populous country should be a wilderness. Companies - In those parts travelers then did, and still do, go together in companies. Dedanim - These were merchants, who used to trade with Tyre, and their way lay thro' Arabia.

14. Tema - A part of Arabia. Fled - Whereby he implies, that those other Arabians, against whom this prophecy is principally directed, should be reduced to great scarcity, and forced to flee for their lives, from a bloody enemy.

16. A year - From the time of this prophecy: an exact year. Glory - Their power, and riches, and all things wherein they used to glory. This was executed by the Assyrians.

## XXII

The anguish of Judah, the prophet much grieved, ver. 1-5. By the Persians, Medes, and Assyrians, ver. 6, 7. He reproves their human wisdom, ver. 8-11. And profane joy, ver. 12, 13. Which God would certainly punish, ver. 14. Shebnah's deprivation for his pride, ver. 15-19. Eliakim put in his place, his glory, ver. 20-25.

1. The valley - Of Judah; and especially of Jerusalem, called a valley, because great part of it flood in a valley; and the valley of vision, because of the many and clear visions or Revelations of God's mind, in that place. House-tops - As they used to do in times of great consternation, that they might look, to and cry to heaven for help.

2. Noises - Of joyful shouts. Tumultuous - Through revelling and jollity. Battle - But either by famine or pestilence in the siege, or in their flight.

3. Rulers - Zedekiah and his chief commanders, whose flight he foretells. Found - That remain there with Zedekiah in the siege; for those who had fled to the Chaldeans saved their lives and liberties. Bound - In fetters, Jer. lii, 11. Fled - Who fled from Jerusalem, but were pursued and overtaken by their enemies, and bound, as others had been.

4. Look away - Take off your eyes and thoughts from me, and leave me alone.

5. Treading down - In which my people are trodden under foot by their enemies. By the Lord - Not only men, but God himself fought against them. Walls - Of the strong cities of Judah. Mountains - With such loud and dismal outcries as should reach to the neighbouring mountains.

6. Elam - The Persians, who now, and for a long time after, were subject to the Assyrian and Chaldean emperors. Quiver - Being expert bowmen. Horsemen - As some fought on foot, so others fought from chariots and horses. Kir - The Medes, so called from Kir, an eminent city and region of Media. Uncovered - Prepared it and themselves for the battle.

7. Valleys - Valleys were the most proper places for the use of chariots. Gate - To assist the footmen while they made their assault, and to prevent those who endeavoured to escape.

8. He - The enemy. Covering - He took those fenced cities, which were a covering or safe-guard both to the people of Judah, and to Jerusalem. The armour - Thy trust was placed in the arm of flesh. The forest - More fully called the house of the forest of Lebanon, 1 Kings vii, 2, not because it was built in Lebanon, for it was in Jerusalem; but because it was built of the trees of Lebanon.

9. Seen - That is, observed in order to the reparation of them. The waters - That you might both deprive the enemy of water, and supply the city with it.

10. Numbered - That they might exactly know their own strength. The houses - Which stood upon or without the walls, and so gave their enemies advantage, and hindered the fortifying the city.

11. Thereof - Of Jerusalem, expressed in the foregoing verse. Him - God, who made it a city, and the place of his special presence and worship. Long ago - Which may be added to aggravate their sin, in distrusting that God, who had now for a long time given proof of his care and kindness in defending this city.

12. Call - By his providence, and by his precepts requiring these things in such times. Baldness - By plucking or shaving off the hair of their heads, as was usual in great sorrows.

13. Let us, &c. - A most perverse and desperate conclusion.

14. 'Till ye die - You shall feel the sad effects of this, as long as you live.

16. What - What right hast thou to this place and office? Whom - What kindred or relations? For the Jews say, he was a stranger by birth; which is the more probable, because his pedigree is not mentioned in any of those places of scripture where he is named. On high - In an high and eminent place. An habitation - He erected a stately house to live in, and a stately sepulchre to receive him when he died. And these two are fitly joined together, because their sepulchres were commonly built in or near their houses. A rock - A fit place both for strength and state.

17. Will carry - Will cause thee to be carried into captivity by a strong hand. Cover - This may be an allusion to the ancient custom of covering the faces of condemned persons.

18. Thy chariots - Thy glorious chariots where thou didst ride in great state at Jerusalem, shall be turned into shame to thyself, and to thy master.

19. He - The Lord; such sudden changes of persons being very usual in these writings.

20. Call - By my powerful providence.

21. Girdle - There was a peculiar sort of robe and girdle which was the badge of his office. A father - He shall govern them with fatherly care and affection.

22. The key - The government, the power of opening and shutting, of letting men into it, or putting them out of it, whereof a key is a fit emblem. Shoulder - He mentions the shoulder rather than the hand, in which keys are commonly carried, from some ceremony then in use, of carrying a key upon the shoulder of the officer of state.

23. Fasten - I will establish the power in his hands. Sure place - In the strong walls, or solid timber, in the house. He shall be - By his prudent and righteous government he shall procure great glory, to all that have any relation to him.

24. The glory - Of his own kindred and family, who shall all depend upon him, and receive glory from him; of the house of David, which is called his father's house, because he was of the blood-royal. The offspring - Great and small, the children and grand-children of his father's house, the meanest of them shall receive a lustre from their relation to him. All vessels - All sorts of vessels, great or small, mean or precious, may be hanged upon him, without any fear of falling.

25. The nail - Shebna, who seemed to be so. The burden - All those wicked officers that were advanced and supported by his power.

## XXIII

The destruction of Tyre, from God, for their pride, ver. 1- 14. The time of her rising again, ver. 15-17. And conversion to God, ver. 18.

1. Of Tyre - The prophecy of the heavy calamity and destruction of Tyre. Tyre was, according to this prophecy, destroyed; first by Nebuchadnezzar, and afterwards by Alexander the great. And tho' this prophecy seemed directly to respect the former destruction, yet it seems to have some reference to the latter also; only it is intimated, that after seventy years, Tyre should recover some former power and glory, before her second and final destruction. Howl - To which howling and lamenting is ascribed by a known figure. No house - So effectually wasted, that there is not an house left in it, nor any merchants or others that go into it, for traffick. Chittim - He mentions the land of Chittim, because this was an eminent place for shipping and trading, and therefore doubtless had great dealings with Tyre. It may here be put for all other countries which traded with her. It is not necessary to determine what Chittim is; it is sufficient to know, that it was a seafaring place in the Midland Sea.

2. Be still - Hebrew. be silent, boast no more of thy wealth and power. The isle - Of Tyre, which was an island, 'till Alexander joined it to the continent. The title of islands is often given by the

Hebrew to places bordering upon the sea. That pass - That are a sea-faring people. Replenished - With manners, and commodities.

4. Zidon - Zidon was a great city near Tyre, strongly united to her by commerce and league, and called by some the mother of Tyre, which they say, was built and first inhabited by a colony of the Sidonians. The sea - That part of the sea in which Tyre was, and from which ships and men were sent into all countries. The strength - Tyre might be called the strength of the sea, because it defendeth that part of the sea from piracies and injuries. I travel not - I, who was so fruitful, that I sent forth colonies into other countries (of which Carthage was one), am now barren and desolate.

5. Waters - By the sea, which is very fitly called the great waters, understand, cometh, or is brought to her. The seed - The corn of Egypt, wherewith Egypt abounded. Sihor is the same as the Nile. The harvest - The plentiful harvest of corn which comes from the inundation of the Nile; emphatically called the river. The revenue - Is as plentifully enjoyed by her, as if it grew in her own territories. A mart - A place to which all nations resort for traffick.

7. Antiquity - Being built before Joshua's time, Josh. xix, 29. Her feet - Whereas before, like a delicate lady, she would not set her foot to the ground, but used to be carried in stately chariots. To sojourn - To seek for new habitations.

8. Who - This is the word of God, and not of man. The crowning city - Which was a royal city, and carried away the crown from all other cities. Princes - Equal to princes for wealth, and power, and reputation.

9. The Lord - This is the Lord's own doing. To stain - God's design is by this example to abase the pride of all the potentates of the earth.

10. Pass through - Tarry no longer in thy own territories, but flee through them, into other countries, for safety and relief. As a river - Swiftly, lest you be prevented. Tarshish - O Tyre, which might well be called daughter of Tarshish, that is, of the sea, as that word is used, ver. 1, and elsewhere, because it was an island, and therefore as it were, born of the sea, and nourished and brought up by it.

11. He - The Lord. Shook - Hebrew. he made the kingdoms to tremble; the neighbouring and confederate kingdoms, who might justly quake at her fall, for the dreadfulness and unexpectedness of the thing; and because Tyre was a bulwark, and a refuge to them. A commandment - Hath put this design into the hearts of her enemies, and given them courage to attempt, and strength to execute it.

12. Virgin - So he calls her, because she had hitherto never born the yoke of a conquering enemy. Zidon - Tyre may be called the daughter of Zidon, because she was first built and possessed by a colony of the Zidonians. No rest - Thither thine enemies shall pursue thee, and there shall they overtake the.

13. Behold - Thou Tyrians, cast your eyes upon the Chaldeans or Babylonians; who tho' now flourishing, grow far more glorious and potent, even the glory of kingdoms, yet shall certainly be brought to utter ruin. This people - The Chaldeans at first were not a people, not formed into any commonwealth or kingdom, 'till Nimrod, the head and founder of the Assyrian monarchy, built Babel, Gen. x, 9, 10, now the head of the Chaldean monarchy; which he built for those people, who then lived in tents, and were dispersed here and there in waste places. He - The Lord. To ruin - Will infallibly bring that great empire to ruin. He speaks of a future thing as if it were already past.

14. Your strength - The city of Tyre, where you found safety and wealth.

15. Forgotten - Neglected and forsaken. Seventy years - During the time of the Jewish captivity in Babylon. Tyre was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxvii, 3, 8 Ezek xxvi, 7, a little after the taking of Jerusalem and was restored by the favour of the Persian monarchs after the return of the Jews. One king - One royal race of Nebuchadnezzar, including his son, and his son's son, in whom his family and kingdom were to expire. Sing - She shall by degrees return to her former traffick, whereby she shall easily entice the merchants of the world to trade with her, as harlots use to entice men by lascivious songs.

16. Go about - As harlots use to do. Thou harlot - So he calls Tyre, because she enticed the merchants to deal with her by various artifices, and even by dishonest practices, and because of the great and general uncleanness which was committed in it.

17. Visit - In mercy. Her hire - The Hebrew word properly signifies, the hire of an harlot. Fornication - Shall trade promiscuously with people of all nations, as harlots entertain all comers.

18. Holiness - This is a prophecy concerning the conversion of the Tyrians to the true religion. Laid up - Either out of covetousness, or for their pride and luxury, as they formerly did; but now they shall freely lay it out upon pious and charitable uses. Shall be - For the support and encouragement of the ministers of holy things, who shall teach the good knowledge of the Lord. Although this does not exclude, but rather imply their liberality in contributing to the necessities of all Christians.

## XXIV

Judgments on Judah for their defilements and transgression, ver. 1-12. A remnant shall praise God, ver. 13-15. God, by his judgments on his people and their enemies, will advance his kingdom, ver. 16-23.

1. The land - Of Canaan. Waste - He will shortly make it waste, first by the Assyrians, and then by the Chaldeans. Turneth - Brings it into great disorder and confusion.

2. It shall be - The approaching calamity shall be universal, without any distinction of persons or ranks; the priests themselves having been partakers of the peoples sins, shall also partake with them in their plagues. The seller - The purchaser of lands shall have no more left than he that hath sold all his patrimony; and all persons shall be made equal in beggary and slavery.

4. The world - The land of Judea. The majesty - Not only common people, but the high and lofty ones.

5. Defiled - By the wickedness of its people. The laws - The laws of God. Ordinance - God's ordinances concerning his worship and service; the singular being put for the plural. Covenant - The covenant made between God and Abraham, and all his posterity, which was everlasting, both on God's part, who, upon the conditions therein expressed, engaged himself to be a God to them and to their seed forever; and on Israel's part, who were obliged thereby to constant and perpetual obedience thro' all generations.

6. The curse - The curse of God threatened to transgressors. Burned - Are consumed by the wrath of God, which is commonly compared to fire.

7. Mourneth - Because there are none to drink it. Grief is ascribed to senseless creatures by a figure usual in all authors. Languisheth - Because there are no people left to dress it, or gather its grapes. The merry-hearted - That made their hearts merry with wine.

8. Tabrets - Which they used in their feasts. The noise - The word properly signifies a confused clamour, such as drunken men make.

9. Bitter - Because of the fears and miseries wherewith it is mixed.

10. The city - Jerusalem, and other cities; for the singular word may be here taken collectively. A city of confusion or disorder, breaking all the laws and orders which God had established among them. Shut up - Because the inhabitants are either dead, or gone into captivity.

11. A crying - Such was their gross sensuality and sottishness, that instead of crying for their sins, they did only howl for their corn, and wine, and oil, Hosea vii, 14.

13. When - When this judgment shall be executed, there shall be left a remnant; as there are some few olives or grapes left after the vintage is over. 14. They - The remnant shall sing for the glorious power and goodness of God, manifested in their deliverance. The sea - From the isles of the sea; from those parts beyond the sea into which, they were carried captive.

15. In distress - When you are in the furnace of affliction. In the isles - In remote countries, beyond the sea, which in scripture are commonly called isles.

16. From - From all the parts of the earth in which the Jews are or shall be. Songs - Of joy and praise. Glory - Or, glory be to the righteous. The Lord, the righteous one. But - In the midst of these joyful tidings, I discern something which gives me cause of lamentation. My leanness - I faint and pine away for grief, for the following reason. Treacherously - The Jews, who have been frequently guilty of great perfidiousness towards God, are now acting the same part. Even the Hebrew doctors expound this place of the perfidiousness of some Jews in the times of the Messiah. And it is not strange that so sad a sight made the prophet cry out, My leanness, &c. He repeats it to shew the horridness of the crime.

17. The snare - Great and various judgments, some actually inflicted, and others justly feared.

18. Fleeth - Upon the report of some terrible evil. The foundations - Both heaven and earth conspire against him. He alludes to the deluge of waters which God poured down from heaven, and to the earthquakes which he often causes below.

19. The earth - This is repeated again, to shew the dreadfulness and, certainty of these judgments, and to awaken the stupid Israelites.

20. A tent - Which is easily and commonly carried from place to place.

22. Gathered - By God's special providence, in order to their punishment. And thus the unbelieving Jews were generally gathered together at Jerusalem, to their solemn feast, when Titus came and besieged, and destroyed them. Shut up - As malefactors, which are taken in several places, are usually brought to one common prison. After - After the apostate Jews shall have been shut up in unbelief, and in great tribulations for many ages together, they shall be convinced of their sin in crucifying the Messiah, and brought home to God and Christ by true repentance.

23. The sun - All earthly powers and glories shall be obscured with the far greater splendour of Christ, the king of kings, at whose feet even the kings of the earth shall fall down and worship. The Lord - The Messiah, who, tho' man, yet is also God, and the Lord of hosts. Shall reign - Shall come in the flesh, and set up his kingdom, first in Jerusalem, and afterward in all other nations. Before - Before his ministers, who are in some sort the courtiers of the King of Glory. But the ancients are here put for the whole church, in whose name and for whose service they act.

## XXV

God glorious in his judgments on Babel, ver. 1-5. and his people's salvation, ver. 6-12.

1. O Lord - The prophet reflecting upon those great and glorious prophecies which he had delivered, interrupts the course of his prophecies, and breaks forth into a solemn celebration of God's wonderful works. Thy counsels - From which all thy works proceed, and which thou hast from time to time revealed to thy prophets and people, which were of old, being conceived from all eternity, are true and firm, and shall certainly be accomplished.

2. A city - Which is put for cities: or of enemies of God and his people. And under the name cities he comprehends their countries and kingdoms. Strangers - The royal cities, in which were the palaces of strangers, of Gentiles. No city - Their cities and palaces have been or shall be utterly and irrecoverably destroyed.

3. Shall fear - Thy stoutest enemies observing thy wonderful works, shall be converted, or at least forced to tremble before thee.

4. For - For thou hast defended thy poor and helpless people. As a storm - Makes a great noise, but without any effect.

5. The noise - The tumultuous noise, as the word properly signifies; the rage and furious attempts of those Heathen nations that fought against God's people. As the heat - With as much ease as thou dost allay the heat of a dry place, by the shadow of thy clouds, or by the rain which falls from black and shadowy clouds. The branch - The arm or power, as a branch is the arm of a tree.

6. And - In mount Zion, in God's church. All people - Both Jews and Gentiles. A feast - A feast made up of the most delicate provisions, which is manifestly meant of the ordinances, graces, and comforts given by God in his church. Of wines - Which have continued upon the lees a competent time, whereby they gain strength, and are afterwards drawn off, and refined.

7. The face - The covering of the face. The veil - The ignorance of God, and of the true religion, which then was upon the Gentiles, and now is upon the Jews.

8. He - Christ will by his death destroy the power of death, take away the sting of the first death, and prevent the second. In victory - Hebrew. unto victory; so as to overcome it perfectly; which complete victory Christ hath already purchased for, and will in due time actually confer upon his people. Rebuke - The reproach and contempt cast upon his faithful people by the ungodly world.

9. Our God - Our Messiah, long since promised, and for whom we have waited long, is come into the world, bringing salvation with him.

10. Rest - The powerful and gracious presence, of God shall have its constant and settled abode. Moab - The Moabites are put for all the enemies of God's church.

11. He - The Lord, whose power they shall be no more able to resist, than the waters can resist a man that swims. Spread - To smite and destroy them. The spoils - With all their wealth which they have gained by rapine, and spoiling of God's people.

12. And - All thy fortifications, in which thou trustest.

## XXVI

A song of praise and confidence in God, for the blessings of righteousness, judgments on their enemies, and favour to his people: their chastisement, repentance, and hope, ver. 1-21.

1. In that day - When God shall do such glorious works, as are described in the foregoing chapter. Sung - In the church of God. A city - Jerusalem, or the church, which is often compared to a city. For walls - God's immediate and saving protection shall be to his church instead of walls.

2. The gates - Of the city, mentioned ver. 1. The nation - The whole body of righteous men, whether Jews or Gentiles. For he seems to speak here, as he apparently did in the foregoing chapter, of the times of the gospel. Keepeth truth - Which is sincere in the true religion.

4. For ever - In all times and conditions.

5. On high - He speaks not so much of height of place, as of dignity and power, in which sense also he mentions the lofty city in the next clause. Lofty city - Which may be understood either of proud Babylon, or of all the strong and stately cities of God's enemies.

6. The needy - God will bring it under the feet of his poor, and weak, and despised people.

7. Thou - O God, who art upright in all thy ways, and therefore a lover of uprightness, and of all upright men, dost weigh (examine) the path of the just, the course of his actions, and, which is implied, dost approve of them, and therefore direct them to an happy issue.

9. In the night - When others are sleeping, my thoughts and desires are working towards God. Early - Betimes in the morning. For - And good reason it is that we should thus desire and seek thee in the way of thy judgments, because this is the very design of thy judgments, that men should thereby be awakened to learn and return to their duty; and this is a common effect, that those who have been careless in prosperity, are made wiser and better by afflictions.

10. Will not learn - This is the carriage of thy people; but the course of wicked men is directly contrary in all conditions: for if thou dost spare them, they will not accept of that gracious invitation to repentance. In the land - Even in God's church, and among his people, where righteousness is taught and practiced. Will not behold - Tho' God gives such plain discoveries of his majesty and glory, not only in his word, but also in works, and especially in this glorious work of his patience and mercy to wicked men, yet they will not acknowledge it.

11. Will not see - And they are guilty of the same obstinate blindness when thou dost smite and punish them, which is commonly signified by lifting up the hand. They shall see - They shall know that by sad experience, which they would not learn by easier ways. These - Such fire or wrath as thou usest to pour forth upon thine implacable enemies.

12. Our works - All the good works done by us, are the effects of thy grace.

13. Other lords - Others besides thee, and besides those governors who have been set up by thee, even foreign and heathen lords. By thee - By thy favour and help. Will we - Celebrate thy praise.

14. Rise - Those tyrants are destroyed; they shall never live or rise again to molest us.

15. The nation - This nation seems to be the people of Israel. Removed - Thou hast removed thy people out of their own land, and suffered them to be carried captive to the ends of the earth.

16. They - Thy people. Visited - Come into thy presence, with their prayers and supplications.

17. Like - Such was our anguish and danger.

18. We - We have had the torment of a woman in child-bearing, but not the comfort of a living child, for we have brought forth nothing but wind; all our labours and hopes were unsuccessful. The world - The Assyrians, or our other enemies.

19. Thy - The prophet here turns his speech to God's people, and gives them a cordial in their distress. Thy dead men are not like those, ver. 14, for they shall not live; but thine shall live. You shall be delivered from all your fears and dangers. My dead body - As I myself, who am one of these dead men, shall live again; you shall be delivered together with me. Awake - Out of your sleep, even the sleep of death, you that are dead and buried in the dust. Thy dew - The favour and blessing of God upon thee. The dew - Which makes them grow and flourish.

20. Shut thy doors - Withdraw thyself from the world, and pour out thy prayers to God in thy closet. Indignation - The dreadful effects of God's anger, mentioned in the following verse.

21. Cometh - Cometh down from heaven. To punish - All the enemies of God, and of his people. Her slain - The innocent blood which hath been spilled upon the earth shall be brought to light, and severely revenged upon the murderers.

## XXVII

God's care over his vineyard, ver. 1-6. His chastisements on them, ver. 7-9. His severe judgments against them, ver. 10, 11. Their return, ver. 12, 13.

1. Leviathan - By this leviathan, serpent and dragon (for all signify the same thing) be understands some powerful enemy or enemies of God, and of his church or people, which may well be called by these names, partly for their great might, and partly for the great terror and destruction which they cause upon the earth. The piercing - Which by its sting pierces deeply into mens bodies. Crooked serpent - Winding and turning itself with great variety and dexterity. Whereby he seems to signify the craftiness and activity of this enemy, whose strength makes it more formidable.

2. In that day - When this enemy shall be destroyed. A vineyard - My church and people, of red wine, of the choicest and best wine, which in those parts was red.

3. I keep it - I will protect my church from all her enemies, and supply her with all necessary provisions.

5. Or - Or if at any time fury seem to be in me against my people. Let him - My people. Take hold - Which he may by humble prayer not only restrain from doing him hurt, but engage to do him good.

6. Take root - To be firmly settled in their possessions. Fruit - Their posterity shall seek habitations in other countries, and replenish them with people. But this seems to be understood of the spiritual seed of Jacob.

7. Hath he - He hath not dealt so severely with his people, as he hath dealt with their enemies, whom he hath utterly destroyed. Of them - Of those who were slain by God on the behalf of Israel.

8. In measure - With moderation. When - When the vine shooteth forth its luxuriant branches, he cuts them off, but so as not to destroy the vine. Contend - God is said to contend with men, when he executes his judgments upon them, Amos vii, 4. Stayeth - He mitigates the severity of the judgment. In the day - In the time when he sends forth his east-wind; which he mentions because that wind in those parts was most violent and most hurtful.

9. By this - By this manner of God's dealing with them. When - Which sin of Jacob's shall be purged, when he shall truly repent of all his sins, and especially of his idolatry. Altar - Their idolatrous altars. Possibly he may say the altar, with respect to that particular altar, which Ahaz had set upon the place of God's own altar; and this prophecy might be delivered in Ahaz's time, while that altar stood. Chalk-stones - When he shall break all those goodly altars in pieces. Not stand - Shall be thrown down with contempt.

10. Yet - Yet before this glorious promise be fulfilled, a dreadful and desolating judgment shall come. The city - Jerusalem and the rest of the defensed cities in the land. The habitation - The most inhabited and populous places. The calf - This is put for all sorts of cattle, which may securely feed there, because there shall be no men left to disturb them.

11. Broken - That there may be no hopes of their recovery. Women - He mentions women, because the men would be destroyed. Not understanding - They know not the things which concerns their peace, but they blindly and wilfully go on in sin. Therefore - Thus he overthrows their conceit that God would never destroy the work of his own hands.

12. Beat out - It is a metaphor from grain which was beaten out with a rod or staff, and then carefully gathered and laid up. From - From Euphrates to the Nile, which were the two borders of the land of promise. All the Israelites who are left in the land. One by one - Which signifies, God's exact care of them.

13. Trumpet - God shall summon them altogether by sound of trumpet, by an eminent call of his providence. He alludes to the custom of calling the Israelites together with trumpets.

## XXVIII

The drunkenness of Ephraim bringeth destruction on them, a remnant shall be honourable, ver. 1-8. Their unteachableness, 9-13. Their mock at God's threatening, ver. 14, 15. Christ a sure foundation to believers, ver. 16. And destruction to the mockers, who are exhorted to amend, ver. 17-22. God's providence, its work and seasons towards the church, under the figure of a husbandman, 23-29.

1. Pride - That proud and insolent kingdom. Drunkards - Having many and excellent vines among them, they were much exposed to this sin. Ephraim - Of the kingdom of the ten tribes. Who are - Who have their common abode. The head - Samaria, might well be called the head, as being seated upon a mountain, and the head of the kingdom, and the head of the fat valleys, because it was encompassed with many fat and rich valleys.

2. A strong one - The king of Assyria. Shall cast down - The crown of pride. The hand - By the hand of God, which shall strengthen him in this work.

3. Trodden - The expression is emphatical; the crown which was upon their own heads, shall be trodden under the feet of others; and they, whose drunkenness made them fall to the ground, shall be trodden down there.

4. He eateth - Which, as soon as a man sees he plucks it off, and devours it, as soon as he can get it into his hand. And so shall it be with Ephraim's glory, which his enemies shall devour greedily.

5. In that day - When the kingdom of Israel shall be destroyed. A diadem - God shall give eminent glory and beauty, to the kingdom of Judah.

6. To them - Who not only drive their enemies from their land, but pursue them into their own lands, and besiege them in their own cities.

7. But - Judah is guilty of the same sins with Israel, therefore they also must expect the same calamities; of which he speaks afterward. The prophet - The teachers, who should have been patterns of sobriety to the people. They err - The prophets miscarry in their sacred employment. Stumble - The priests mistake in pronouncing the sentence of the law, which was their duty.

9. He - God. Them - Who is there among this people that are willing to be taught the knowledge of God? A minister may as soon teach an infant as these men.

10. For - They must be taught like little children, because of their great dullness. Line - One line of the book after another, as children are taught to read.

11. Another tongue - By people of a strange language, whom he shall bring among them, seeing they will not hear him speaking, by his prophets, in their own language.

12. This - This doctrine. The rest - The only way, in which you will find rest.

13. Here a little - As this method has been used and was altogether necessary for them; so it still is, and for the future shall be. As they were children in understanding, they shall still continue to be such; they shall be ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth. That - This will be the event, or consequence of their sin: they will fall backward, which is the worst, and most dangerous way of falling; and so be broken to pieces.

15. Said - In your hearts. We - We are as safe from death, and hell, or the grave, as if they had entered into covenant with us. The scourge - The judgment of God. Through - The land. For - We shall secure ourselves by lying and dissimulation.

16. Therefore - Because your refuges are so vain, and deceitful; therefore I will direct you to a surer refuge, which God hath laid in Zion. But if you despise that refuge; then know, that I will lay judgment to the line, &c. I lay - I have promised it, and will, in the fulness of time, perform it. In Zion - In my church. A foundation - Upon which I will build my church. A stone - The Messiah. Tried - Which I have tried, and approved as every way sufficient. Corner-stone - Uniting the several parts of the building together. Sure - Upon whom you may securely rest. Believeth - This promise. Shall not - Hastily catch at any way of escaping danger, but shall patiently wait upon God in his way, 'till he deliver him.

17. Plummet - I will execute just judgment, as it were by a line and plummet annexed to it; that is, with exactness and care: I will severely punish, and utterly destroy all who reject that stone. For the line and plummet, or the plumb-line, was not only used in erecting buildings, but also in pulling them down; those parts of the building being thus marked out, which were to be demolished.

19. Pass over - It shall not only come to you, but it shall abide upon you; and when it hath passed over you, it shall return again to you, morning after morning; and shall follow you day and night, without giving you the least respite. The report - So dreadful shall the judgment be, that it shall strike you with horror, when you only hear the rumour of it.

20. For - For those lying refuges, to which you trust, will not be able to give you that protection, which you expect from them; no more than a man can stretch himself upon a bed that is too short for him.

21. Perazim - Where he fought against the Philistines, 2 Sam. v, 20. Gibeon - Where he fought against the Canaanites, Josh. x, 10, &c. and afterwards against the Philistines, 1 Chron. xiv, 16. Strange work - For this work of bringing total destruction upon Israel, was contrary to the benignity of his own nature, and to the usual way of dealing with his people.

22. Lest - Lest thereby you make the judgments of God sure and unavoidable. For - God hath assured me, that he will utterly destroy the people of Israel.

24. Doth - The plowman doth not spend all his time in plowing the ground; but he has several times for several works. And so God has his times and seasons for several works, and his providence is various at several times, and towards several people. Therefore those scoffing Israelites were guilty of great folly, in flattering themselves, because of God's long patience towards them; for God will certainly take a time to thresh, and break them with his judgments, as at present he plowed and harrowed them, and so prepared them for it by his threatenings. Open - Understand, all day. Break - Which they used to do with a kind of harrow.

25. Made plain - By breaking the clods. The wheat - The best which he chuses for seed. Barley - That proportion of barley which he appointed. Place - Hebrew. in his border; each seed in a several place.

27. A threshing instrument - This then was made like a sledge shod with iron, which was drawn by men or beasts, over the sheafs of corn, to bruise them, and tear the grain out of them. A wheel - A lower wheel than a cart wheel, but of the same form, upon which possibly the threshing instrument was drawn.

28. Bruised - With a threshing instrument. Break it - Understand, forever. Horses - This was another way of threshing out the corn, by driving horses, or other cattle, over the sheaves to tread it.

29. This also - This part of the husbandman's discretion. These words contain the application of the similitude. The husbandman manages his affairs with common discretion; but God governs the world, and his church, with wonderful wisdom: he is great and marvelous, both in the contrivance of things, and in the execution of them.

## XXIX

The temple and city of Jerusalem destroyed, ver. 1-6. Her enemies insatiable, ver. 7, 8 Their senselessness, ver. 9-12. And deep hypocrisy, ver. 13-17. These scorner and oppressor being cut off, the rest shall be converted, ver. 18-24.

1. The city - The royal city, and seat of David and his posterity. Set them - Go on in killing sacrifices from time to time, one year after another, whereby you think to appease me, but all shall be in vain.

4. And thou - Thou who now speakest so loftily, shall be humbled, and with a low voice, beg the favour of thine enemies. As one - Who, that they might possess the people with a kind of reverence and horror, used to deliver their answers with a low voice, from some cave under the ground.

5. Strangers - Whom thou hast hired to assist thee, as indeed they did, when the Chaldeans came against them. Terrible ones - Thy great commanders, and stout soldiers. It - This destruction of thy strangers, and terrible ones shall come to pass.

6. Thou - Thou, O Jerusalem. Fire - With dreadful judgments, which are frequently expressed by these metaphors.

8. His soul - His appetite or desire is unsatisfied. So - No less unsatisfied and insatiable; they shall be always thirsting after more of your blood.

9. Wonder - At the stupidity of this people. Cry - Cry out again and again through astonishment. They stagger - With giddiness or stupidity, which makes them like drunken men, insensible of their danger.

10. Dead sleep - Hardness of heart, and insensibleness of your danger. Seers - Your magistrates and ministers. Covered - With the veil of ignorance and stupidity.

12. Of all - Of all, your prophets. As a book - In which no man can read, while it is sealed up, as books then sometimes were, being made in the form of rolls. Delivered - Unsealed and opened.

13. Draw near - Namely, in acts of worship. With lips - With outward devotions. But - They do not pay me that love, and fear, and obedience, which I require. And - They worship me not in such a manner, as I have prescribed, but according to mens inventions, preferring the devices and traditions of their false prophets, before my institutions.

14. Hid - Shall disappear and vanish.

15. Seek deep - A metaphor from men, who use to dig deep into the earth, that they may hide any thing there. To hide - Vainly imagining, that they can deceive, not only men, but God, by their external professions. Who - Neither God nor man can discover us.

16. Surely - All your subtle devices, by which you turn yourselves into all shapes. As clay - It is no more to me, than the clay is to the potter, who can alter and dispose it as he sees fit.

17. As a forest - The forest of Lebanon, which was a barren mountain, shall by God's providence, become a fruitful and populous place; and these places which are now fruitful and populous, shall then become as barren and desolate, as that forest. This is a prophecy of the rejection of the Jews, and of the calling of the Gentiles.

18. Shall see - Being, by God's grace, brought out of gross, ignorance and wickedness, unto a clear and saving knowledge of the truth.

19. Meek - The humble and meek believers. Poor - Mean and despicable people, such as the Gentiles were in the opinion of the Jews, and such as the greatest part of the first Christians were.

20. That watch - That early and diligently apply themselves to the practice of wickedness.

21. That make a man - That condemn a man, as if he was a great criminal. For him - For God's faithful prophets and ministers. The gate - There the people used to assemble, both upon civil and sacred accounts, and there prophets used to deliver their prophecies. Turn - From his right. The just - The faithful ministers of God. Nought - Not for any great advantage, but for a trifle.

22. Redeemed - From manifold dangers, and especially from idolatry. Jacob - The Israelites or posterity of Jacob, who had great cause to be ashamed, for their continued infidelity, shall at last

be brought back to the God of their fathers, and to their Messiah. Pale - Through fear of their enemies.

23. He seeth - When the believing seed of Jacob shall see those children, whom they have begotten to God, by the gospel, even the Gentiles. The work - The children, not of the flesh, but of the promise, whom I, by my almighty grace, have regenerated. In the midst - Incorporated with the Jews, into one and the same body. Shall sanctify - They shall glorify God, with them and for them.

24. That erred - Those Gentiles who erred from God's truth. Murmured - They that murmured at God's faithful teachers, shall now receive God's truth in the love of it.

## XXX

The prophet threatens the people for their confidence in Egypt, ver. 1-7. And contempt of God's word, ver. 8-11. Wherefore they shall be destroyed, ver. 12-17. God's mercies towards the church, ver. 18-26. God's wrath and the peoples joy in the destruction of Assyria, ver. 27-33.

1. The rebellious - The Jews. Take counsel - That consult together. Cover - That seek protection. But not - Not such as by my spirit, speaking in my word, I have required them to do. That they may add - That unto all their sins, they may add distrust of my power and mercy, and put confidence in an arm of flesh.

2. Asked - Either by the priests or prophets.

4. His princes - The princes of Judah. Hanes - An eminent city of Egypt.

5. They - Both the messengers, and they who sent them.

6. The burden - The treasures, which were carried upon asses or camels, into Egypt, which lay southward from Judea. The land of trouble - Egypt, so called prophetically. From whence - This may be understood properly, but withal, seems to design the craft and cruelty of that people. They - The Jews. Their riches - To procure their assistance. Bunches - Upon the backs.

7. To her - To Jerusalem or Judah. Sit still - It is safer and better for them to sit quietly at home, seeking to me for help.

8. Write - This warning. Before - In their presence. Note it - So this was to be written twice over, once in a table, to be hanged up in some public place, that all present might read it; and again, in a book, that it might be kept for the use of posterity. The time to come - As a witness for me and against them.

11. Cause, &c. - Do not trouble us with harsh messages from God.

12. And trust - In the wealth which you have gotten by oppression, and in your perverse course of sending to Egypt for help.

13. This iniquity - Of trusting to Egypt, shall be like a wall which is high, but swelling forth in some parts, which, upon the least accident, falls down suddenly.

14. He - God.

15. In returning - To God. Quietness - In sitting still, and quieting your minds. Confidence - Placed upon me, and my promises.

17. 'Till - 'Till you be destroyed, and but a few of you left.

18. Wait - Patiently expect your repentance. Exalted - He will work gloriously. Judgment - Or mercy. That wait - In his way, with faith and patience.

19. Shall dwell - After a set time, they shall return to Jerusalem, and have a fixed abode. This was in part accomplished upon their return from Babylon; but more fully in the times of the gospel, when many of them were, and the whole body of them shall be brought into Christ's church.

21. Shall hear - Thou shalt hear the voice of God's word and spirit. Behind thee - A metaphor borrowed from shepherds, who use to follow their sheep, and recall them when they go out of the way.

22. Defile - To shew your contempt of it. Covering - The leaves or plates wherewith their images were frequently covered. Ornament - It was a costly and glorious robe.

23. Bread - Which shall be the fruit of thy own land and labour: and excellent for quality, which is called, fat, Deut. xxxii, 14, and abundant for quantity.

24. Clean provender - There should be such plenty of corn, that the very beasts, instead of straw, should eat corn; and that not in the ear, or with the straw, but the pure grain.

25. Hill - Which is commonly dry and barren. In the day - When God shall destroy the enemies of his people. The towers - The mighty potentates, who fought against God's people.

26. Sevenfold - As if the light of seven days were combined together in one. Healeth - When God shall effectually cure the wounds of his people, making Israel and Judah to be one, and making Jew and Gentile to be one fold under one shepherd.

27. Behold - Here he gives them an earnest of those greater mercies in times to come, by assuring them of the approaching destruction of the Assyrian forces. The name - The Lord himself. From far - From a remote place: even from heaven. Heavy - He will inflict heavy judgments upon them. Indignation - He hath pronounced a severe sentence against them, and will give command for the execution of it.

28. His breath - God's anger. A stream - Coming from him as vehemently, as a mighty torrent of waters. To sift - To shake and scatter, as it were with a sieve. The nations - The Assyrian army, which was made up of several nations. With - Not with an ordinary sieve, which casteth away the chaff only, but with a sieve, which should shake them so long and so vehemently, as to cast away altogether. A bridle - God will over-rule them by his powerful providence. To err - Whereas other bridles guide into the right way, this shall turn them out of the way, by giving them up to their own foolish counsels, which shall bring them to certain ruin.

29. A song - You shall have songs of praise. The night - He seems to have a particular respect to the solemnity of the passover, in which they spent some considerable part of the night in rejoicing, and singing psalms before the Lord. As when - Like the joy of one that is going up to the solemn feasts with musick.

30. His voice - His thunder, metaphorically taken for some terrible judgment. The lightning - Upon the Assyrian. With - With great wrath; which is signified by heaping so many words of the same signification together.

32. The rod - Hebrew. the founded rod, the judgment of God, called a founded rod, because it was firmly established, by God's immutable purpose. Him - Upon the Assyrian. With harps - Their destruction shall be celebrated by God's people, with joy and musick, and songs of praise. Of shaking - Or, shaking of the hand, of which kind of shaking this Hebrew word is constantly used. God will fight against them, and destroy them by his own hand. With it - With the army of the Assyrians.

33. Tophet - This was a place near Jerusalem, in which the idolatrous Israelites used to offer up their children to Moloch. It may be put, for any place of torment; and particularly it is put for hell. For the king - For the king of Assyria. Fire - He alludes to the ancient custom, of burning sacrifices, and particularly of burning children to Moloch. The breath - The immediate hand of God, or his word of anger. Brimstone - He seems to allude to that shower of fire and brimstone, Gen. xix, 24.

## XXXI

The folly and punishment of trusting in Egypt, ver. 1-3. God will fight for Jerusalem, ver. 4, 5. If they will turn unto him, ver. 6, 7. The fall of Assyria, ver. 8, 9.

1. Horses - For Egypt had many and choice horses.

2. He is safe - You think you are safe, in engaging the Egyptians; but God is not inferior to them in wisdom or strength, and therefore you have done foolishly, in preferring them before him, who will execute his judgments upon you, notwithstanding all the Egyptians can do. The help - The helpers, as it is explained in the next verse.

3. Flesh - Weak and frail.

4. For - Although you have done evil in sending to Egypt for help, yet the Lord himself will, of his own grace, give you that help which you do not deserve.

5. As birds - Which come from above, and so cannot be kept off; which fly swiftly, and engage resolutely, when their young ones are in danger. Passing over - The destroying angel shall pass over Jerusalem.

8. The sword - Not of any man, but of an angel. Discomfited - Hebrew. shall melt away, a great part of them being destroyed by the angel; and the hearts of the rest melting for fear.

9. He - Sennacherib shall flee away, from Jerusalem, to his strong city of Nineveh. The ensign - Of the Lord's ensign, which he hath lifted up against them. Whose fire - Who is, and will appear to be in Zion, like a fire to defend his people, and to consume their enemies.

## XXXII

Christ's kingdom and its blessings, ver. 1-8. Careless women, shall be troubled, ver. 9-11. And the land laid waste, ver. 12-14. Until a restoration, ver. 16-20.

1. Behold - This seems to be a distinct prophecy from the former, and delivered before that which is related in the former chapters. The prophecies are not always set down in that order, in which the prophets delivered them. The foregoing prophecy was delivered, not in the time of Ahaz

for he sent to the Assyrian, not the Egyptian, for help; it was Hezekiah, who rebelled against the king of Assyria, and was too prone to trust upon the staff of Egypt. But this seems to have been delivered in the time of Ahaz. A king - Hezekiah, a type of Christ, and Christ typified by him.

2. A man - Each of his princes. A hiding place - Unto the people under their government. The wind - From the rage and violence of evil men. As rivers - No less refreshing. As the shadow - In a dry and scorched country, which is called weary, because it makes travelers weary; as death is called pale in other authors, because it makes mens faces pale.

3. The eyes - The people, they shall not shut their eyes and ears against the good counsels and examples of their religious king and rulers, as they have done formerly: both princes and people shall be reformed.

4. The rash - Who were hasty in judging of things; which is an argument of ignorance and folly. The tongue - That used to speak of the things of God, darkly, and doubtfully; which though it was in part fulfilled in Hezekiah, yet was truly and fully accomplished only by Christ, who wrought this wonderful change in an innumerable company both of Jews and Gentiles.

5. The vile - Base and worthless men. Liberal - Shall no longer be reputed honourable, because of their high and honourable places, but wickedness shall be discovered where ever it is, and virtue manifested and rewarded. The churl - The sordid and covetous man; but under this one vice, all vices are understood, as under the opposite virtue of bountifulness; all virtues are comprehended.

6. Villainy - Men shall no longer be miscalled; for every one will discover what he is by his words and actions. Will work - He will, from time to time, be advising wickedness, that he may execute it when he hath opportunity. To practice - To do bad things, tho' with a pretense of religion and justice. To utter - To pass unjust sentence, directly contrary to the command of God. Cause the drink - Whereby they take away the bread and the drink of the poor.

7. Lying words - With false and unrighteous decrees. Even - When their cause is just and good.

9. Ye - That indulge yourselves in idleness and luxury. Careless - Who are insensible of your sin and danger.

10. The vintage shall fail - During the time of the Assyrian invasion. The gathering - Of the other fruits of the earth.

11. Strip - Put off your ornaments.

12. The teats - For the pleasant and fruitful fields, which like teats yielded you plentiful and excellent nourishment.

13. Yea - Upon that ground, where now your houses stand, in which you take your fill of mirth and pleasure.

14. Forsaken - Of God, and given up into their enemies hands. A joy - Desolate places, in which wild asses delight to be.

15. Until - Until the time come, in which God will pour, or, as the Hebrew word properly signifies, reveal, evidently and plentifully pour out his spirit from heaven upon his people, which was fully accomplished in the days of the Messiah. The fruitful field - God's people who were desolate, shall be revived and flourish, and their flourishing enemies shall be brought to destruction.

16. Judgment - Just judgment. Righteousness - Justice shall be executed in all the parts of the land.

17. The work - The effect of this shall be prosperity. Quietness - Tranquility, both of mind and outward estate. Assurance - Of God's mercy, and the fulfilling of his promises.

19. It shall hail - As my blessings shall be poured down upon my people, who, from a wilderness, are turned into a fruitful field, so my judgments (which are signified by hail, chap. xxviii, 2, 17, and elsewhere) shall fall upon them, who were a fruitful field, but are turned into a forest, upon the unbelieving and rebellious Jews. The city - Jerusalem, which, though now it was the seat of God's worship and people, yet he foresaw, would be the great enemy of the Messiah. Low - Hebrew. shall be humbled with humiliation: shall be greatly humbled, or brought very low.

20. Blessed - As the barren forest shall be destroyed, so the fruitful field shall be improved, and bring forth much fruit; which is signified by a declaration of the blessedness of them that sow in it. Waters - In all moist grounds, which are like to yield good fruit. But this also is to be understood of the times of the gospel, and of the great and happy success of the ministers of it. The ox - Which they employed in plowing and sowing the ground.

## XXXIII

The destruction of the enemies of the church, who are derided, ver. 1-13. Which terrifies the sinners in Zion, ver. 14. The safety and privileges of the godly, ver. 23, 24.

1. To thee - Sennacherib, who wasted the land of Judah.

2. O Lord - The prophet contemplating the judgment which was now coming upon God's people, directs his prayer to God for them. Their arm - Our arm or strength. The change of persons is frequent in prophetical writings. Every morning - When we offer the morning sacrifice, and call upon thee: which yet is not meant exclusively, as if he did not desire God's help at other times; but comprehensively, the morning being put for the whole day. The sense is, help us speedily and continually.

3. The noise - Which the angel shall make in destroying the army. The people - Those of the army, who escaped that stroke. The nations - The people of divers nations, which made up this army.

4. Your spoil - That treasure which you have raked together, by spoiling divers people. Gathered - By the Jews at Jerusalem, when you flee away. Like the caterpillar - As caterpillars gather and devour the fruits of the earth. As locusts - As locusts, especially when they are armed by commission from God, come with great force, and run hither and thither.

5. Exalted - By the destruction of so potent an army; and by the defense of this people.

6. Thy times - He turns his speech to Hezekiah. Thy throne shall be established upon the sure foundations of wisdom and justice. And strength - Thy strong salvation. The fear - Thy chief treasure is in promoting the fear and worship of God.

7. Behold - That the mercy promised might be duly magnified, he makes a lively representation of their great danger and distress. The ambassadors - Whom he shall send to beg peace of the Assyrian. Shall weep - Because they cannot obtain their desires.

8. The covenant - Sennacherib broke his faith, given to Hezekiah, of departing for a sum of money, 2 Kings xviii, 14, 17. Cities - The defensed cities of Judah, which he contemned, and easily took.

9. Mourneth - Being desolate and neglected. Hewn - By the Assyrians. Bashan - Two places eminent for fertility, are spoiled of their fruits.

11. Stubble - Instead of solid corn. Your great hopes and designs, shall be utterly disappointed. Your breath - Your rage against my people shall bring ruin upon yourselves.

12. The people - Shall be burnt as easily and effectually as chalk is burned to lime.

14. The sinners - This is spoken of the Jews. The prophet having foretold the deliverance of God's people, and the destruction of their enemies, gives a lively representation of the unbelieving condition, in which the Jews were, before their deliverance came. Who - How shall we be able to endure, or avoid the wrath of that God, who is a consuming fire; who is now about to destroy us utterly by the Assyrians, and will afterwards burn us with unquenchable fire?

15. He - Who is just in all his dealings. From hearing - Who will not hearken to any counsels, tending to shed innocent blood. From seeing - That abhors the very sight of sin committed by others, and guards his eyes from beholding occasions of sin.

16. On high - Out of the reach of danger. His waters - God will furnish him with all necessaries.

17. The king - First Hezekiah, and then Christ, triumphing over all enemies, and ruling his own people with righteousness. Very far - Thou shalt not be shut up in Jerusalem, but shalt have free liberty to go abroad with honour and safety.

18. Thine heart - This is a thankful acknowledgment of deliverance from their former terrors and miseries. Where - These words they spoke in the time of their distress. The scribe, whom we call muster-master, was to make and keep a list of the soldiers, and to call them together as occasion required: the receiver, received and laid out the money for the charges of the war; and he that counted the towers, surveyed all the parts of the city, and considered what towers or fortifications were to be made or repaired. And unto these several officers the people resorted, with great distraction and confusion.

19. A fierce - That fierce and warlike people, whom thou hast seen with terror, near the walls of Jerusalem, thou shalt see no more. A people - A foreign nation, whose language is unknown to thee.

20. Look upon - Contemplate Zion's glorious and peculiar privileges. Solemnities - This was the chief part of Zion's glory, that God was solemnly worshipped, and the solemn assemblies and feasts kept in her. Quiet - This was but imperfectly fulfilled in the literal Zion; but clearly and fully in the mystical Zion, the church of God, in the times of the gospel.

21. There - In and about Zion. Rivers - Tho' we have nothing but a small and contemptible brook to defend us; yet God will be as sure a defense to us, as if we were surrounded with great rivers. No galley - No ships of the enemies shall be able to come into this river to annoy them.

22. Is judge - To plead our cause against our enemies. Lawgiver - Our chief governor, to whom it belongs, to give laws, and to defend his people.

23. Tacklings - He directs his speech to the Assyrians; and having designed their army under the notion of a gallant ship, ver. 21, he here represents their undone condition, by the metaphor of a ship, tossed in a tempestuous sea, having her cables broke, and all her tacklings loose, so that she could have no benefit of her masts and sails; and therefore is quickly swallowed up. The lame - They shall leave so many spoils behind them, that there shall be enough left for the lame, who come last to the spoil.

24. The inhabitant - Of Jerusalem. Sick - Shall have no cause to complain of any sickness or calamity. Forgiven - They shall not only receive from me a glorious temporal deliverance; but,

which is infinitely better, the pardon of all their sins, and all those spiritual and everlasting blessings, which attend upon that mercy.

## XXXIV

God's fury and wrath against his church's enemies, ver. 1- 10. Their land utterly desolate, ver. 11-15. The certainly hereof, and duration, ver. 16, 17.

2. All nations - Not only upon the Assyrians, but on all enemies of my people.

3. Cast out - Into the fields.

4. Dissolved - The sun, moon, and stars. So great shall be the confusion and consternation of mankind, as if all the frame of the creation were broken into pieces. It is usual for prophetic writers, both in the Old and New Testament, to represent great and general calamities, in such words and phrases, as properly agree to the day of judgment; as on the contrary, the glorious deliverances of God's people, in such expressions, as properly agree to the resurrection from the dead.

5. Bathed - In the blood of these people. Heaven - Where God dwells; in which this is said to be done, because it was there decreed and appointed. Idumea - Upon the Edomites, who, tho' they were nearly related to the Israelites, yet were their implacable enemies. But these are named for all the enemies of God's church, of whom they were an eminent type. The people - Whom I have cursed, and devoted to utter destruction, as the word properly signifies.

6. The sword - The metaphor is taken from a great glutton, who is almost insatiable. Rams - By lambs, and goats, and rams, he means people of all ranks and conditions, high and low, rich and poor. Bozrah - A chief city of Edom, and a type of those cities which should be most opposite to God's people.

7. The unicorns - It is confessed, this was a beast of great strength and fierceness; and it is used in this place to signify their princes and potentates, who shall be humbled and cast down. Them - With the lambs, and goats, and rams. Fatness - With the fat of the slain sacrifices, mingled with it.

8. For - This is the time which God hath fixed, to avenge the cause of his persecuted people.

9. The land - Idumea shall be dealt with, as Sodom and Gomorrah were.

10. For ever - It shall remain as a spectacle of God's vengeance to all succeeding ages.

11. Dwell - It shall be entirely possessed by those creatures which delight in deserts and waste places. Stretch - He shall use the line, or the stone or plummet joined to it, not to build them, but to mark them out to destruction, as workmen commonly use them to mark what they are to pull down.

12. None - They shall not find any willing to undertake the government. Nothing - Shall have no courage or strength left in them.

16. Seek - When this judgment is executed, if you pursue this prophecy, you will find, that all things exactly come to pass, as I have told you. His - My spirit, (such sudden changes of persons being frequent here) hath brought all these creatures together, as he formerly brought the creatures to Adam, and to Noah, by an instinct which he put into them.

17. Divided - He hath divided the land to them, as it were by lot and line, as Canaan was divided among the Israelites.

## XXXV

The joyful flourishing of Christ's kingdom, ver. 1, 2. The weak he strengthens and comforts, ver. 3, 4. His miracles, ver. 5, 6. The prosperity and peace of his people, ver. 7-10.

1. The solitary place - Emmanuel's land, or the seat of God's church and people, which formerly was despised like a wilderness, and which the rage of their enemies had brought to desolation, shall flourish exceedingly.

2. The excellency - The wilderness shall be as pleasant and fruitful as Lebanon, and Carmel, and Sharon. They - The inhabitants of the wilderness aforesaid. The glory - The glorious discoveries of God's power and goodness.

3. Strengthen - Ye ministers of God, comfort and encourage God's people, who are now ready to faint.

4. Your God - Tho' he seems to be departed, he will come to you, and abide with you. He will shortly come in the flesh, to execute vengeance upon the enemies of God.

5. Then - The poor Gentiles, who before were blind and deaf, shall now have the eyes and ears of their minds opened to see God's works, and to hear and receive his word.

7. Streams - The most dry and barren places shall be made moist and fruitful; which is principally meant of the plentiful effusion of God's grace upon such persons and nations, as had been wholly destitute of it. Rushes - Those dry and parched deserts, in which dragons have their abode, shall yield abundance of grass, and reeds, and rushes, which grow only in moist ground.

8. A way - The high-way and the way are not to be taken for two different ways, but for one and the same way, even a causey, which is raised ground, and a way. Holiness - The people (walking in it) shall be all righteous. For those - But this way shall be appropriated to those persons above-mentioned; the weak, and blind, and lame, whom God will lead and save. Though fools - The way shall be so plain and strait, that even the most foolish travelers cannot easily mistake it.

## XXXVI

Sennacherib invades Judah, ver. 1. He sends Rabshakeh, who by his blasphemous persuasions tempts Hezekiah to despair, and the people to revolt, ver. 2-22. The history related here, and in the three following chapters, is, almost in the same words contained 2 Kings 18, 19, 20. It is inserted here, to explain and confirm some of the foregoing predictions. It may seem to have first been written by this prophet, and from him taken into the book of Kings, to compleat that history.

## XXXVII

Hezekiah mourns and sends to Isaiah to pray for them, ver. 1-5. He comforts them, ver. 6, 7. Sennacherib called away against the king of Ethiopia, sends a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah, ver. 8-13. His prayer, ver. 14-20. Isaiah's prophecy, ver. 21-35. An angel slays the Assyrians, ver. 36. Sennacherib is slain at Nineveh by his own sons, ver. 37, 38.

## XXXVIII

Hezekiah in his sickness receives from Isaiah a message of death, ver. 1. By prayer, ver. 2, 3. hath his life lengthened; the sun goeth backward for a sign thereof, ver. 4-8. His song of praise to God, ver. 9-20.

13. I reckon - When I could not rest all the night even 'till morning, my thoughts were presaging that God would instantly break me to pieces, and the like thoughts followed me from morning 'till evening.

16. By these - By thy promises, and thy performance of them; therefore it is not strange, that one word of God hath brought me back from the jaws of death.

18. Praise - The dead are not capable of glorifying thy name among men upon earth. They cannot expect nor receive the accomplishment of thy promised goodness in the land of the living.

20. Was ready - Was a present help.

## XXXIX

The king of Babylon sends ambassadors with letters and a present to Hezekiah, who shews them his treasures, ver, 1, 2, Isaiah foretells the Babylonish captivity, ver. 4-7. His resignation, ver. 8.

## XL

The prophet having now foretold the Babylonish captivity, chap. xxxix, 6, 7, does here arm his people against it by the consideration of their certain deliverance out of it, and their blessed condition after it, as in other things so especially in the coming of the Messiah, and the great and glorious privileges conferred upon God's church and people in his days. The preaching of the gospel by John the baptist and the apostles, ver. 1-11. The power and wisdom of God in governing the world, ver. 12-17. The folly of idolatry, ver. 18-26. God knows the state of his people, and both can and will protect them, ver. 27-31.

1. Ye - Ye prophets and ministers.

2. Warfare - The time of her captivity, and misery. Double - Not twice as much as her sins deserved, but abundantly enough to answer God's design in this chastisement, which was to humble and reform them, and to warn others by their example.

3. The voice - An abrupt speech. Methinks I hear a voice. Wilderness - This immediately relates to the deliverance of the Jews out of Babylon, and smoothing their passage from thence to Judea, which lay through a great wilderness; but principally to their redemption by the Messiah, whose coming was ushered in by the cry of John the baptist, in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way - You to whom this work belongs. He alludes to the custom of princes who send pioneers before them to prepare the way through which they are to pass. The meaning is, God shall by his spirit so dispose mens hearts, and by his providence so order the affairs of the world, as to make way for the accomplishment of his promise. This was eminently fulfilled, when Christ, who was, and is God, blessed for ever, came into the world in a visible manner.

6. Cry - God speaks unto his ministers. He - The prophet. All flesh - The prophet having foretold glorious things, confirms the certainty of them, by representing the vast difference between the nature, and word, and work of men and of God. All that men are or have, yea, their highest accomplishments, are but like the grass of the field, weak and vanishing, soon nipt and brought to nothing; but God's word is like himself, immutable and irresistible: and therefore as the mouth of the Lord, and not of man, hath spoken these things, so doubt not but they shall be fulfilled.

9. Zion - Zion or Jerusalem is the publisher, and the cities of Judah the hearers. Get up - That thy voice may be better heard. Afraid - Lest thou shouldest be found a false prophet. Say - To all my people in the several places of their abode. Behold - Take notice of this wonderful work, and glorious appearance of your God.

10. His arm - He shall need no succors, for his own power shall be sufficient to govern his people, and to destroy his adversaries. His reward - He comes furnished with recompences as well of blessings for his friends, as of vengeance for his enemies. His work - He carries on his work effectually: for that is said in scripture to be before a man which is in his power.

12. Who hath - Who can do this but God? And this discourse of God's infinite power and wisdom, is added to give them the greater assurance, that God was able to do the wonderful things, he had promised.

13. Who - Who did God either need or take to advise him in any of his works, either of creation or the government of the world.

15. Are counted - By him, and in comparison of him. The dust - Which accidentally cleaves to the balance, but makes no alteration in the weight. The isles - Those numerous and vast countries, to which they went from Judea by sea, which are commonly called isles.

16. Lebanon - If men were to offer a sacrifice agreeable to his infinite excellency, the whole forest of Lebanon could not afford either a sufficient number of beasts to be sacrificed: or, a sufficient quantity of wood to consume the sacrifice.

18. To whom - This is a proper inference from the foregoing discourse of God's infinite greatness; from whence he takes occasion to shew both the folly of those that make mean and visible representations of God, and the utter inability of men or idols to give any opposition to God.

19. Melteth - He melts metal into a mould, which afterwards is graven or carved to make it more exact.

20. He - That can hardly procure money to buy a sacrifice. Chuseth - He is so mad upon his idols, that he will find money to procure the choicest materials, and the best artist to make his idol. An image - Which after all this cost, cannot stir one step out of its place to give you any help.

21. Known - God to be the only true God, the maker and governor of the world.

22. Sitteth - Far above this round earth, even in the highest heavens; from whence he looketh down upon the earth, where men appear to him like grasshoppers. As here we have the circle of the earth, so elsewhere we read of the circle of heaven, Job xxii, 14, and of the circle of the deep, or sea, Prov. viii, 27, because the form of the heaven, and earth and sea is circular. Spreadeth - For the benefit of the earth and of mankind, that all parts might partake of its comfortable influences.

24. Sown - They shall take no root, for planting and sowing are in order to taking root. They shall not continue and flourish, as they have vainly imagined, but shall be rooted up and perish.

26. Bringeth - That at first brought them out of nothing, and from day to day brings them forth, making them to rise and set in their appointed times. Faileth - Either to appear when he calls them; or to do the work to which he sends them.

27. What - Why dost thou give way to such jealousies concerning thy God, of whose infinite power and wisdom, and goodness, there are such evident demonstrations. Is hid - He takes no notice of my prayers and tears, and sufferings, but suffers mine enemies to abuse me at their pleasure. This complaint is uttered in the name of the people, being prophetically supposed to be in captivity. Judgment - My cause. God has neglected to plead my cause, and to give judgment for me against mine enemies.

30. The youths - The youngest and strongest men, left to themselves.

31. Wait - That rely upon him. Renew - Shall grow stronger and stronger.

## XLI

God called Cyrus, and was with him, the nations idolatrous, ver. 1-8. Israel encouraged by promises of safety and deliverance, ver. 9-20. The vanity of idols, ver. 21-24. Redemption by Christ, ver. 25-29.

1. Keep silence - Attend diligently to my plea. Islands - By islands he means countries remote from Judea, inhabited by the idolatrous Gentiles. Renew - Strengthen themselves to maintain their cause against me; let them unite all their strength together. Near - Unto me that we may stand together, and plead our cause, and I will give them free liberty to say what they can on their own behalf.

2. Who - Was it not my work alone? Raised - Into being and power, stirring up his spirit, and strengthening him to the work. The man - Cyrus. The east - Persia was directly eastward, both from Judea and from Babylon. He was raised up by God in an eminent manner. And although these things were yet to come; yet the prophet speaks of them as if they were already past. And by this instance he pleads his cause against the Gentiles; because this was an evident proof of God's almighty power, and of the vanity of idols, which eminently appeared in the destruction of the Babylonians,

who were a people mad upon their idols. Called him - To march after him, and under God's banner against Babylon.

3. Pursued - Went on in the pursuit with ease and safety. Even - Through unknown paths.

4. Calling - Them out of nothing, giving them breath and being: disposing and employing them as he sees fit. From the beginning - All persons and generations of mankind from the beginning of the world. I - Who was before all things even from eternity, and shall be unto eternity.

5. The isles - Even remote countries. Saw - Discerned the mighty work of God in delivering his people, and overthrowing their enemies. Feared - Lest they should be involved in the same calamity. Came - They gathered themselves together.

7. Fastened it - To the wall or pillar.

9. Thou - Thou Israel, whom I took to myself, and brought hither in the loins of thy father Abraham, from a remote country. Called thee - From the midst of many great persons among whom he lived in Chaldea. Chosen - I have chosen thee and thy seed through all generations.

11. Confounded - Because the mischief which they contrived against thee shall fall upon themselves.

13. Will hold - Will enable thee to vanquish all thine enemies.

14. Thou worm - Who art weak in thyself, and trodden under foot by thy proud enemies.

15. An instrument - Such as were usual in those times and places. The mountains - The great and lofty potentates of the world.

16. Fan - When thou hast beaten them as small as chaff. In the Holy One - For to him, thou shalt ascribe thy victory.

18. In high places - Upon the mountains where by the course of nature there are no rivers. The dry land - Their people who are like a dry and barren wilderness. I will abundantly water with my blessings.

19. The box tree - Trees which are both useful and pleasant to the eye, and giving a good shadow to the traveler. But what particular trees these Hebrew words signify, is not certainly known.

22. Them - The idols. Former things - Such things as should shortly come to pass. The latter end - Whether the events answer to their predictions.

23. Do good - Protect your worshippers whom I intend to destroy, and destroy my people whom I intend to save. That - That I and my people may be astonished, and forced to acknowledge your godhead.

24. Your work - Your operations are like your beings: there is no reality in your beings, nor efficacy in your actions.

25. Raised - Cyrus, might be said to come from the north, because he was a Mede by his mother, as he was a Persian by his father; or because a great part of his army was gathered out of Media, which was northward, in reference to Judea, and because Darius the Mede was joined with him in this expedition. Proclaim - This Cyrus did in express, emphatical terms, Ezra i, 1, 2. As on mortar - Treading them down, as easily as a man treads down mortar.

26. Who - Which of your idols could foretel such things as these from the beginning of the world unto this day? Before-time - Before the things come to pass. Righteous - His cause is good: he is a God indeed. Heareth - Because you are dumb and cannot speak.

27. The first - I who am the first, do and will foretel to my people things to come. Them - I also represent future things as if they were present. By them he means things which are to come. One - Messengers, who shall foretel the good tidings of their deliverance from captivity.

28. For - I looked to see if I could find any man that could foretel future events. No man - Not any, of the idols; for the word man is sometimes used by the Hebrew of brute creatures, and even of lifeless things. No counsellor - Though these idols were often consulted, yet none of them were able to give any solid and certain advice concerning future things.

29. Behold - This is the conclusion of the dispute, but under these he comprehends all images whatsoever. Wind - Empty and unsatisfying things. Confusion - Confused and useless things, like that rude heap in the beginning of God's creation, of which this very word is used, Gen. i, 2.

## XLII

The person and office of Christ appointed by the Father, ver. 1-9. A new song to God for his gospel, among the Gentiles, ver. 10-16. The idolatry of the Heathen, and obstinacy of the Jews, ver. 17-25.

1. Behold - The prophet having given one eminent instance of God's certain fore-knowledge, in the deliverance of the Jews by Cyrus, now adds another more eminent example of it, by foretelling the coming of the Messiah. This place therefore is expressly interpreted of Christ, Matt. xii, 18, &c. And to him, and to him only, all the particulars following, truly and evidently belong. Whom - Whom I will enable to do and suffer all those things which belong to his office. Elect - Chosen by me to this great work. Delighteth - Both for himself and for all his people, being fully satisfied with that sacrifice, which he shall offer up to me. Bring forth - Shall publish or shew, as this word is translated, Matt. xii, 18. Judgment - The law, and will, and counsel of God, concerning man's salvation. Gentiles - Not only to the Jews, but to the Heathen nations.

2. Cry - In a way of contention, or ostentation. Lift - His voice. Heard - As contentious and vain-glorious persons frequently do.

3. Break - Christ will not deal rigorously with those that come to him, but he will use all gentleness, cherishing the smallest beginnings of grace, comforting and healing wounded consciences. Quench - That wick of a candle which is almost extinct, he will not quench, but revive and kindle it again. Judgment - The law of God, or the doctrine of the gospel, which he will bring forth, unto, with, or according to truth, that is, truly and faithfully.

4. 'Till - 'Till he has established his law or doctrine, among the nations of the earth. Isles - The countries remote from Judea, shall gladly receive his doctrine.

5. He - This description of God's infinite power, is seasonably added, to give them assurance of the certain accomplishment of his promises.

6. Called thee - To declare my righteousness, or faithfulness. With-hold - Will give thee counsel and strength for the work. Give thee - To be the mediator in whom my covenant of grace is confirmed with mankind. The people - Of all people, not only of Jews but Gentiles. A light - To enlighten them with true and saving knowledge.

8. The Lord - Hebrew. Jehovah: who have all being in and of myself, and give being to all my creatures. The everlasting, and unchangeable, and omnipotent God, who therefore both can, and will fulfil all my promises.

9. I tell you - That when they come to pass, you may know that I am God, and that this is my work.

10. Sing - Upon this new and great occasion, the salvation of the world by Christ. From the end - All nations from one end of the earth to another. Ye - You that go by sea carry these glad tidings from Judea, where Christ was born, and lived, and died, and published the gospel, unto the remotest parts of the earth.

11. The wilderness - Those parts of the world which are now desolate and forsaken of God, and barren of all good fruits. Kedar - The Arabians: who were an Heathen and barbarous people, and are put for all nations. Mountains - Who are commonly more savage and ignorant than others.

12. The islands - In the remotest parts of the world, as well as in Arabia, which was near to them.

13. Go forth - To battle. Stir up - He shall stir up his strength, and anger against the obstinate enemies of his Son and gospel. Roar - As a lion doth upon his prey, and as soldiers do when they begin the battle.

14. Long - I have for many ages suffered the devil and his servants, to prevail in the world, but now I will bring forth and accomplish that glorious work which I have long conceived in my mind; yea, I will suddenly destroy the incorrigible enemies of my truth.

15. Hills - My most lofty and flourishing enemies. Dry up - I will remove all impediments out of the way.

16. The blind - The Gentiles. By a way - By the way of truth, which hitherto has been hidden from them, yea, I will take away all hindrances; I will direct then in the right way; I will enlighten their dark minds, and rectify their perverse wills and affections, until I have brought theirs to the end of their journey.

18. Hear - O you, whosoever you are, who resist this clear light.

19. My servant - The Jews, who will not receive their, Messiah. Messenger - My messengers, the singular number being put for the plural, namely the priests and other teachers whom I have appointed to instruct my people. The Lord's servant - As the most eminent teachers and rulers of the Jews, who were called and obliged to be the Lord's servants, in a special manner.

20. Heareth not - Thou dost not seriously consider the plain word, and the wonderful works of God.

21. Well pleased - Altho' God might justly destroy thee suddenly, yet he will patiently wait for thy repentance, that he may be gracious; and that not for thy sake, but for the glory of his own faithfulness, in fulfilling that covenant, which he made with thy pious progenitors. Magnify - He will maintain the honour of his law, and therefore is not forward to destroy you, who profess the true religion, lest his law should upon that occasion be exposed to contempt.

22. But - But not withstanding this respect which God hath to his people, he hath severely scourged you for your sins. Hid - They have been taken in snares made by their own hands, and by God's just judgment cast into dungeons and prisons. None - None afforded them help.

25. Fury - Most grievous judgments. Yet - They were secure and stupid under God's judgments.

## XLIII

Promises to protect and enlarge the church, ver. 1-5. God appeals to them as witnesses of his power and knowledge, ver. 6- 13. He foretells the destruction of Babylon, and a new deliverance of his people, ver. 14-21. whose sins, ver. 22-24. against God's mercies render them inexcusable, ver. 25-28.

1. But - Notwithstanding thy gross insensibleness, I will deal mercifully with thee. Created - That made thee his people, and that in so miraculous a manner as if he had created thee a second time. Redeemed - From the Egyptians. Called thee - By the name of God's people, which was as proper and peculiar to them, as the name of Israel.

3. I gave Egypt - This was fulfilled when the king of Assyria, Esar-haddon, who designed to revenge his father's disgrace, upon the Jews, was diverted and directed by God to employ his forces against Egypt, and Ethiopia, and Seba. Seba - The Sabaeans were confederate with the Ethiopians.

4. Since - From the time that I chose thee for my people, I have had an affection for thee. Men - As I gave up the Egyptians, so I am ready to give up others to save thee, as occasion requires.

7. For my glory - And therefore I will glorify my power and goodness, and faithfulness in delivering them. Formed - I have not only created them out of nothing, but I have also formed and made them my peculiar people.

8. Bring - O ye idolatrous Gentiles, bring forth your false gods, which have eyes but see not, and ears but hear not.

9. Assembled - To plead the cause of their idols with me. This - This wonderful work of mine in bringing my people out of captivity. Former things - Such things as shall happen long before the return from the captivity, which yet your blind idols cannot foresee. Witnesses - Who can testify the truth of any such predictions of theirs, that they may be owned for true gods; or if they can produce no evidence of any such thing, let them confess, that what I say is truth, that I only am the true God.

10. Ye - You my people are able to witness for me, that I have given you plain demonstrations of my certain knowledge of future events. My servant - Cyrus who is an eminent instance and proof of God's foreknowledge: or, the Messiah, who is the most eminent witness in this cause. Understand - That I am the true God. Nor after me - The gods of the Heathens neither had a being before me nor shall continue after me: whereas the Lord is God from everlasting to everlasting; but these pretenders are but of yesterday. And withal he calls them formed gods, in a way of contempt, and to shew the ridiculousness of their pretense.

12. I - I first foretold your deliverance, and then effected it. When - And this I did when you did not worship any idols.

13. Yea - Before all time; from all eternity, I am God.

14. Sent - I have sent Cyrus against Babylon, to this very end, that he might deliver you out of captivity. Chaldeans - The common people of Chaldea, who make fearful outcries, as they flee away from the Persians in ships.

17. The chariot - Pharaoh and his chariots and horses, and army. Lay down - In the bottom of the sea. They never rose again to molest the Israelites. Quenched - As the wick of a candle when it is put into the water, is extinguished.

18. Remember not - Tho' your former deliverance out of Egypt was glorious: yet in comparison of that inestimable mercy of sending the Messiah, all your former deliverances are scarce worthy of your remembrance and consideration.

19. A new thing - Such a work as was never yet done in the world. Now - The scripture often speaks of things at a great distance of time, as if they were now at hand; to make us sensible of the inconsiderableness of time, and all temporal things, in comparison of God, and eternal things; upon which account it is said, that a thousand years are in God's sight but as one day.

20. The beast - Shall have cause, if they had abilities, to praise me for their share in this mercy. Dragons - Which live in dry and barren deserts.

22. For - God called to the Gentiles to be his people, because the Jews forsook him. Weary - Thou hast not esteemed my service to be a privilege, but a burden and bondage.

23. honoured - Either thou didst neglect sacrificing to me; or didst perform it merely out of custom or didst dishonour me, and pollute thy sacrifices by thy wicked life. Although - Altho' God had not laid such heavy burdens upon them, nor required such costly offerings, as might give them cause to be weary, nor such as idolaters did freely perform in the service of their idols.

24. Sweet cane - This was used in the making of that precious ointment, Exod. xxx, 34, and for the incense, Exod. xxx, 7. Thou hast been niggardly in my service, when thou hast, spared for no cost in the service of thine idols. Nor filled me - Thou hast not multiplied thy thank-offerings and free-will offerings, tho' I have given thee sufficient occasion to do so. But - Thou hast made me to bear the load and burden of thy sins.

25. I - I whom thou hast thus provoked. Mine own sake - Not for thy merits, but my own mere goodness.

26. Put me - I remember nothing by which thou hast deserved my favour.

27. Thy father - This may be put for their forefathers; and so he tells them, that as they were sinners, so also were their progenitors, yea even the best of them. Teachers - Thy priests and prophets; who were their intercessors with God: and if these were transgressors, the people had no reason to fancy themselves innocent.

28. Therefore - I have exposed them to contempt and destruction. Princes - The highest and best of your priests. Curse - To utter destruction, to which persons or things accursed were devoted.

## XLIV

A farther promise of spiritual blessings, ver. 1-6. The vanity of idols, and folly of idol-makers, and worshippers, ver. 7- 20. An exhortation to praise God, ver. 21-23. our Redeemer and maker, ver. 24. for his wisdom, ver. 25. truth, ver. 26. power, ver. 27. and goodness, ver. 28.

2. Formed thee - From the time that I first took thee to be my people, I have been forming and fashioning thee. Jesurun - Another name of Jacob or Israel, given to him, Deut. xxxii, 15.

3. Water - Upon him that is destitute of it.

5. Israel - The blessing of God upon the Jews shall be so remarkable, that the Gentiles shall join them, and accept the Lord for their God.

7. Who - Which of all the Heathen gods. Declare - Shall by his powerful word cause it to be, and by his fore-knowledge declare that it shall be. Set in order - Orderly relate all future events in the same manner as they shall happen. Since - Since I first made man upon earth. The things - Such things as are near at hand, and such as are to come hereafter.

8. Ye - Thee, O Israel, whom he bids not to fear. Told thee - Even from the first ages of the world. Declared - Have published it to the world in my sacred records. Witnesses - Both of my predictions, and of the exact agreeableness of events to them.

9. Delectable things - Their idols, in which they take so much pleasure. They - They that make them, are witnesses against themselves, and against their idols, because they know they are the work of their own hands. See not - Have neither sense nor understanding, therefore they have just cause to be ashamed of their folly, in worshipping such senseless things.

11. Men - They are of mankind, and therefore cannot possibly make a God. Together - Tho' all combine together, they shall be filled with fear and confusion, when God shall plead his cause against them.

12. Faint - This is mentioned as an evidence of great zeal and industry in carrying on this work; so that they forget or neglect to eat and drink.

13. According to - In the same comely shape and proportions which are in a living man. House - In the dwelling-house of him that made it.

14. Oak - Which afford the best and most durable timber. Strengtheneth - He plants, and with care and diligence improves those trees, that he or his posterity may thence have materials for their images, and those things which belong to them.

15. Fallen down - Having related the practices of idolaters, he now discovers the folly of them, that he makes his fire and his God of the same materials, distinguished only by the art of man.

17. He eateth - He dresses flesh for his eating. Seen - I have felt the warmth of it.

18. Not known - This shews that they have not the understanding of a man. For he - God. Not as if God did make men wicked; he only permits them so to be, and orders, and over-rules their wickedness to his own glorious ends.

20. Ashes - An unprofitable and pernicious food, and no less unsatisfying and mischievous is the worship of idols. Deceived heart - A mind corrupted and deceived by deep prejudice, gross error, and especially by his own lusts. Turned - From the way of truth. Deliver - From the snares and dangers of idolatry. Is there not - What is this idol which I set at my right-hand, as the true God is said in scripture to be at the right-hand of his people; which I highly honour, for the most honourable place was on the right-hand; to which I look for relief and assistance, which God in scripture is said to afford to his people, by being at and holding their right-hand. What, I say, is this idol? Is it not a lie, which tho' it pretends to be a God, yet, in truth is nothing but vanity and falsehood?

21. These - These things, the deep ignorance and stupidity of idolaters. Forgotten - I will not forget nor forsake thee; therefore thou shalt have no need of idols.

22. As a cloud - So that there is no remnant of it left.

23. Sing - By such invitations to the senseless creatures, he signifies the transcendent greatness of this mercy, sufficient to make even the stones, if it were possible, to break forth into God's praises.

25. Liars - Of the magicians, and astrologers, who were numerous, and greatly esteemed in Babylon, and who had foretold the long continuance and prosperity of the Chaldean empire. Mad

- With grief for the disappointment of their predictions, and their disgrace which followed it. Turneth - Stopping their way, and blasting their designs.

27. That saith - That with a word can dry up the sea and rivers, and remove all impediments.

28. Cyrus - Whom God here mentions by his proper name, two hundred years before he was born, that this might be an undeniable evidence of the exactness of God's fore-knowledge, and a convincing argument to conclude this dispute between God and idols. Shepherd - Then will I set up to be the shepherd of my people, to rescue them from wolves or tyrants, to gather them together, to rule them gently, and to provide comfortably for them.

## XLV

Cyrus's work and strength foretold, ver. 1-4. God hath all power, ver. 5-12. Will assist Cyrus, ver. 13, 14. The mystery of providence, ver. 15. Idols and their worshippers shall be destroyed, and God alone exalted, ver. 16-21. The Gentiles come in to Christ, ver. 22, 23.

1. His anointed - His king, whom God has designed, and separated, and fitted, in all respects, for this work. Loose - I will take away their girdle, which was about their loins; their power and authority, whereof that was an ensign. Gates - The great and magnificent gates of their cities and palaces, which shall be opened to him as conqueror.

2. Go - To remove all obstructions, to destroy all them that oppose thee, and carry thee through the greatest difficulties.

3. The treasures - Such as have been long kept in dark and secret places.

4. I have - I knew, and called thee by thy name, when thou didst neither know nor think of me; nay, when thou hadst no being.

5. I girded - I made thee strong and active, and disposed thee for these great and warlike enterprizes.

6. That - That all nations may know it by my foretelling these things so long before, and by the wonderful success that I shall give thee, and by my over-ruling thine heart and counsels, to the deliverance of my people.

7. Light - All mens comforts and calamities come from thy hand.

8. Drop - The righteous and gracious acts of God for his people, shall be so many, as if God rained showers of righteousness out of heaven. Open - Open itself to bring forth those fruits which may be expected from such showers. Them - The heavens and the earth conspiring together. Together - Together with salvation. It - This great work of salvation and righteousness; whereof, tho' Cyrus is the instrument, I am the author.

9. Woe - As God here makes many glorious promises to Cyrus, so he pronounces a curse upon them, who should endeavour to hinder him. Contend - Contend, if you please, with your fellow creatures, but not with your creator. Or - He turns his speech to the potter.

11. Thus saith - Will you not allow me that liberty which yourselves take, of disposing of my own children and works, as I see fit?

13. Him - Cyrus. In righteousness - Most justly, to punish the wicked Babylonians, to plead the cause of the oppressed ones, to manifest my righteousness, and truth, and goodness.

14. The labour - The wealth gotten by their labour. Thee - Jerusalem shall not only be rebuilt, but the wealth and glory of other countries shall be brought to it again. This was in part verified in Jerusalem; but it was much more fully accomplished in the church of the gospel, in the accession of the Gentiles to that church which began in Jerusalem, and from thence spread itself into all the parts of the world. Come over - They shall be taken captive by thee, and willingly submit themselves to thee.

15. Verily - These are the words of the prophet, on contemplation of the various dispensations of God towards his church, and in the world. Hidest - Thy counsels are deep and incomprehensible, thy ways are past finding out.

19. In secret - The Heathen idols deliver oracles in obscure cells and caverns: but I have delivered my oracles to Israel publickly and plainly. In vain - Serve and worship me for nought. As I appointed them work, so from time to time I have given them abundant recompence. Right - I require nothing of my people which is not highly just and good.

20. Draw near - To hear what I have said, and am now about to say. Of the nations - The remnant of the Gentiles, who survive the many destructions, which I am bringing upon the Heathen nations.

21. Take counsel - To maintain the cause of their idols. This - This great work, Babylon's destruction, and the redemption of God's people.

23. In righteousness - It is what I will faithfully perform. Return - Without effect. It is a metaphor from ambassadors, who sometimes return to their princes without any success in their business. Every tongue - Not only the Jews, but all nations.

24. In the Lord - By or from God alone, or the Messiah, who is the true Jehovah as well as man. Righteousness - To justify me from all things which I could not be justified by the law of Moses. Strength - Support and assistance to bear all my burdens, overcome all my enemies, and perform all my duties. Men - The Gentiles shall come to Christ. Ashamed - But all his implacable enemies shall be brought to shame.

25. All - All Israelites indeed, whether Jews or Gentiles.

## XLVI

The ruin of Babylon and her idols, ver. 1-2. God's love and faithfulness to the Jews. ver. 3-4. Idols not to be compared with God, ver. 5-8. for power, knowledge, and sure salvation, ver. 9- 13.

1. Bel - The chief idol of the Babylonians, called by profane historians Jupiter Belus. Boweth - As the Babylonians used to bow down to him to worship, so now he bows down to the victorious Persians. Nebo - Another of the famous idols, which used to deliver oracles. Their idols - Were taken and broken, and the materials of them, gold, silver, and brass, were carried upon beasts into Persia. Your carriages - O ye Persians, to whom he turns his speech.

2. They - The Babylonians. Together - The Babylonians and their idols together, neither could help the other. Deliver - The Babylonians could not deliver their idols.

3. Carried - Whom I have nourished, ever since you were a people, and came out of Egypt; and that as tenderly, as parents bring up their own children.

7. Remove - He can stir neither hand nor foot to help his people.

8. Bring it - Think of this again and again, ye who have been guilty of this foolish sin.

10. Declaring - Foretelling from the beginning of the world, future events which should happen in succeeding ages, even to the end of the world.

11. A bird - Cyrus, called a bird for his swiftness, and ravenous for his fierceness, and victoriousness over his enemies.

13. I bring - Tho' you are unrighteous, I will shew myself a righteous and faithful God, making good my promise of delivering you out of Babylon after seventy years. It - My work of saving you from the Babylonish captivity. Will place - I will bring my people to Zion, and save them from all their enemies. My glory - In whom I will once again glory as my people.

## XLVII

God's judgments upon Babylon and Chaldea, for their cruelty towards God's people, ver. 1-6. Their pride and other sins, ver. 7-10. Their enchantments shall not deliver them, ver. 11-15.

1. Down - From thy throne. Virgin - So, called, because she was tender and delicate. No throne - For thee. The empire is taken from thee, and translated to the Persians. Called - Be so.

2. Millstones - Thou shalt be brought to the basest slavery, which grinding at the mill was esteemed. For this work was not performed by horses, as now it is, but by the labour of slaves and captives. Grind - Grind bread-corn into meal for thy master's use. Uncover - Take off the ornaments wherewith such women as were of good quality, used to cover and dress their heads. These are predictions of what they should be forced to do or suffer. Thigh - Gird up thy garments close and short about thee, that thou mayest be fit for travelling on foot, and for passing over those rivers, through which thou wilt be constrained to wade, in the way to the land of thy captivity.

3. Uncovered - Either for want of raiment to cover it; or rather, by thine enemies in way of scorn and contumely. As a man - With moderation and gentleness, as those men who have not quite put off humanity use to do.

5. Silent - Thro' grief and shame, as mourners use to do. The lady - The chief and glory of all kingdoms.

6. Polluted - I cast them away as an unclean thing. Into thine hand - To punish them. No mercy - Thou hast exceeded the bounds of thy commission. The ancient - Who besides their common calamity were afflicted with the miseries of old age, and therefore did require both pity and reverence.

7. These things - Thy cruel usages of my people, and the heavy judgments which thou hadst reason to expect for them. Nor remember - Thou didst not consider what might and was likely to befall thee afterward.

8. I am - Independent, and self-sufficient. None - Which is not either subject to me, or far inferior to me in power and glory. Shall not sit - I shall never want either a king or people to defend me.

9. Perfection - In the highest degree.

10. Trusted - Confidently expecting to preserve thyself by these and other wicked arts. None seeth - My counsels are so deeply laid. Perverted - Hath misled thee into the way of perdition. None seeth - Which is repeated, to denote their intolerable self- confidence.

11. Therefore - This agrees with the history. Babylon being surprized by Cyrus, when they were in deep security.

12. Stand - Persist in these practices. laboured - From the beginning of thy kingdom. For the Chaldeans in all ages were famous for the practice of these arts.

13. Wearied - Thou hast spent thy time and strength in going from one to another, and all to no purpose.

15. Thus - Such comfortless and helpless creatures. They - Merchants who came from several countries to trade with Babylon. And the verse may be thus rendered; Thus (vain and unprofitable) shall they (thy sorcerers) with whom thou hast laboured be unto thee: (So here is only a transposition of words, than which nothing is more usual in scripture. Then follows another matter:) also thy merchants, or they with whom thou hast traded from thy youth, shall wander every one to his own quarter.

## XLVIII

God reproves their hypocrisy and obstinacy by his prophecies, ver. 1-8. He spares them for his name's sake, and that they may learn to know him aright, ver. 9-11. God's powerful salvation a motive to obedience, ver. 12-17. God laments their backwardness, ver. 18, 19. Deliverance out of Babylon, ver. 20, 21. No peace to the wicked, ver. 22.

1. Called - Who are Israelites in name, but not in truth. Are come - From the lineage of your progenitor, Judah, as waters flow from a fountain. Swear - Who profess the true religion; (one act of religion being put for all) and call themselves by his name.

2. Though - They glory that they are citizens of Jerusalem, a city sanctified by God, to be the place of his true worship, and gracious presence. And stay - Not by a true faith, but a vain confidence.

4. I knew - Therefore I gave thee clearer demonstrations of my nature and providence, because I knew thou wast an unbelieving nation. Thy neck - Will not bow down to receive my yoke. Thy brow - Thou wast impudent.

6. See - As thou hast heard all these things, from time to time, seriously consider them. Declare - I call you to witness: must you not be forced to acknowledge the truth of what I say? Shewed - And I have now given thee new predictions of secret things, such as 'till this time were wholly unknown to thee, concerning thy deliverance out of Babylon by Cyrus.

7. Created - Revealed to thee by me; brought to light, as things are by creation. Not - Hebrew. not from thence, not from these ancient times when other things were revealed to thee. Or - Hebrew. and (or, or, as this particle is frequently used) before this day. This day answers to now in the first clause: and seems to be added as an exposition of it. Before this time in which God hath revealed them to thee by my ministry. I knew - Either by thine own sagacity: or by the help of thine idols.

8. Yea - The same thing is repeated, because this was so illustrious a proof of the infinite power and providence of God. Thine ear - Thou didst not hear, I did not reveal these things unto thee: for so this phrase of opening the ear is understood, 1 Sam. ix, 15. I knew - I knew all these cautions were necessary to cure thine infidelity. Called - Justly, thou wast indeed such.

9. For my sake - I will spare thee, and deliver thee out of captivity, not for thy sake, but merely for my own sake, and for the vindication of my name, that I may be praised for my power, faithfulness, and goodness.

10. Behold - Although I will not cut thee off, yet I will put thee into the furnace. Silver - Which is kept in the furnace so long 'till all the dross be purged away, I will not deal so rigorously with thee; for then I should wholly consume thee. I will chuse - God had in a manner rejected Israel, and therefore it was necessary he should chuse and try this people a second time.

11. It - This great work of delivering my people out of Babylon. Name - If I should not deliver my people, my name would be profaned and blasphemed. Glory - I will not give any colour to idolaters, to ascribe the divine nature and properties, to idols, as they would do if I did not rescue my people out of their hands in spite of their idols.

12. O Israel - Whom I have called out of the world to be my peculiar people.

13. Stand up - They are still continually in readiness to execute my commands.

14. Which - Which of the gods whom any of you serve. Him - Cyrus.

16. In secret - l have openly revealed my mind to you. The beginning - Either from the first time that I began to prophecy until this time: or from the beginning of my taking you to be my people, and of revealing my mind unto you. From the time - From the time that I first spoke of it, I am or was there, to effect what I had foretold. The Lord - God by his Spirit. Me - The prophet Isaiah; who was a type of Christ, and so this may have a respect to him also.

17. Teacheth - Who from time to time have made known to thee, all necessary doctrines; which, if observed by thee, would have been infinitely profitable to thee, both for this life and that to come. So that it is not my fault, but thine own, if thou dost not profit. Leadeth - Who acquainteth thee with thy duty in all the concerns of thy life; so that thou canst not pretend ignorance.

18. As the waves - Infinite and continual.

20. Singing - With joy and songs of praise. Declare - Publish God's wonderful works.

21. They thirsted not - They shall not thirst. He speaks of things to come, as if they were already past.

22. No peace - God having foretold that peace which he would give to his servant Jacob, adds an explication; and declares, that wicked men should not enjoy the benefit of this mercy.

## XLIX

Christ, being sent to the Jews complains of them, ver. 1-4. He is sent to the Gentiles with gracious promises, ver. 5-12. God's love to his church perpetual, ver. 13-17. The ample restoration of the church, and its enlargement, ver. 18-23. Its powerful deliverance out of captivity, ver. 24-26.

1. Listen - God turns his speech to the Gentiles, and invites them to hearken to those counsels and doctrines which the Jews would reject. Me - Unto Christ: Isaiah speaks these words in the name of Christ.

2. A sword - As he made me the great teacher of his church, so he made my word, quick and powerful, and sharper than any two- edged sword. Hath he hid - He will protect me from all mine enemies. Made me - Like an arrow, whose point is bright and polished; which therefore pierceth deeper.

3. O Israel - As the name of David is sometimes given to his successors, so here the name of Israel may not unfitly be given to Christ, not only because he descended from his loins; but also because he was the true and the great Israel, who, in a more eminent manner, prevailed with God, as that name signifies, of whom Jacob, who was first called Israel, was but a type.

4. Then said I - Lord, thou sayest thou wilt be glorified by my ministry; but I find it otherwise. In vain - Without any considerable fruit of my word and works among the Israelites. My judgment - My right, the reward which by his promise, and my purchase, is my right.

5. To bring - To convert the apostate Israelites to God. Not gathered - Not brought home to God by my ministry. Yet - God will not despise me for the unsuccessfulness of my labours, but will honour and glorify me. My strength - To support and strengthen me under this and all other discouragements.

6. He - The Lord. It is - This is but a small favour. The tribes - That remnant of them which shall survive all their calamities. My salvation - The great instrument and author of that eternal salvation which I will give to the Gentiles.

7. His Holy One - The Holy One of Israel. To him - To Christ, to whom, in the days of his flesh, this description fully agrees: for men, both Jews and Gentiles among whom he lived, did despise him from their hearts; and the nation, of which he was a member, abhorred both his person and his doctrine; and he was so far from being a temporal monarch, that he came in the form of a servant, and was a servant of rulers, professing subjection and paying tribute unto Caesar. Kings - Though for a time thou shalt be despised, yet after a while thou shalt be advanced to such glory, that kings shall look upon thee with reverence. Arise - From their seats to worship thee. Faithful - Because God shall make good his promises to thee. Chuse thee - And although thou shalt be rejected by thine own people, yet God will manifest to the world, that thou, and thou only, art the person whom he hath chosen to be the Redeemer of mankind.

8. The Lord - God the Father unto Christ. Heard thee - Though not so as to deliver thee from death; yet so as to crown thee with glory and honour. For a covenant - To be the Mediator and surety of that covenant, which is made between me and them. To establish - To establish truth and righteousness upon earth, and subdue those lusts and passions, which are the great disturbers of human society. Desolate heritages - That desolate places may be repaired and repossessed. That Christ may possess the Heathen, who were in a spiritual sense in a most desolate condition.

9. Prisoners - To the Gentiles who are fast bound by the cords of their sins, and taken captive by the devil at his will. Go forth - Come forth to the light, receive divine illumination. In high places - They shall have abundant provision in all places, yea even in those which commonly are unfruitful, such are both common roads and high grounds.

11. A way - I will remove all hindrances, and prepare the way for them, by levelling high grounds, and raising low grounds.

12. These - My people shall be gathered from the most remote parts of the earth. He speaks here, and in many other places, of the conversion of the Gentiles, with allusion to that work of gathering, and bringing back the Jews from all parts where they were dispersed, into their own land. Sinim - Either of the Sinites as they are called, Gen. x, 17, who dwelt about the wilderness. Or of Sin, a famous city of Egypt, which may be put for all Egypt, and that for all southern parts.

14. But - This is an objection. How can these things be true, when the condition of God's church is now so desperate?

16. Graven - He alludes to the common practice of men who put signs upon their hands or fingers of such things as they would remember.

18. These - Gentiles. Thy church shall not only be restored, but vastly enlarged and adorned by the accession of the Gentiles.

19. Thy waste places - Thy own land, whereof divers parts lie waste for want of people to possess them. Land of destruction - Which before was desolate and destroyed.

20. The children - Those Gentiles which shall be begotten by thee, when thou shalt be deprived of thine own natural children, when the generality of the Jews cut themselves off from God.

21. Who - Whence have I this numberless issue? Seeing - Seeing I was in a manner left childless. Desolate - Without an husband, being forsaken by God, who formerly owned himself for my husband.

22. Behold - I will call them to me. Set my standard - As generals do to gather their forces together. Thy sons - Those who shall be thine by adoption, that shall own God for their father, and Jerusalem for their mother. Carried - With great care and tenderness, as nurses carry young infants. Carried - As sick or infirm persons used to be carried.

23. Lick the dust - They shall highly reverence and honour thee. These expressions are borrowed from the practice of the eastern people, who bowed so low as to touch the ground. Ashamed - Their expectations shall not be disappointed.

24. Shall the prey - Here is a double impediment to their deliverance, the power of the enemy who kept them in bondage, and the justice of God which pleads against their deliverance.

25. For I - I the almighty God will undertake this work.

## L

The dereliction of the Jews is not of Christ; for he hath power to save, ver. 1-4. And was obedient in that work, and God is present with him, ver. 5-9. An exhortation not to trust in ourselves, but in God, ver. 10, 11.

1. Thus saith the Lord - The scope of this and the next chapter, is to vindicate God's justice and to convince the Jews that they were the causes of their own calamities. Behold - You can blame none but yourselves and your own sins, for all your captivities and miseries.

2. Wherefore - The general accusation delivered in the last words he now proves by particular instances. When - When I, first by my prophets, came to call them to repentance. No man - That complied with my call. To answer - To come at my call. Is my hand - What is the reason of this

contempt? Is it because you think I am either unwilling or unable to save you? A wilderness - As dry and fit for travelling as a wilderness.

3. I clothe - When it is necessary to save my people, I cover them with thick and dark clouds black as sackcloth, Rev. vi, 12.

4. Given me - This and the following passages may be in some sort understood of the prophet Isaiah, but they are far more evidently and eminently verified in Christ, and indeed seem to be meant directly of him. The tongue - All ability of speaking plainly, and convincingly, and persuasively. Weary - Burdened with the sense of his, deplorable condition. Wakeneth - Me, from time to time, and continually. To hear - He by his Divine power assists me to the practice of all his commands and my duties, with all attention and diligence.

6. I gave - I patiently yielded up myself to those who smote me.

8. Justifieth - God will clear up my righteousness, and shew by many and mighty signs and wonders, that I lived and died his faithful servant. Let him come - l am conscious of mine own innocency, and I know that God will give sentence for me.

9. They - Mine accusers and enemies. The moth - Shall be cut off and consumed by a secret curse.

10. The voice - Of Christ, who is called God's servant, by way of eminency and to intimate that though he was God, yet he would take upon himself the form of a servant. In darkness - Not in sin, but in misery, that lives in a disconsolate and calamitous condition. No light - No comfort. Trust - Let him fix his faith and hope in the mercy, and faithfulness, of the Lord, declared in his word, and in his interest in God, who by the mediation of this servant is reconciled to him and made his God.

11. All ye - You that reject the light which God hath set up, and seek for comfort and safety, by your own inventions. Walk - Use your utmost endeavours to get comfort from these devices. This - This shall be the fruit of all, you shall receive nothing but vexation and misery.

## LI

Abraham, our pattern to trust in Christ, in his promises, and righteous salvation: this is constant, but men are transitory, ver. 1- 8. A prayer of the Godly in affliction, ver. 9-11. The Lord's answer, ver. 12-17. He bewails Jerusalem, ver. 18-20. The bitter cup taken from her, and given to her enemies, ver. 21-23.

1. Look - Consider the state of Abraham and Sarah, from whom all of you sprang.

2. Him alone - To follow me to an unknown land: him only of all his kindred. Increased - Into a vast multitude, when his condition was desperate in the eye of reason. And therefore God can as easily raise his church when they are in the most forlorn condition.

3. Therefore - For the sake of Abraham, and of that covenant which I made with him. Garden - Flourishing as the garden of Eden.

4. My people - Ye Jews, whom I chose to be my peculiar people. A law - A new law, even the doctrine of the gospel. Judgment - Judgment is here the same thing with law, the word of God, or

the evangelical doctrine, of which he saith that he will make it to rest, that is settle and establish it. The people - People of all nations.

5. My righteousness - My salvation, the redemption of all my people, Jews and Gentiles, which is the effect of his righteousness, his justice, faithfulness, or mercy. Is gone - Shall shortly go forth. Judge - Shall subdue the Gentiles to my authority, and rule them by my word and spirit. Isles - The remote countries shall expect this salvation from me, and from me only.

6. The heavens - The heavens and earth shall pass away, in regard of their present state, and properties, and use, as smoak is said to vanish, tho' the substance of it be not destroyed.

7. Know - That love and practice it.

8. Like wool - Like a woollen garment, which is sooner corrupted by moths or such creatures, than linen.

9. Put on - Put forth thy strength. Rahab - Egypt, from its pride or strength. The dragon - Pharaoh so called, Psalm 7iv, 13.

11. Therefore - This verse contains an answer to the prophet's prayer. I did these great things, and I will do the like again. Joy - Like a crown of glory.

13. Where is the fury - Is it not all gone? He speaks of the thing as if it were already done, because it should certainly and suddenly be done.

16. I have - These words are spoken by God to his church and people, to whom he speaks both in the foregoing and following verses. For God's word is frequently said to be put into the mouths, not only of the prophets, but of the people also. Covered - Have protected thee by my almighty power, that I may bring thee to that perfect and blessed estate which is reserved for the days of the Messiah, which in scripture phrase is called a making of new heavens, and a new earth, chap. lxv, 17.

17. Awake - Hebrew. Rouse up thyself: come out of that forlorn condition in which thou hast so long been. Stand up - Upon thy feet, O thou who hast been thrown to the ground. Drunk - Who hast been sorely afflicted. The cup - Which strikes him that drinks it with deadly horror. And wrung - Drunk every drop of it.

18. None to guide - When thou wast drunk with this cup, and not able to go.

19. These things - Those which follow, which tho' expressed in four words, may fitly be reduced to two things, the desolation or devastation of the land, and the destruction of the people by famine and sword. So famine and sword are not named as new evils, but only as the particular ways of bringing the destruction. By whom - I cannot find any man who is able to comfort and relieve thee.

20. Fainted - They are so far from being able to comfort thee, that they themselves faint away. They lie - Dead by famine or the sword. As a bull - Those of them who are not slain are struggling for life.

21. Not with wine - But with the cup of God's fury.

22. That pleadeth - Who, tho' he has fought against thee, is now reconciled to thee, and will maintain thy cause against all thine adversaries.

23. Go over - That we may trample upon thee.

## LII

The church redeemed and called upon to rejoice therein, ver. 1-6. The universal preaching of the gospel glorious, ver. 7-10. A call to free ourselves from bondage, ver. 11, 12. Christ's kingdom shall be exalted, ver. 13-15.

1. Awake - This is a prediction and promise what she should do, that she should awake or arise out of her low estate, and be strong and courageous. Beautiful garments - Thy sorrows shall be ended, and thou shalt be advanced into a glorious condition. O Zion - O my church. Come - Either to molest thee, or defile thee. The uncircumcised - Heathens or infidels. Unclean - Nor any others, who are unholy.

2. The dust - In which thou hast sat as a mourner. The bands - The yoke of thy captivity shall be taken off from thee.

3. Sold yourselves - By your sins, without any valuable consideration paid by them either to you, or to your Lord and owner. Without money - Without paying any ransom.

4. Egypt - Where they had protection and sustenance, and therefore owed subjection to the king of Egypt. And yet when he oppressed them, I punished him severely, and delivered them out of his hands. The Assyrian - The king of Babylon, who is called the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xxiii, 29, as also the Persian emperor is called, Ezra vi, 22, because it was one and the same empire which was possessed, first by the Assyrians, then by the Babylonians, and afterwards by the Persians. Without cause - Without any such ground or colour, by mere force invading their land, and carrying them away into captivity.

5. What have I - Why do I sit still here, and not go to Babylon to punish the Babylonians, and to deliver my people? For nought - Without any provocation, or pretense of right. Howl - By their unmerciful usage. Blasphemed - The Babylonians blasphemed me as if I wanted either power or good will to save my people out of their hands.

6. Shall know - They shall experience my power and goodness in fighting for them. In that day - When I shall redeem my people: which work was begun by the return of the Jews from Babylon, and perfected by the coming of the Messiah. Behold - That all these promises are the words of the omnipotent, unchangeable God.

7. The mountains - Of Judea, to which these glad tidings were brought, and from which they were spread abroad into other countries. Of him - Or, of them; the singular number being put for the plural. Returneth - In the days of the Messiah, God did discover and exercise his dominion over the world far more eminently than ever he had done from the beginning of the world until that time.

8. Thy watchmen - Thy ministers, who descry the approach of this heavenly king. Lift up thy voice - To give notice to all people of these glad tidings; and by way of exultation, to sing forth the praises of God for this glorious day. Eye - Distinctly and familiarly, their eyes beholding the eyes of this king of glory. They shall be eye and ear-witnesses of the words and works of Christ, and therefore their testimony shall be more certain and valuable. Bring again - When God shall complete the work of bringing his church out of captivity.

11. Depart - Out of Babylon. Touch - Carry not along with you any of their superstitions or idolatries. Ye - And especially your priests and Levites, who minister in holy things, and carry the holy vessels of the temple, keep yourselves from all pollution.

12. Not by flight - But securely, and in triumph, being conducted by your great captain the Lord of hosts. Rereward - So that none shall be able either to oppose you in your march, or to fall upon you in the rear.

13. Behold - This is the beginning of a new prophecy, which is continued from hence to the end of the next chapter. My servant - That it is Christ who is here spoken of, is so evident, that the Chaldee paraphrast, and other ancient, and some later Hebrew doctors, understand it directly of him, and that divers Jews have been convinced and converted to the Christian faith, by the evidence of this prophecy. Prosper - This is fitly put in the first place to prevent those scandals which otherwise might arise from the succeeding passages, which describe his state of humiliation. Very high - Here are three words signifying the same thing to express the height and glory of his exaltation.

14. Astonished - At his humiliation. Thee - At thee, O my servant. His form - Christ, in respect of his birth, breeding, and manner of life, was most obscure and contemptible. His countenance also was so marred with frequent watchings, and fastings, and troubles, that he was thought to be near fifty years old when he was but about thirty, John viii, 57, and was farther spoiled with buffetings, and crowning with thorns, and other cruel and despiteful usages.

15. So - His exaltation shall be answerable to his humiliation. Sprinkle - With his word or doctrine; which being often compared to rain or water, may be said to be sprinkled, as it is said to be dropped, Deut. xxxii, 2 Ezek xx, 46. Kings - Shall be silent before him out of profound humility, reverence, and admiration of his wisdom. For - They shall hear from his mouth many excellent doctrines, which will be new and strange to them. And particularly that comfortable doctrine of the salvation of the Gentiles, which was not only new to them, but strange and incredible to the Jews themselves.

## LIII

The incredulity of the Jews; the death of Christ, and the blessed effects thereof, ver. 1-10. His exaltation and glory, ver. 11, 12.

1. Who - Who, not only of the Gentiles, but even of the Jews, will believe the truth of what I say? And this premonition was highly necessary, both to caution the Jews that they should not stumble at this stone, and to instruct the Gentiles that they should not be seduced with their example. The arm - The Messiah, called the arm or power of God, because the almighty power of God was seated in him. Revealed - Inwardly and with power.

2. As a root - And the reason why the Jews will generally reject their Messiah, is, because he shall not come into the world with secular pomp, but he shall grow up, (or spring up, out of the ground) before him, (before the unbelieving Jews, of whom he spake ver. 1, and that in the singular number, as here, who were witnesses of his mean original; and therefore despised him) as a tender plant (small and inconsiderable) and as a root, or branch, grows out of a dry, barren ground. No form - His bodily presence shall be mean and contemptible. No beauty - This the prophet speaks in the person of the unbelieving Jews. We - Our people, the Jewish nation.

3. We hid - We scorned to look upon him.

4. Yet - Our people believed that he was thus punished by the just judgment of God.

5. Wounded - Which word comprehends all his pains and punishments. For our iniquities - For the guilt of their sins, which he had voluntarily taken upon himself, and for the expiation of their sins, which was hereby purchased. The chastisement - Those punishments by which our peace, our reconciliation to God, was to be purchased, were laid upon him by God's justice with his own consent. Healed - By his sufferings we are saved from our sins.

6. We - All mankind. Astray - From God. Have turned - In general, to the way of sin, which may well be called a man's own way, because sin is natural to us, inherent in us, born with us; and in particular, to those several paths, which several men chuse, according to their different opinions, and circumstances. Hath laid - Hebrew. hath made to meet, as all the rivers meet in the sea. The iniquity - Not properly, for he knew no sin; but the punishment of iniquity, as that word is frequently used. That which was due for all the sins of all mankind, which must needs be so heavy a load, that if he had not been God as well as man, he must have sunk under the burden.

7. He opened not - He neither murmured against God, nor reviled men.

8. Taken away - Out of this life. By distress and judgment - By oppression and violence. and a pretense of justice. His generation - His posterity. For his death shall not be unfruitful; when he is raised from the dead, he shall have a spiritual seed, a numberless multitude of those who shall believe in him. Cut off - By a violent death. And this may be added as a reason of the blessing of a numerous posterity conferred upon him, because he was willing to be cut off for the transgression of his people.

9. With the wicked - This was a farther degree of humiliation. He saith, he made his grave, because this was Christ's own act, and he willingly yielded up himself to death and burial. And that which follows, with the wicked, does not denote the sameness of place, as if he should be buried in the same grave with other malefactors, but the sameness of condition.

10. He - God was the principal cause of all his sufferings, tho' mens sins were the deserving cause. When - When thou, O God, shalt have made, thy son a sacrifice, by giving him up to death for the atonement of mens sins. His soul is here put for his life, or for himself. Shall see - He shall have a numerous issue of believers reconciled by God, and saved by his death. Prolong - He shall live and reign with God for ever. The pleasure - God's gracious decree for the salvation of mankind shall be effectually carried on by his ministry and mediation.

11. Shall see - He shall enjoy. The travel - The blessed fruit of all his labours, and sufferings. Satisfied - He shall esteem his own and his father's glory, and the salvation of his people, an abundant recompence. By his knowledge - By the knowledge of him. Justify - Acquit them from the guilt of their sins, and all the dreadful consequences thereof. And Christ is said to justify sinners meritoriously, because he purchases and procures it for us. Many - An innumerable company of all nations. For - For he shall satisfy the justice of God, by bearing the punishment due to their sins.

12. I - God the father. A portion - Which is very commodiously supplied out of the next clause. With the strong - God will give him happy success in his glorious undertaking: he shall conquer all his enemies, and set up his universal and everlasting kingdom in the world. Because - Because he willingly laid down his life. Transgressors - He prayed upon earth for all sinners, and particularly for those that crucified him, and in heaven he still intercedes for them, by a legal demand of those good things which he purchased; by the sacrifice of himself, which, though past, he continually represents to his father, as if it were present.

## LIV

The blessings and fulness of the gospel-church, ver. 1-4. The Gentiles becoming Christ's spouse, to whom his love is everlasting, ver. 5-10. Her glories, ver. 11, 12. The gifts of the Holy Ghost, ver. 13. Her sure preservation, ver. 14-17

1. Sing - The prophet having largely discoursed of the sufferings of Christ, and of the blessed fruits thereof, and here foreseeing that glorious state of the church, he breaks forth into this song of triumph. And as the foregoing chapter literally speaks of Christ, so doth this of the church of Christ. This church, consisting at first of the Jews, and afterwards of the Gentiles, had been barren, 'till the coming of Christ. The desolate - The church of the Gentiles, which in the times of the Old Testament was desolate, does now bring forth to God a more numerous posterity than that of the Jews.

2. Enlarge - That it may be capable of the Gentiles, who shall flock to thee in great numbers. Strengthen - That they may be able to support that great weight which the tents thus enlarged, shall be upon them.

3. For - Thou shalt bring forth a multitude of children; for this word is commonly used of any extraordinary propagation of living creatures. On the left - On every side, in all the parts of the world. Thy seed - Thy spiritual seed, the church of the New Testament, which is accounted Abraham's seed, or children.

4. Ashamed - For the barrenness and widowhood, which once was the matter of thy grief and shame. Forget - Thou shalt not be upbraided with thy former barrenness in thy youthful state.

5. Thy maker - Will own thee for his spouse. The Lord - Who hath the sovereign command of all men and creatures, and therefore can subdue the Gentiles to thee, and can make thee to increase and multiply in so prodigious a measure, even in thine old age, notwithstanding thy barrenness in the days of thy youth, of which he speaks in the foregoing verse. The God - The God and father of all nations, whereas formerly he was called only the God of Israel.

6. Called thee - To return to him. As forsaken - When thou wast like a woman forsaken. And grieved - For the loss of her husband's favour. Of youth - As affectionately as an husband recalls his wife which he married in his youth.

7. For a moment - In comparison of God's everlasting kindness. Gather thee - From all the places where thou art dispersed, from all parts of the world.

8. With everlasting kindness - With kindness to thee and thy seed through all succeeding generations.

9. This - This covenant of grace and peace made with thee shall be as certain and perpetual as that which I made with Noah, that there should never be another flood to drown the world. Wrath - So as to forsake thee utterly.

10. The mountains - Shall sooner depart from their places than any kindness shall depart from thee. The covenant - That covenant whereby I have made peace and friendship with thee, and have promised to thee all manner of happiness. God will not cast off his Christian church, as he cast off the church of the Jews, the New covenant is established upon better and surer promises than the Old. The Lord - Who doth this not for thine own merits, but merely for his own grace and mercy.

11. O thou - Who hast been, in a most afflicted and comfortless condition. With sapphires - I will make thee exceeding beautiful and glorious, by a plentiful effusion of excellent gifts, and graces.

12. Agates - The proper signification of the Hebrew names of precious stones is unknown to the Jews themselves. It may suffice us to know that this was some very clear and transparent, and precious stone. Thy borders - The utmost parts or walls.

13. Taught - Not only outwardly by his word, but inwardly by his spirit. The peace -

1. Inward peace arising from the clear discoveries of God's love and reconciliation to us, and wrought by the spirit of adoption, which is more abundantly given to believers under the gospel, than under the law.

2. Outward peace, safety, and happiness.

14. Established - Thine affairs shall be managed with righteousness, which is the glory of any society. Oppression - Either by thine own governors, or by foreign powers.

15. Behold - It is true some will combine and make an attempt against thee. But - Without any such commission from me, as Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar had.

16. The smith - Both the smith that makes warlike instruments, and the soldier that uses them, are my creatures, and totally at my command, and therefore they cannot hurt you without my leave. The waster - To destroy only whom and when I please.

17. Condemn - And I will deliver thee not only from the fury of war, but also from the strife of tongues. This - This blessed condition, is the portion allotted them by me. Righteousness - The reward of their righteousness. Of me - I give it, and I will continue it to them.

## LV

An invitation to seek for spiritual blessings from Christ, whom the Father sends, ver. 1-5. To come to him speedily and by repentance, ver. 6, 7. His grace infinite, ver. 8, 9. His word powerful, ver. 10, 11. The joy of believers, ver. 12, 13.

1. Thirsteth - For the grace of God and the blessings of the gospel. This thirst implies a vehement, and active, and restless desire after it. No money - Those who are most worthless and wicked, if they do but thirst may be welcome. Buy - Procure or receive that which is freely offered. Wine and milk - All gospel-blessings; in particular, that peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, which are better than wine, and that love of God which nourishes the soul, as milk does the body.

2. Money - All your time, and strength, and cost. Not bread - For those things which can never nourish or satisfy you, such as worldly goods, or pleasures. Eat ye - That which is truly and solidly, and everlastingly good. In fatness - In this pleasant food of gospel-enjoyments.

3. An everlasting covenant - That everlasting covenant of grace and peace which I made with Abraham, and his seed. Of David - Even that covenant which was made first with Abraham, and then with David, concerning those glorious and sure blessings which God hath promised to his people, one and the chief of which was giving Christ to die for their sins. David here seems to be put for the son of David.

4. Behold - I have appointed, and will in due time actually give. Him - The David last mentioned, even Christ. A witness - To declare the will of God concerning the duty and salvation of men, to bear witness to truth, to confirm God's promises, and, among others, those which respect the calling of the Gentiles: to be a witness of both parties of that covenant made between God and men. The people - To all people.

5. Thou - Thou, O Messiah. Call - To the knowledge of thyself. Knewest not - With that special knowledge which implies approbation. Because - Because the Lord shall by many tokens, manifest himself to be thy God, and thee to be his son and faithful servant. Glorify thee - By confirming thy word with illustrious signs and miracles, and particularly by thy resurrection, and glorious ascension.

6. Seek - labour to get the knowledge of God's will, and to obtain his grace and favour. While - In this day of grace, while he offers mercy and reconciliation. Near - Ready and desirous to receive you to mercy.

7. Return - By sincere repentance, and faith.

8. For - If any man injure you, especially if he do it greatly and frequently, you are slow and backward to forgive him. But I am ready to forgive all penitents, how many, and great, and numberless soever their sins be.

10. The snow - Which in its season contributes to the fruitfulness of the earth. Returneth not - Without effect. And bread - That it may bring forth store of bread-corn, both for mens present supplies, and for seed for the next year.

11. My word - My promises, concerning the pardon of the greatest sinners. Void - Without success.

12. Therefore - Ye shall be released from your bondage. Peace - Safely and triumphantly. Clap - There shall be a general rejoicing, so that even the senseless creatures shall seem to rejoice with you.

13. Instead - Whereas your land was filled with thorns and briars, as was foretold, they shall be rooted out, and it shall be planted with fir-trees and myrtle-trees, and such other trees, as are useful either for fruit or for delight. The church shall be delivered from pernicious things, and replenished with all divine graces and blessings. It - This wonderful change shall bring much honour to God. A sign - For a monument, of God's infinite power, and faithfulness, and love to his people to all succeeding generations.

## LVI

The blessedness of the Godly without any respect of persons, ver. 1-8. Blind watchmen shall be destroyed, ver. 9-12.

1. My salvation - That eminent salvation by the Messiah, and in which, without this you shall have no share. Is near - So the scripture often speaks of things which are at a great distance, as if they were present or at hand, Hab. ii, 3 James v, 8, 9 Rev. xxii, 20. My righteousness - The same thing which he called salvation.

2. The man - Every man not only Jews but Gentiles, as it is explained in the following verses. The sabbath - The sabbath seems to be put here, as sacrifice is elsewhere, for the whole worship of God.

3. The stranger - The stranger, the Gentile, who by birth is a stranger to God, that hath turned from dumb idols to the living God. The eunuch - Who is here joined with the stranger, because he was forbidden to enter into the congregation of the Lord, Deut. xxiii, 1. Under these two instances he understands all those, who either by birth, or by any ceremonial pollution, were excluded from church privileges, and so he throws open the door to all true believers. A dry tree - A fruitless tree, accursed by God with the curse of barrenness.

4. Take hold - That stedfastly keep the conditions of my covenant.

5. In mine house - In my temple. Better - A far greater blessing and honour than that of having posterity, even my favour, and my spirit, and eternal felicity.

7. Mountain - To my house, which stood upon mount Zion. Joyful - By accepting their services, and comforting their hearts with the sense of my love. Accepted - They shall have as free access to mine house and altar, as the Jews themselves, and their services shall be as acceptable to me. Evangelical worship is here described under such expressions as agreed to the worship of God which then was in use.

8. The Lord - Who will gather to himself, and bring into their own land, those that are cast out of their own land. Yet - I will make a far more comprehensive gathering of the Gentiles.

9. Come - This is a prediction of Israel's destruction by their cruel enemies. The prophet having largely discoursed concerning the Messiah, and his kingdom, and having encouraged the Gentiles with God's gracious promises made to them, now proceeds to terrify the unbelieving Jews, and to shew that as the Gentiles would believe, and be saved, so they would reject their Messiah, and be destroyed.

10. His - Israel's. Watchmen - Priests and teachers; he mentions only the teachers, because ignorance was most shameful in them, but hereby he supposes the gross ignorance of the people. Bark - They are also slothful and negligent in instructing the people, and do not faithfully reprove them for their sins.

11. They look - They regard neither God's glory, nor the peoples good, but only the satisfaction of their own base desires. Quarter - In their several stations.

12. Say they - Unto their brethren, fellow-priests, or other jolly companions. Fill ourselves - We will drink not only to delight, but even to drunkenness, as the word signifies, which shews their dreadful security and contempt of God, and their abandoning of all care of their own or peoples souls.

## LVII

The blessed death of the righteous, not duly lamented by the Jews, who also commit idolatry, and trust in man: they are threatened, ver. 1-12. Evangelical promises to the penitent, ver. 13-19. No peace to the wicked, ver. 20, 21.

1. The righteous - Just and holy men. No man - Few or none. Layeth it to heart - Is duly affected with this sad sign of God's displeasure.

2. He - This just and merciful man shall enter into a state of rest, where he shall be out of the reach of the approaching miseries. They - just men. Here is a sudden change of the number, which is very frequent in the prophets. Beds - In their graves, which are not unfitly called their beds, as their death is commonly called sleep in scripture.

3. Hither - To God's tribunal, to receive your sentence. Sons - Not by propagation, but by imitation. And the whore - Not the genuine children of Abraham, their dispositions were far more suitable to a bastardly brood, than to Abraham's seed.

4. Against whom - Consider whom it is that you mock and scoff, when you deride God's prophets. A seed - A generation of liars, whose practices contradict your professions, who deal deceitfully both with God and men.

5. Enflaming - Lusting after them, and mad upon them. Slaying - In way of sacrifice to their idols. Valleys - He seems to allude to the valley of Hinnom in which these cruelties were practiced. Clifts - Which they chuse either for shade, or for those dark vaults, in rocks, which were convenient for idolatrous uses.

6. Portion - Thou hast chosen for thy portion those idols, which were worshipped by the sides of brooks or rivers where such smooth stones commonly lie. They - Thou hast forsaken me and chosen idols. Offered - For the devil is God's ape, and idolaters used the same rites and offerings in the worship of idols which God had prescribed in his own. Comfort - Should I be pleased with such a people and such actions?

7. Mountain - In high places, which were much used for religious worship, both by Israelites and by Heathens. Thy bed - Thine altar, in which thou didst commit spiritual whoredom with idols.

8. The posts - Behind the posts of the doors of thine house: where the Heathens placed their tutelar gods to whose protection they committed their houses, that so they might have their eyes and minds upon them, whensoever they went out or came in. Set up - Those monuments which thou didst set up there as remembrances of those idol-gods whom they represented. Discovered - Thou hast uncovered thy nakedness; to others beside me thine husband. Gone up - Into the adulterous bed. Enlarged - That it might receive many adulterers together. Thou hast multiplied thine idols and altars. A covenant - Thou hast covenanted to serve them.

9. The King - The king of Assyria, called the king by way of eminency, to whom the Israelites in the days of Isaiah were very prone to trust, and send presents. And so the prophet passes from their idolatry to another sin, even their confidence in Heathen princes. Increase - Didst send great quantities. Far off - Into Assyria, which was far from Judea. Debase - Thou wast willing to submit to the basest terms to procure their aid.

10. Wearied - Thou hast not eased, but tired thyself with thy tedious journey. Yet - And yet thou didst not perceive that thy labour was lost. Hast found - Thou hast sometimes found success in these ways. Not grieved - Therefore thou didst not repent of thy sin herein.

11. Feared - And who are they, the fear of whom drives thee to these wicked courses? Lied - That thou hast dealt thus perfidiously with me. Not remembered - Hast thou forgotten all those great things which I have done for thee. Held my peace - Have not I forbore to punish thee from time to time, that by this goodness I might oblige thee to love me. And thou - Or, therefore thou dost not fear or regard me. Thou abusest my long-suffering.

13. But - But they shall be carried away suddenly and violently by the blast of mine anger. Vanity - A vapor which quickly vanishes away. Inherit - Shall enjoy my favour and presence in my temple.

14. And he - God will raise up a man who shall say with authority and efficacy. Cast up - Make causeways, where it is needful, for their safe and easy passage, and remove all things which may hinder them in their return.

16. For - I will not proceed to the utmost severity with sinful men.

17. Covetousness - Of which sin the Jews were eminently guilty. But this comprehends all those sins for which God contended with them. He went - Yet he was not reformed, but trespassed more and more.

18. Mourners - To those who are humbled under God's hand, that mourn in Zion for their own and others sins.

19. I create - I will by my almighty power produce. Peace - That peace which is not wrought by mens hands, but only by God's lips or word. The doubling of the word signifies the certainty and abundance this peace. Far off - To the Gentiles who are far from God, as well as to the Jews, who are called a people near unto God, Psalm 1xlviii, 14.

20. Cast up - Their minds are restless, being perpetually hurried with their own lusts and passions, and with guilt, and the dread of the divine vengeance.

21. No peace - Though they may have a great share of prosperity, yet they have no share in this inward, and spiritual, and everlasting peace.

## LVIII

The hypocrisy of the Jews, in their fasts, ver. 1-5. A true fast described, ver. 6, 7. Promises to Godliness, ver. 8-12. To the keeping of the sabbath, ver. 13, 14.

2. Yet - They cover all their wickedness with a profession of religion. Delight - There are many men who take some pleasure in knowing God's will and word, and yet do not conform their lives to it. As - As if they were a righteous people. Forsook - As if they were not guilty of any apostacy from God, or disobedience to God's precepts. Ask - As if they resolved to observe them. In approaching - In coming to my temple to hear my word, and to offer sacrifices.

3. Afflicted - Defrauded our appetites with fasting, of which this phrase is used, Levit xvi, 29. Ye find - Either you indulge yourselves in sensuality, as they did, chap. xxii, 13. But this does not agree with that afflicting of their souls which they now professed, and which God acknowledges; or you pursue and satisfy your own desires: though you abstain from bodily food, you do not mortify your sinful inclinations. Exact - Your money, got by your labour, and lent to others, either for their need or your own advantage, which you require either with usury, or at least with rigor, when either the general law of charity, or God's particular law, commanded the release, or at least the forbearance of them.

4. Behold - Your fasting days, wherein you ought in a special manner to implore the mercy of God, and to shew compassion to men, you employ in injuring or quarrelling with your brethren,

your servants or debtors, or in contriving mischief against them. Heard - In strife and debate. By way of ostentation.

5. Chosen - Approve of, accept, or delight in, by a metonymy, because we delight in what we freely chuse. For a day - This may be understood, either for a man to take a certain time to afflict his soul in, and that either from even to even, Lev. xxiii, 32, or from morning to evening, or for a little time. Wilt thou call - Canst thou suppose it to be so? A fast - It being such an one as has nothing in it, but the dumb signs of a fast, nothing of deep humiliation appearing in it, or, real reformation proceeding from it. Acceptable day - A day that God will approve of.

6. The bands - The cruel obligations of usury and oppression.

7. Cast out - And thereby become wanderers, having no abiding place. To thy house - That thou be hospitable, and make thy house a shelter to them that have none of their own left. Hide not - That seek no occasion to excuse thyself. Thy own flesh - Some confine this to our own kindred; but we can look on no man, but there we contemplate our own flesh, and therefore it is barbarous, not only to tear, but not to love and succor him. Therefore feed him as thou wouldest feed thyself, or be fed; shelter him as thou wouldest shelter thyself, or be sheltered; clothe him as thou wouldest clothe thyself, or be clothed; if in any of these respects thou wert in his circumstances.

8. Thy light - Happiness and prosperity. Break forth - It shall not only appear, but break forth, dart itself forth, notwithstanding all difficulties, as the sun breaks, and pierces through a cloud. Thy health - Another metaphor to express the same thing. Righteousness - The reward of thy righteousness. Before thee - As the morning-star goes before the sun. The glory - His glorious power and providence. Thy rereward - Thus the angel of his presence secured the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt.

9. Answer - He will give an effectual demonstration, that he hears thee. Here l am - A phrase that notes a person to be ready at hand to help. Take away - From among you. The yoke - All those pressures and grievances before mentioned. Putting forth - Done by way of scoff, or disdainful insulting. Vanity - Any kind of evil words.

10. Draw out - Or, open, as when we open a store, to satisfy the wants of the needy. Thy soul - Thy affection, thy pity and compassion. Thy darkness - In the very darkness of the affliction itself thou shalt have comfort.

11. Guide thee - Like a shepherd. And he adds continually to shew that his conduct and blessing shall not be momentary, or of a short continuance, but all along as it was to Israel in the wilderness. Satisfy - Thou shalt have plenty, when others are in scarcity. Make fat - This may be spoken in opposition to the sad effects of famine, whereby the flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen, and the bones that were not seen, stick out. A garden - If thou relieve the poor, thou shalt never be poor, but as a well-watered garden, always flourishing. Fail not - Hebrew. deceive not, a metaphor which farther notes also the continuance of this flourishing state, which will not be like a land-flood, or brooks, that will soon be dried up with drought. Thou shalt be fed with a spring of blessing, that will never fail.

12. They shall be of thee - Thy posterity. Waste places - Cities which have lain long waste; that shall continue for many generations to come. The breach - Breach is put for breaches, which was made by God's judgment breaking in upon them in suffering the walls of their towns and cities to be demolished. Paths - Those paths that led from city to city, which being now laid desolate, and uninhabited, were grown over with grass, and weeds. To dwell in - These accommodations being recovered, their ancient cities might be fit to be re-inhabited.

13. If - If thou take no unnecessary journeys, or do any servile works on the sabbath-day. A delight - Performing the duties of it with chearfulness, delighting in the ordinances of it. Holy - Dedicated to God, consecrated to his service.

14. In the Lord - In his goodness and faithfulness to thee, and in the assurance of his love and favour. To ride - Thou shalt be above the reach of danger. Feed thee - Thou shalt enjoy the good of the land of Canaan, which God promised as an heritage to Jacob, and his seed, Gen. xxxv, 12.

## LIX

Sin separates between God and us, ver. 1, 2. Murder, theft, falsehood, injustice, cruelty, ver. 3-8. Calamity for sin, ver. 9-15. Salvation only of God, ver. 16-19. The covenant of the redeemer, ver. 20, 21

3. Perverseness - Perverse words are such as are contrary to God's word. Words every way contrary to God's will.

4. None - None seek to redress these wrongs, and violences; they commit all rapines, and frauds with impunity. Bring forth - These two words of conceiving, and bringing forth, denote their whole contrivance, and perfecting their wickedness.

5. Cockatrice eggs - One kind put for any venomous creature, a proverbial speech signifying by these eggs mischievous designs, and by hatching them, their putting them in practice. Web - Another proverbial speech whereby is taught, both how by their plots they weave nets, lay snares industriously with great pains and artifice. And also how their designs will come to nothing, as the spider's web is soon swept away.

6. Webs - Their contrivances shall not be able to cover or defend them.

7. Wasting - They meditate on little or nothing else. Paths - In what way or work soever they are engaged, it all tends to ruin and destruction.

8. The way of peace - They live in continual contentions, and discords. Judgment - No justice, equity, faith, or integrity.

9. Justice - Judgment, and so justice is here taken for deliverance. God doth not defend our right, nor revenge our wrong, because of these outrages, and acts of violence, injustice, and oppression.

10. As dead men - He compares their captivity to men dead without hope of recovery.

11. Mourn - Their oppressing governors made the wicked roar like bears, and the good mourn like doves.

12. Transgressions - The word here signifies sins of an high nature, such as wherein there is much of man's will against light: rebellious sins. Multiplied - They admit of no excuse; for they are acted before thee, and multiplied against thee, whereby thou art justly provoked to deny us all help. Testify - As so many witnesses produced proves our guilt. Are with us - Are still unforgiven. We know - We are convinced of them.

13. Lying - Transgressing here, and lying, seem to be one and the same thing, inasmuch as in their transgressing the law of God, they broke their solemn engagement to God upon mount Sinai.

Departing - Turning from God to idols. Speaking - As it were, talking of little else one among another, but how to oppress their neighbours, and apostatize from God. Uttering - That is, first contriving in their heart false accusations, false worship to the dishonour of God; laying the contrivances and uttering them. From the heart - And when they dealt with men in ways of fraud, it was from the heart, but when they spake with God it was but from the lip.

14. Judgment - He speaks here of the sentences in courts of judicature. Truth - Truth is cast to the ground, and justice trampled under foot, even in publick. Equity - No such thing will be admitted in their courts.

15. Faileth - All things are amiss, neither judgment or justice, or truth, is to be found among us. A prey - Or, as some render it, is accounted mad, is laughed at. Josephus tells us, that immediately before the destruction of Jerusalem, it was matter of scorn to be religions. The translators reach the meaning of the word by prey: the wicked, like wild beasts, endeavouring to devour such as are not as bad as themselves: where wickedness rules, innocency is oppressed.

16. No man - To appear in the behalf of equity. His arm - He would do his work without help from any other. Righteousness - His justice; seeing there could be no justice found among them, he would avenge the innocent himself.

17. For - God, resolving to appear as a man of war, puts on his arms; he calls righteousness his breast-plate, to shew the justness of his cause, as also his faithfulness in making good his promises. Vengeance - Or garments made of vengeance: as God is said to put on the former for their sakes, whom he would preserve, so he puts on these for their sakes, whom he will destroy, namely, his peoples enemies. Zeal - For his own honour, and for his own people. The sum of all these expressions is, to describe both the cause and effect together; the cause was righteousness and zeal in God, the effect, salvation to his people, and vengeance on his enemies.

18. Deeds - Hebrew. recompences or deserts. That is, he will recompence his adversaries with those effects of his fury that they have deserved. Islands - To those remoter nations under the king of Babylon, that thought themselves secure.

19. Fear - Worship the Lord. The west - The western part of the world. His glory - The glorious God. The rising of the sun - The eastern parts. When - At what time soever the devil, or his instruments shall make violent irruptions upon the church. A standard - God shall make known himself to take their part and defend them, by his spirit alone.

20. The Redeemer - Christ, of whom the apostle expounds it, Rom. xi, 26, the prophets usually concluding their promises of temporal deliverances with the promises of spiritual, especially such, of which the temporal were evident types.

21. My covenant - What I have promised, to them that turn from their iniquity. My words - Which thou hast uttered by virtue of my spirit. Of thy seed - A promise of the perpetual presence of his word and spirit with the prophets, apostles, and teachers of the church to all ages.

## LX

The glory and blessing of the new church after a short affliction, ver. 1-22.

1. Arise - A word of encouragement accommodated to the Jewish, or Hebrew style, wherein, as by lying down, is described a servile and calamitous condition, chap. xlvii, 1, so by rising, and standing up, a recovery out of it, into a free, and prosperous one, as may be seen frequently; Rouze up, intimating her deliverance to be at hand. Here under a type, of Jerusalem's restoration, is displayed the flourishing state of the Gentile - church, under the Messiah. Thy light - Thy flourishing and prosperous state.

2. The darkness - All kinds of errors. The Lord - Christ. Shall be seen - Shall be conspicuous; as the Lord's arising, to the darkness covering the earth, so the glory being seen, answers to that gross darkness.

3. The Gentiles - A plain prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles.

5. See - With delight the multitudes of thy children running to thee. Flow - They shall flock together to behold such an amazing sight. Fear - Or stand amazed. Enlarged - Both with joy, and love. The abundance - The islands of the sea, the nations, shall turn to thee in religion, and affection. The forces - Or wealth.

6. The multitude - The treasure, that is brought upon camels. By these, and such like figurative expressions in several verses of this chapter is implied the coming in of all nations to Christ, and therefore they are brought in as presenting the chief commodities of their respective countries. Dromedaries - A smaller sort of camel. Ephah - The Midianites, and Ephahites dwelt beyond Arabia. Sheba - A country in Arabia Felix, whose queen it was, that came to visit Solomon, and her bringing gifts might be a type of this, Solomon being a type of Christ. Gold - The principal commodities with which this country abounded, by which we are to understand whatever is precious.

7. Kedar - Arabia Petrea. Acceptance - They shall not now, as heretofore, be rejected. The house - The temple, or my house: God shall become glorious by the multitude of sacrifices, that shall be offered, and accepted here. This is a type of how glorious his New Testament worship shall be.

8. A cloud - These metaphors import the number as well as speed, of those that should be begotten by the apostles doctrine.

9. Ships - To convey them to me. Tarshish - Those that traffick by sea. In naming this he implies all that had commerce with other nations. From far - From the remotest parts. Glorified - He will make thee honourable in the eyes of the world, especially in setting up the ministry of the gospel in the midst of thee.

10. Minister - Shall administer all necessaries to thee. I had mercy - As I afflicted thee in my anger, so out of my compassion I will abundantly bless thee.

11. Therefore - For that purpose; by reason of the conflux of people, that shall be continually flocking thither.

12. Serve - That will not submit to Christ's scepter.

13. The glory - The box, the fir, the pine, and the cedar, on account whereof Lebanon was so famous; kings and great ones, the glory of the world, and also persons of a lower rank, shall be the materials, and members of Christ's church. To beautify - This is the reason and end why the glory of Lebanon is to be brought hither; by these trees understand the beauty, and nobility of the church. Sanctuary - The temple wherein was the sanctuary. The place of my feet - The ark, so called, because, supposing God after the manner of men, to sit between the wings of the cherubim, his feet would rest upon the ark. All this is made good in the gospel-church.

14. The sons - Either their posterity, or themselves, for it is the manner of the Hebrew so to speak. Bending - Humbling themselves, as penitents. Call thee - They shall acknowledge her to be so.

15. Forsaken - Both of God and of her inhabitants. No man went - Thy streets were left desolate.

16. Shalt suck - That the church shall draw, or receive the wealth of nations, and the riches, and power of kings, and whatever is most excellent, and that it shall come freely, and affectionately, as milk flows from the breast of the mother.

17. For brass - An allusion to the days of Solomon, when gold was as brass. Peace - Loving, meek, and peaceable. Righteousness - Most righteous. Such even thy tax-gatherers shall be.

18. Salvation - They shall be safe, and able to defend thee; thou shalt be as safe, as salvation itself can make thee. Thy gates - Within and upon thy gates and walls, thou shalt sing praises. All this will be fulfilled during the thousand years wherein Christ shall reign upon earth.

19. The sun - These shall not be esteemed in comparison of the spiritual light of the church; but here laid down for the churches comfort as the former was for her safety, so that God will not only be a shield, but a sun. The Lord - Christ shall scatter all darkness and ignorance, and this light shall not wax, and wane, and suffer eclipses, and settings, as the sun and moon do, but shall be constant, without shadow of change. The glory - Always ministering matter of glorying in him.

21. The branch - Thy people being of my planting, the work of my hands.

22. In time - In due time, the time that I have appointed.

## LXI

Christ and his blessed office, ver. 1-3. The church's repair and increase, ver. 4-6. And joy, ver. 7-11.

1. Upon me - Though the prophet may speak of himself, yet it is principally to be understood of Christ. Anointed - Set me apart, both capacitating him with gifts, and commissioning him with authority; and yet more, as it is applied to Christ, a power to make all effectual, from whence he hath also the name of Messiah among the Hebrew, and of Christ among the Greeks; nay, Christ alone among the prophets hath obtained this name, Psalm xlv, 7. The prophet describes first, who Christ is, and then what are his offices. Liberty - This appertains to Christ's kingly office, whereby he proclaims liberty from the dominion of sin, and from the fear of hell.

2. Vengeance - It being necessary, that where God will deliver his people, he should take vengeance on their enemies; principally on the enemies of his church, and the spiritual ones chiefly, Satan, sin, and death.

3. Ashes - By ashes understand whatever is proper for days of mourning, as by beauty whatever may become times of rejoicing. Oil of joy - He calls it oil of joy in allusion to those anointings they were wont to use in times of joy, gladness for heaviness; and it is called a garment in allusion to their festival ornaments, for they had garments appropriated to their conditions, some suitable to times of rejoicing, and some to times of mourning. Called - That they may be so. Trees - That they

shall be firm, solid, and well rooted, being by faith engrafted into Christ, and bringing forth fruit suitable to the soil wherein they are planted.

5. Strangers - Gentiles, such as are not of the natural race of the Jews, but Gentile converts. Or, such as shall have no more than an outward profession. Stand - Ready to be at thy service. Flocks - The churches with the word of God. Plow-men - Shall manage the whole work of God's spiritual husbandry.

6. The priests - The whole body of them shall now be as near to God as the priests were formerly, and shall be a royal priesthood. This is most certainly true of all the faithful under the gospel.

7. Double - honour. Portion - Of honour, that God will give them.

8. Love judgment - I will do them right, for I love justice in myself, and in them that practice it. Robbery - All things gotten by injustice, though it be for sacrifice. Direct - I will lead them so, that they shall do all things in sincerity. Everlasting covenant - Though you have broken covenant with me, yet I will renew my ancient covenant made with your fathers, confirmed with the blood of Christ, and it shall be everlasting, never to be abrogated.

9. Shall be - That is, eminently a promise of the increase of the church; such shall be their prosperity, and multiplying, that they shall be known abroad by their great increase; or else, the meaning is, the church shall have a seed of the Gentiles, whereas the church has been confined to one corner of the world, now it shall remain in one nation alone no more, but shall fill all the nations of the earth. Hath blessed - There shall be such visible characters of God's love to them, and of God's grace in them.

10. I will - This is spoken in the person of the church. Garments, &c. - With salvation as with a garment, and with righteousness as with a robe.

11. Righteousness - His great work of salvation shall break out and appear. Praise - As the natural product, and fruit of it.

## LXII

A prayer of the watchmen for the church in confidence of God's gracious designs and promises to it, ver. 1-12.

1. Zion's sake - Zion and Jerusalem are both put for the church, Heb. xii, 22. My peace - These seem to be the words of the prophet strongly resolving, notwithstanding all difficulties, to solicit God for the church's happiness, and constantly excite to the belief of it by his preaching, though it were long before it came, for Isaiah lived near two hundred years before this was accomplished. Righteousness - With reference to the Babylonians, understand it of the righteousness of God, who hath promised his people deliverance, and he must be righteous, and so understand salvation before; or rather, the vindicating of his people's cause in the eyes of the nations by the ruin of the Babylonians; he will shew that his people have a righteous cause. Lamp - And to that purpose is set up where it may be seen continually, to signify how eminently conspicuous this prosperous estate of the church should be among the nations, and as it may particularly relate to revealing of Christ unto the world.

2. A new name - The church shall be more renowned than ever, both in respect of her condition, and so called Hephzi-bah, and of her relation, and so called Beulah, and this new name the Lord gives them accordingly, ver. 4.

3. Crown of glory - An expression to set forth the dignity of her state. In the hand - Preserved and defended by God's hand. Royal diadem - The same thing with the former for substance. Or, the royal priesthood, whereof the apostle speaks, 1 Pet. ii, 9.

4. Forsaken - As a woman forsaken by her husband. Thy land - The inhabitants of the land. Hephzi-bah - My delight is in her; a new name agreeing with her new condition. Beulah - Married; agreeing to her new relation. Married - Thou shalt see the increase of thy children again in the land, as the fruit of thy married condition, which by reason of thy being forsaken of thy husband, were in a manner wasted and decayed: and this refers to the great enlargement of the church in the gospel days.

6. Day nor night - There shall be a vigilant and industrious ministry. Ye - That is, are his servants. And here especially are meant his servants in ordinary, his remembrancers, such as put God in mind of his promise, and such as make the Lord to be remembered, putting his people in mind of him.

7. A praise - By sending the Messiah, and those labourers into his vineyard, whereby the church may be established, and settled on sure foundations, and so become a matter of praise to God. All the nations shall praise him for her.

9. But - Thou shalt not sow, and another reap, as formerly. Courts - In my courts: holiness being put for God himself.

10. Go through - It is doubled by way of emphasis. Go meet the Gentiles, whom God purposes to bring into the church. Prepare - Let them not have any obstructions in their way. Stones - That there be no stumbling-stone, or offense in their way. Standard - An allusion to soldiers, that set up their standard that the army may know where to repair from all quarters.

11. Zion - To Jerusalem, or the church. Thy salvation - Thy saviour. Reward - The reward due to the work.

## LXIII

Christ's victory over his enemies, ver. 1-6. and mercy towards his church: in judgment remembering mercy, ver. 7-14. The church's prayer and complaint in faith, ver. 15-19.

1. Who - The church makes enquiry, and that with admiration, who it is that appears in such a habit or posture? Edom - Idumea, where Esau dwelt. It is put for all the enemies of the church. Bozrah - The capital city of Idumea. Here is also an allusion to the garments of this conqueror, Edom signifying red, and Bozrah a vintage. Glorious - Such as generals march before their armies in. Righteousness - Here Christ gives an answer, wherein he both asserts his fidelity, that he will faithfully perform what he hath promised, and that he will truly execute justice. Mighty - I have power to accomplish salvation.

3. Trodden - I have destroyed the enemies of my people, I have crushed them as grapes are crushed, this being an usual metaphor to describe the utter destruction of a people.

4. Of vengeance - To take vengeance on the enemies of my church.

5. None to help - Not that he needed it, but to see what men would do, in regard his people needed it; therefore the standing, or not standing by his people, is the same thing with standing, or not standing by him. Uphold - A metaphor, taken from a staff, that is an help to one that leans on it.

6. Drunk - They go as it were to and fro, not knowing what to do with themselves. Bring down - Whatever it is wherein their strength lies, he will bring to the very dust, to nothing.

7. Mention - Here begins a new matter, which contains the prophet's prayer, to the end of chap. 64, wherein he begins with mentioning the great kindnesses that God had shewn the Jews, and that emphatically, setting them forth with the greatest advantages.

8. He said - When he made a covenant with our fathers, and brought them out of Egypt. Not lie - That will keep my covenant. So he - Not Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Nehemiah, but Christ himself.

9. The angel - The same that conducted them through the wilderness; the Lord Jesus Christ, who appeared to Moses in the bush. Saved them - From the house of bondage. Carried - He carried them in the arms of his power, and on the wings of his providence. And he is said to do it of old, To remember his ancient kindness for many generations past.

11. He remembered - This relates, either

1. To the people, and then he is collectively taken, and so it looks like the language of the people in Babylon, and must be read, he shall remember. Or,
2. It may look back to their condition in the wilderness, and thus they may properly say, Where is he? Or that God who delivered his people of old, to do the like for us now? There is a like phrase used by God, as it were recollecting himself, Where is he? Where am I with my former bowels, that moved me to help them of old? His people - What great things he had done for them by Moses. The sea - Here God speaks of himself, as in the former clause, that divided the sea for them. Shepherds - Moses and Aaron. Holy spirit - Those abilities and gifts, wherewith God furnished Moses, as properly proceeding from the Spirit.

13. As an horse - With as much ease and tenderness, as an horse led by the bridle. Not stumble - That, tho' the sea were but newly divided, yet it was dried and smoothed by the wind, that God sent, as it were to prepare the way before them.

14. The valley - A laden beast goeth warily and gently down the hill. Rest - Led them easily, that they should not be over-travelled, or fall down, through weariness; thus Jeremiah expresses it, Jer. xxxi, 2, and thus God gave them rest from their enemies, drowning them in the sea, and in their safe conduct, that they could not annoy or disturb them, leading them 'till he found them a place for resting; the word for leading, and resting, being much of a like notion, Zech x, 6, pointing at their several rests by the way, Num. x, 33, or it may be read by way of interrogation, as all the foregoing words, and be the close of that enquiry, And where is the spirit, that caused then to rest? Or, he led them to Canaan the place of their rest.

15. Look - Now the prophet begins to expostulate with God, and to argue both from the goodness of his nature, and from the greatness of his works. God sees every where, and every thing, but he is said to look down from heaven, because there is his throne whereon he sits in majesty. Behold - Not barely see, but behold with regard, and respect thy poor people. Where - What is become of

that love, which of old would not let thee suffer thy people to be wronged? Strength - That power of thine manifested in those great acts? The founding - This is spoken of God after the manner of men.

16. Abraham - He who was our father after the flesh, though he be dead, and so ignorant of our condition. Redeemer - This is urged as another argument for pity; because their Father was their Redeemer. From everlasting - Thou hast been our Redeemer of old.

17. Made us - Suffered us to err. Hardened - Suffered it to be hardened. Thy fear - The fear of thee. Servants sake - For our sakes, that little remnant that are thy servants. Inheritance - The land of Canaan, which God gave them as an inheritance.

18. People - The people set apart for his servants. A little while - Comparatively to the promise, which was for ever. Sanctuary - The temple.

19. Thine - We continue so; we are in covenant, which they never were; and thus it is an argument they use with God to look upon them. Never - Not in that manner thou didst over us. They - Neither owned thee, nor were owned by thee.

## LXIV

The church's prayer continued, for the illustration of God's glory, ver. 1-5. With a confession of their sins, and complaint of their afflictions, ver. 6-12.

1. Rent - A metaphor taken from men, that when they would resolutely help one in distress, break and fling open doors and whatever may hinder. Flow down - That all impediments might be removed out of the way: possibly an allusion to God's coming down upon mount Sinai, in those terrible flames of fire.

2. Fire - Come with such zeal for thy people, that the solid mountains may be no more before thy breath, than metal that runs, or water that boils by the force of a vehement fire. Known - That thine enemies may know thy power, and that thy name may be dreaded among them.

3. Terrible things - This may relate to what he did among the Egyptians, tho' it be not recorded, and afterward in the wilderness. Looked not for - Such things as we could never expect. Mountains - Kings, princes, and potentates, may metaphorically be understood by these mountains.

4. Besides thee - This is to be applied to all the wonderful works, that God at all times wrought for his people: and thus they are a plea with God, that they might well expect such things from him now, that had done such wonderful things for their fathers. Waiteth - This may be taken with reference both to the state of grace and glory, those incomprehensible things that are exhibited through Christ in the mysteries of the gospel.

5. Meetest - As the father the prodigal. Worketh - That rejoices to work righteousness. Continuance - To those that work righteousness. Be saved - In so doing, in working righteousness.

6. Unclean - Formerly there were some that feared thee; but now we are all as one polluted mass, nothing of good left in us by reason of an universal degeneracy. And all - The very best of us all are no better than the uncleanest things. Taken - Carried away to Babylon, as leaves hurried away by a boisterous wind.

7. That calleth - That call upon thee as they ought. Take hold - Either to stay thee from departing from us, or to fetch thee back when departed.

8. Our father - Notwithstanding all this thou art our father both by creation, and by adoption, therefore pity us thy children.

9. Thy people - Thou hast no people in covenant but us, and wilt thou not leave thyself a people in the world?

11. Pleasant things - The king's palace, and the houses of the nobles, and other pieces of state and magnificence.

12. Wilt thou - Do none of these things move thee to take vengeance? Thy peace - Wilt thou be as one that regards not?

## LXV

The calling of the Gentiles: the Jews for their incredulity, idolatry, and hypocrisy, rejected, ver. 1-7. A remnant shall be saved, ver. 8-10. Judgments on the wicked, and blessings on the Godly, ver. 11-16. The flourishing and peaceable state of the New Jerusalem, ver. 17-26.

1. I am, &c. - This in the primary sense of this text, is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles, upon the rejection of the Jews; for their contempt and crucifying of Christ, cannot be doubted by any, who will not arrogate to themselves a greater ability to interpret the prophesies of the Old Testament, than St. Paul had, who, Rom. x, 20, expressly so interprets it, and applies it, which shews the vanity of the Jews in their other interpretations of it. Sought - The word signifies properly a diligent enquiry in things relating to God. Asked not - That in times past made no enquiry after me; l am now found by them that formerly sought me not. I said - I invited whole nations by the preaching of my gospel to behold me, and that with importunity, doubling my words upon them, and this I did unto a nation not called by my name, with whom I was not in covenant.

2. I have spread - Applied to the Jews, Rom. x, 21. I have stretched out my hands, I have used all means to reduce them, I have stretched out the hands of a passionate orator to persuade them, of a liberal benefactor to load them with my benefits; this I have done continually in the whole course of my providence with them.

3. To my face - With the utmost impudence, not taking notice of God's omnipresence, and omniscience. In gardens, &c. - Directly contrary to the divine rule.

4. Remain - They remained among the graves, there consulting with devils, who were thought to delight in such places; or to practice necromancy, all which were forbidden, Deut. xviii, 11 chap. viii, 19. Monuments - Some interpret it of idol temples, some of caves and dens, in which the Heathens used to worship their idols. Broth of abominable things - Of such flesh as was to the Jews unclean by the law.

5. Holier - Thus they esteemed themselves holier than others, though all their holiness lay in rituals, and those too, such as God never commanded. Of these God saith, These are a smoak in my nostrils, a fire that burneth all the day; that is, a continual provocation to me: as smoak is an offense to our noses.

6. Behold - They may think I take no notice of these things; but I will as certainly remember them, as princes or great men that record things in writing which they would not forget.

7. Together - Yea, and when I reckon with them, I will punish them, not only for their personal sins, but for the sins of their parents, which they have made their own, by imitation. Their former - I will not only punish the late sins that they have committed, but the former sins of this kind, which those that went before did commit, and they have continued in.

8. Thus, &c. - These word's may be conceived as a gracious answer from God to the prophet, pleading God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. To this God replies, that he intended no such severity. His threatening should be made good upon the generality of this people. Blessing - But yet, as in a vineyard, which is generally unfruitful, there may be some vine that brings forth fruit, and has the hopes of new wine in the cluster, and as to such, the gardener bids his servant destroy it not, for there is in them what speaks God's blessing. So - So (saith God) will I do for my servants sake, that I may not destroy them all, for the sake of my servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

9. Judah - God farther promises to bring out of Judah, an inheritor of his mountains which refers to the Jews return out of the captivity of Babylon to Jerusalem, to worship God in his temple, upon mount Zion. Mine elect - My chosen ones. The term signifies such as are dignified with some special favour. The whole nation of the Jews are called a chosen people.

10. A fold - Sharon was a place of great fruitfulness for pastures. It was become like a wilderness, God here promises that it should again be a place for the flocks.

11. Forget - To forget God's holy mountains, signifies not to regard the true worship of God. God calls Zion his holy mountain. That troop - The idols of the ten tribes, and of the Assyrians, were a troop, where as the God of Israel was one God. By preparing a table, here seems to be meant, the feasts they made upon their sacrifices in imitation of what the true God had commanded his people. Furnish - God had appointed drink offerings for his honour, but the people had paid their homage to idols. Number - The multitude of their idols.

12. To the sword - A great number of you shall perish by the sword; or possibly the term number may refer to all in the next phrase, so that none of them should escape. God saith he will number them, tell them out one by one to the sword. Bow down - As you have bowed down to idols. I called - By my prophets, you did not answer by doing the things which I enjoined. Chuse - You sinned deliberately chusing sinful courses, the things which I hated.

15. A curse - They shall use your names as examples, of the eminent wrath of God upon sinners. Another name - He will not suffer his own people to be called by a name by which idolaters are known.

16. God of truth - Because they shall see what God promised is fulfilled. Are hid - That is, they are at an end.

17. I create - I am about wholly to change the state not only of my people, but to bring a new face upon the world, which shall abide until a new heavens and earth appear, in which shall dwell nothing but righteousness. Not be remembered - That state of things shall be so glorious, that the former state of my people shall not be remembered.

18. You - The church, as well under the gospel, as under the law.

20. An infant - Those that were now children, shall die at a great age. But - Yet none of these things shall be of any advantage to wicked men, but if any of them shall live to be an hundred years old, yet they shall die accursed.

23. With them - Is blessed with them.

24. Before they call - God promised, chap. lviii, 9, to answer them, when they called: here he promises to answer the words, as soon as they should be formed in their hearts before they could get them out of their lips. While - Yea, while they were speaking.

25. The wolf, &c. - God here promises to take off the fierceness of the spirits of his peoples enemies, so that they shall live quietly and peaceably together. And dust - God promises a time of tranquility to his church under the metaphor of serpents eating the dust, their proper meat, Gen. iii, 14, instead of flying upon men: it signifies such a time, when wicked men shall no more eat up the people of God.

## LXVI

God is served with the spirit, and not by ceremonies, ver. 1- 5. The wonderful birth and benefits of the gospel-church, ver. 6- 14. Severe judgments against the wicked, ver. 15-17. The Gentiles shall be an holy church, ver. 18-23. The eternal punishment of the wicked, ver. 24.

1. The heaven - The highest heaven, is the place where I shew myself in my majesty. So Psalm xi, 4 Psalm ciii, 19 Matt. v, 34. Hence we are taught to pray; our father which art in heaven. And the earth is my footstool - Or a place wherein I set my feet, Matt. v, 35. The house - Can there be an house built, that will contain me? My rest - Or where is the place wherein I can be said to rest in a proper sense?

2. Have been - They were not only made by God, but kept in being by him. Look - Yet God will look with a favourable eye to him that hath a broken and contrite spirit, whose heart is subdued to the will of God, and who is poor, and low in his own eyes. Trembleth - Who trembleth when he hears God's threatening words, and hears every Revelation of his will with reverence.

3. He that, &c. - Solomon, Prov. xv, 8, gives a full commentary on the whole verse; The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. As if - From hence it is plain, that the prophet is not here reflecting upon idolatrous worship, but formal worship: upon those who in a formality worshipped the true God, and by acts which he had appointed. God by the prophet declares, that these mens services were no more acceptable to him than murder, idolatry, or the most horrid profanation of his name. Own ways - They live as they lust. Delight - They take pleasure in their sins.

4. Chuse - They have chosen to mock and delude me, I will chuse to suffer them to delude themselves; they have chosen to work wickedness, I will chuse the effect. Their fears - That is, the things which they feared. Did not hear - God accounts that those do not hear, who do not obey his will.

5. You - That truly fear God. Your brethren - By nation. Cast you out - That cast you out of their synagogues, cast you out of their city, and some of you out of the world. For my names sake - For my sake; for your adherence to my law. Glorified - Thinking they did God good service, John xvi, 2.

6. A voice - The expression of a prophetical extasy, as if he said, I hear a sad and affrighting noise; it comes not from the city only, but from the temple, wherein these formalists have so much gloried. There is a noise of soldiers slaying, and of the poor people shrieking or crying out. Of the Lord - A voice of the Lord, not in thunder, but that rendereth recompence to his enemies. Thus he seems to express the destruction of the Jews by the Roman armies, as a thing at that time doing.

7. Before - The whole verse is expressive of a great and sudden salvation, which God would work for his church, like the delivery of a woman, and that of a man-child, before her travail, and without pain. Doubtless it refers to the coming of Christ, and the sudden propagation of the gospel.

8. For - As soon as the voice of the gospel put the church of the Jews into her travail, in Christ's and the Apostles time, it presently brought forth.

9. Shall I - I, that in the ordinary course of my providence use to give a birth to women, to whom I have given a power to conceive, shall I not give a birth to my people, whom by my promises I have made to conceive such expectations? And shut - Nor shall Zion once only bring forth, but she shall go on, her womb shall not be shut, she shall every day bring forth more and more children, and my presence shall be with my church, to the end of the world.

11. Consolations - The gospel doctrine was their breasts of consolation. Her glory - Christ was the glory of the people of Israel, though he was also a light to the Gentiles.

12. Like a river - It is plain this prophecy relates to a farther conversion of the Jews than hath been yet seen. Ye - Ye Jews also. Her sides - The Gentiles were born upon the sides of Jerusalem and dandled upon her knees, as first hearing from the Apostles (who were members of the Jewish church) the glad tidings of salvation.

13. As one whom, &c. - That is, in the most tender, and compassionate way.

14. Rejoice - The peace of the church and the propagation of the kingdom of Christ, is always the cause of an heart rejoicing to such as fear God, so that they flourish like an herb in the spring. The hand - The power, protection, and influence of God.

15. With fire - With terrible judgments, or with fire in a proper sense, understanding it of the fire with which enemies use to consume places brought under their power. Whirlwind - With a sudden sweeping judgment. Fury - That is, with fervour; for fury properly taken is not in God. Rebukes - They had contemned the rebukes of the law, now God will rebuke them with fire, and sword.

16. Plead - God at first pleads with sinners by words, but if he cannot so prevail, he will plead with them in a way by which he will overcome; by fire, pestilence and blood. All flesh - Thus he threatens to do with all the wicked Jews. The slain - Those whom God should cause to be slain.

17. Gardens - In which they worshipped idols. In the midst - Behind one of the trees, or one by one behind the trees. The abominations - All those beasts forbidden the Jews for meat. God will not only destroy gross idolaters, but all those who make no conscience of yielding obedience to the law of God in such things as seemed to them of a minute nature, and such as they easily might have obeyed.

18. Come - It shall come to pass that I will cast them off, and then l will gather all nations, &c. My glory - My oracles, my ordinances, which hitherto have been locked up in the church of the Jews, and been their glory, shall be published to the Gentiles.

19. A sign - By this may be understood Christ, Luke ii, 34, or the ministry of the word attended with miracles, these were set up among the Jews first, then among the Gentiles. Afar off - To all the quarters of the world. They shall - This was eminently made good after the destruction of

Jerusalem, when the believers among the Jews, as well as the apostles went about publishing the gospel to all people, which was declaring the Lord's glory.

20. Your brethren - Those who are the children of Abraham, not considered as the father of the Jewish nation only, but considered as the father of many nations, and as the father of the faithful, and so are your brethren, shall be brought out of all nations for an offering to the Lord. Holy mountain - And they shall be brought into the church, which began at Jerusalem. As - And they shall come with as much joy and gladness, with as much sincerity and holiness, as the Godly Jews do when they bring their offerings in clean vessels.

21. For priests - God will find among the converted Gentiles those who though they are not of the tribe of Levi, yet shall do the true work of priests and Levites.

22. The new heavens - The new state of the church to be raised up under the Messiah. Remain - As I intend that shall abide, so there shall be a daily succession of true believers for the upholding of it.

23. And, &c. - In the gospel-church there shall be as constant and settled a course of worship (though of another nature) as ever was in the Jewish church: Christians are not bound to keep the Jewish sabbaths or new-moons. But New Testament worship is expressed by Old Testament phrases. The Jews were only obliged to appear three times in a year at Jerusalem, but (saith the prophet) the gospel-church shall worship God from one sabbath to another.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

IT was the great unhappiness of this prophet, to be a physician to, but that could not save, a dying state, their disease still prevailing against the remedy; and indeed no wonder that all things were so much out of order, when the book of the law had been wanting above sixty years. He was called to be a teacher in his youth, in the days of good Josiah, being sanctified and ordained by God to his prophetical office from his mother's womb, chap. i, 5, in a very evil time, though the people afterward proved much worse upon the death of that good king. He setting himself against the torrent of the corruptions of the times, was always opposed, and unkindly treated by his ungrateful country-men, as also by false prophets, and the priests, princes, and people, who encouraged all their impieties and unrighteousness: at length he threatened their destruction and captivity by the Chaldeans, which he lived to see, but foretells their return after seventy years; all which accordingly came to pass. He also, notwithstanding his dreadful threatenings, intermixes divers comfortable promises of the Messiah, and the days of the gospel; he denounces also heavy judgments against the Heathen nations, that had afflicted God's people, both such as were near, and also more remote, as Egypt, the Philistines, Moab, Edomites, Ammonites, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor, Elam, but especially Babylon herself, that is made so great a type of the Anti-Christian Babylon in the New Testament. Upon the murder of Gedaliah, whom the Chaldeans had made governor of Judea, he was forcibly against his will carried into Egypt, where (after he had prophesied from first to last between forty and fifty years) he probably died; some say he was stoned. Whatever else we hear mentioned of his writings, they are either counterfeit as the prophecies of Baruch,&c., or it is likely

we have the sum of them in this book, though possibly some of his sermons might have had some enlargements in that roll, which by his appointment, was written by Baruch, chap. xxxvi, 2, &c.

## I

The pedigree, time, and calling of Jeremiah, confirmed against his excuses, ver. 1-10. His visions of an almond-rod and seething pot, ver. 11-14. His heavy message against Judah, ver. 15, 16. God promises him his assistance, ver. 17-19.

1. Anathoth - Was a city three miles from Jerusalem, allotted out of the tribe of Benjamin for the priests.

2. The word - That commission from God that authorized him to his prophetic work, for the space of forty-one years successively in Judea, viz. from the 13th year of Josiah to the 11th year of Zedekiah, besides the time that he prophesied in Egypt. In the days - During his reign. Thirteenth - By which it appears that Jeremiah prophesied the last eighteen years of Josiah's reign; for he reigned thirty-one years, 2 Kings xxii, 1.

3. It - The word of the Lord. Jehoiakim - Called at first by Josiah, Eliakim. Jehoahaz and Jehoiakin, whereof the former reigned before him, the latter succeeded, are conceived not to be mentioned, because they reigned each of them but three months, and therefore not considerable. Of Jerusalem - The inhabitants of Jerusalem, under Zedekiah, during all which time Jeremiah prophesied. Captive - This does not terminate the time of his prophecies; for he prophesied also both in Judea, and in Egypt afterwards: but only relates to what he prophesied while the city and temple were standing, the rest seeming to be added as a supplement. Fifth month - Of that present year; for, tho' the year end not at the fifth month, yet it might end the year of Zedekiah's reign, because he might begin his reign at the fifth month of the year.

4. Then - When he was first called to his office.

5. I sanctified - I ordained thee for this public service. He speaks thus to Jeremiah, not to the other prophets, because he stood in need of greater encouragement than they, both in respect of the tenderness of his years, and the difficulties which he was to encounter with. The nations - To other nations besides the Jews.

7. Thou shalt speak - Fear not, I will make thee eloquent and courageous.

9. Then - God having excited the prophet by command and promise, now in a vision confirms him, either by the hand of an angel, or by himself in some visible shape.

10. The kingdoms - Having now received his commission, he is directed to whom he is to go; to the greatest, not only single persons, but whole nations, as the Babylonians, Persians, and Egyptians. To pull down - That is, to prophecy that I will pull down; which I will as certainly effect, as if thou hadst done it thyself: for, according to scripture-usage, the prophets are said to do that which they foretell shall come to pass. To plant - Metaphors taken from architects and gardeners: either the former words relate to the enemies of God, and the latter to his friends; or rather to both conditionally: if they repent, he will build them up, he will increase their families, and settle them in the land; if they do not, he will root them up, and pull them down.

11. Came unto me - This and the boiling caldron, ver. 13, is thought to be at the same time, and in the same vision, when he was first appointed to the work. Almond-tree - That had leaves, and probably blossoms on it like Aaron's. This is a tree that blossoms early, and speedily, and so it may point at either God's readiness, to smite, ver. 12, or Israel's ripeness to be smitten; this rod being like a portentous comet, shewing to Jeremiah the miseries that were at hand, at the death of Josiah, which soon followed this vision, the taxing them by Pharaoh Necho, presently after the breaking in of the Chaldees, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, and then the Babylonian captivity.

12. Well seen - Or thou hast seen and judged right. Hasten - Word for word, I will almond-tree it, that is, I will be upon them speedily, in a short time. My word - My threatening against Judah and its inhabitants.

13. Seething-Pot - I see a pot coming, meaning the Babylonian army, who would besiege Jerusalem as a fire plays round the pot, when it is to be made boil; and reduce the inhabitants to miserable extremities. Face - Or front of the pot, or furnace, the place where the fire was put in, or blowed up to make it boil. North - Indicating from whence their misery should come, namely, from Chaldea, which lay north from Jerusalem.

14. North - From Babylon.

15. The families - Those nations that were under one Lord. Kingdoms - The Babylonians, and their assistants; the Medes also being in confederacy with them, whose king's daughter Nebuchadnezzar married. His throne - Their seats, pavilions or tents shall be pitched, which shall be as so many thrones. Entering - Of the gates, or way leading to them.

17. Gird up - It is a speech taken from the custom of the countries where they wore long garments; and therefore they girt them up about them, that they might not hinder them in any work that required expedition. Consume thee - Lest I destroy thee even in their sight, to become their reproach.

18. This whole land - All its inhabitants in general; intimating, that though men of all degrees should set themselves against him, yet God would support him against their all, and would carry him thro' his work, tho' his troubles would not be only great, but long; passing thro' several king's reigns.

## II

God's numerous and continued mercies render the Jews in their idolatry inexcusable, and unparalleled in any nation; and themselves the causes if their calamities, ver. 1-19. Their gross idolatry, ver. 20-28. Incorrigibleness, bloodshedding, and hypocrisy, ver. 29-37.

2. Go - From Anathoth to Jerusalem. Remember - I remind thee of the kindness that was between us. The love - When I entered into covenant with thee at the giving of the law. Wilderness - I took such care of thee, in the howling wilderness, a land that was not sown.

3. Holiness - A people dedicated to God. As - As the first fruits were holy to God, so was Israel. Devour - All that were injurious to him. Offend - Were liable to punishment. Evil - Evil was inflicted on them from the Lord, as upon the Egyptians, Amalekites, Midianites, Canaanites.

5. Vanity - Idols. Vain - Fools; senseless as the stocks and stones that they made their idols of.

6. Neither - They never concerned themselves about what God had done for them, which should have engaged them to cleave to him. Of drought - Where they had no water but by miracle. Death - Bringing forth nothing that might support life, therefore nothing but death could be expected; and besides, yielding so many venomous creatures, as many enemies that they went in continual danger of. No man dwelt - As having in it no accommodation for travelers, much less for habitation.

7. My land - Consecrated to my name; by your idols and many other abominations.

8. They - They that should have taught others, knew as little as they, or regarded as little, who are said here to handle the law, the priests and Levites, who were the ordinary teachers of the law. Pastors - Either teachers, or kings and princes. Prophets - They that should have taught the people the true worship of God, were themselves worshippers of Baal.

9. Plead - By his judgments, and by his prophets, as he did with their fathers, that they may be left without excuse. Children - God often visits the iniquities of the parents upon the children, when they imitate their parents.

10. Of Chittim - All the isles in the Mediterranean sea, with the neighbouring coasts; for the Hebrew call all people, that separated from them by the sea, islanders, because they came to them by shipping. Kedar - Arabia that lay east-southeast of Judea, as Chittim did more north or northwest; go from north to south, east to west, and make the experiment; look to Chittim the most civilized, or Kedar the most barbarous, yet neither have changed their gods.

11. Their glory - The true God, who was their glory; and who always did them good, giving them cause to glory in him.

12. O ye heavens - A pathetical expression, intimating that it is such a thing, that the very inanimate creatures, could they be sensible of it, would be astonished. Be desolate - Lose your brightness, as the sun seemed to do when Christ suffered.

13. Of living waters - A metaphor taken from springs, called living, because they never cease, or intermit; such had God's care and kindness been over them. Cisterns - Either their idols, which are empty vain things, that never answer expectation, or the Assyrians, and Egyptians. Indeed all other supports, that are trusted to besides God, are but broken vessels.

14. A slave - Slave is here added to home-born to express the baseness of his service, because the master had power to make those slaves who were born of slaves in his house. Why - Why is he thus tyrannized over, as if strangers had the same right over him as owners over their slaves?

15. Lions - Understand the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians, called lions from their fierceness, and young from their strength. Yelled - Noting the terrible voice that the lion puts forth, either in seizing the prey, or devouring it.

16. Noph, &c. - Two of the kings of Egypt's principal seats. Noph was sometimes called Memphis, now Cairo. Tahapanes probably took its name from Taphanes queen of Egypt, 1 Kings xi, 19, called also Hanes: Isaiah xxx, 4. The inhabitants of these cities are called here their children.

17. When - By the conduct of providence in the wilderness, keeping thee from all dangers.

18. And now - What business hast thou there? Sihor - The Nile: it signifies black, called Melas by the Greeks, either from the blackness of the land it passed through, or of the soil it casts up. The waters - Here and by the same words before is meant, to seek help from either place. River - Euphrates, often called so by way of eminency.

19. Thy wickedness - Thy own wickedness is the cause of thy correction. Know - Consider well, and thou canst not but be convinced.

20. Broken - The bondage and tyranny that thou wert under in old time in Egypt, as also divers times besides. Tree - Under these shades idolaters thought there lay some hidden deity. Wanderest - The word properly signifies, making hast from one tree to another, or from one idol to another. Playing - Committing idolatry, which is a spiritual harlotry, chap. iii, 1, 2.

21. A right seed - A right seed of true believers.

22. Nitre - Though interpreters do greatly vary in describing what is particularly meant here by Nitre and Soap, and would be superfluous to mention here; yet all agree, they are some materials that artists make use of for cleansing away spots from the skin. The blot of this people is by no art to be taken out; nor expiated by sacrifices; it is beyond the power of all natural and artificial ways of cleansing. Marked - Thy filthiness is so foul that it leaves a brand behind which cannot be hid or washed out, but will abide, chap. xvii, 1.

23. Baalim - The word is plural, as comprehensive of all their idols. Thy way - The filthiness thou hast left behind thee, whereby thou mayst be traced. Valley - Whether of Hinnom where they burnt their children in sacrifice, or in any valleys where thou hast been frequent in thy idolatries. Traversing - A metaphor taken from creatures that are hunted, that keep no direct path.

24. A wild ass - Another similitude for the more lively description of the same thing. The wind - This creature, by the wind, smells afar off which way her male is. In her occasion - That is, when she has an occasion to run impetuously to her male, she bears down all opposition. In her month - Perhaps the sense is, though Jerusalem be now madly bent upon going after her idols, that there is no stopping her, yet the time may come, in their afflictions, that they may grow more tame, and willing to receive counsel.

25. Withhold - Take not those courses that will reduce thee to poverty, to go bare foot, and to want wherewith to quench thy thirst. No hope - We care not since there is no remedy. Strangers - Idols.

26. Found - Not ashamed of his sin of theft, but that he is at last found.

27. Brought me forth - Or begotten me; so is the word used, Gen. iv, 18. This denotes the sottish stupidity of this people, to take a lifeless stock or stone to be their maker, and to give the honour of God unto them, Isaiah xliv, 17. Turned - They turn their faces towards their idols.

28. For - Thou hast enough of them, imitating the Heathens, who had, according to Varro, above thirty thousand deities. Make trial if any, or all of them together, can help thee.

30. Children - Your inhabitants in every city, they being frequently called the children of such a city. Correction - Instruction: though they were corrected, yet they would not be instructed. Your sword - You have been so far from receiving instruction, that you have, by the sword, and other ways of destruction, murdered those that I have sent to reprove you.

31. O generation - O ye men of this generation. See - You shall see the thing with your eyes, because your ears are shut against it. A wilderness - Have I been like the wilderness of Arabia, have not I accommodated you with all necessaries? A land of darkness - As it were a land uninhabitable, because of the total want of light. Have I been a God of no use or comfort to them, that they thus leave me? Have they had nothing from me but misery and affliction? We - Words of pride and boasting.

32. A maid - How unlikely is it, that a maid should forget her ornaments? A bride - Those jewels which the bridegroom was wont to present his bride with. Forgotten - In the neglect of my worship; me, who was not only their defense, but their glory.

33. Trimmest - Or, deckest, Ezek xxiii, 40, thinking thereby to entice others to thy help. Taught - Nations that have been vile enough of themselves, by thy example are become more vile.

34. Skirts - Of thy garments: the tokens of cruelty may be seen openly there. Innocents - In thee is found the murder expressed here by blood of innocent persons, murdering souls as well as bodies. Search - Hebrew. by digging; as if the earth had covered the blood, or as if they had committed their wickedness in some obscure places. These - Upon thy garments, exposed openly to publick view.

35. Behold - I will proceed in my judgment against thee. Because - Because thou justifiest thyself.

36. Why - Why dost thou seek auxiliaries anywhere, rather than cleave to me? Ashamed - Egypt shall stand thee in no more stead than Assyria hath done.

37. Yea - All the help thou canst procure shall not prevent thy captivity, but from hence thou shalt go. Thy hands - An usual posture of mourning.

## III

God's forbearance with the idolatry of Judah, who is worse than Israel, ver. 1-11. Both called to repent, with gospel promises, ver. 12-19. Misery by sin; salvation only of God, ver. 20-25.

1. Shall be - He cannot take her again according to the law, Deut. xxiv, 1-4. Yet I am ready to be reconciled to you. Polluted - Would not so great a sin greatly pollute a nation? Many - Not with one only, but many idols.

2. Lien with - Where there are not the footsteps of thy idolaters. Sat - To assure passengers. As the Arabian - An allusion to the custom of that people, who were wont to pitch their tents by the way-sides, that they might meet with their customers to trade, as they passed along. Wickedness - Not only thy idolatries, but other wicked courses.

3. A whore's forehead - For all this, thou didst still remain obstinate, as ashamed of nothing.

4. My father - Wilt thou not as a child call upon me, whom thou hast thus greatly provoked. The guide - I have been brought up by thee.

5. Will he - Will he not be reconciled?

6. Israel - The ten tribes who fell off from Judah.

8. Given a bill - Delivered her up into the hands of the Assyrian, where God took from her the title of being his church, 2 Kings xvii, 5, 6.

10. And yet - Though God saw what she did, and though she saw the shameful idolatry of Israel, and what she had suffered.

12. The north - To Assyria and Media, that lay northward from Judea, whither the ten tribes were carried by Tiglath-pileser, and Salmanezer.

13. Strangers - To other gods, or to idols, running here and there up and down.

14. I am married - I am in covenant with you, and this covenant notwithstanding all your unfaithfulness, I am ready to renew with you. Family - This word is taken frequently for a country or nation, and this may partly respect the fewness of those that will return. But chiefly it respects

God's exact care of them, that being now married to them, there shall not be one in a city, or two in a country or tribe, but he will find them out. Zion - The ten tribes did never return into their own land, therefore this must be understood of a spiritual going up to Zion, when all Israel shall be saved, Rom. xi, 26.

16. Multiplied - After the growth of the church under the Messiah. The ark - That whole worship with all the rites and ceremonies belonging to it shall cease, Christ being come, who was the substance of what the ark, and all other rites shadowed. Covenant - Called also the ark of the testimony, because the two tables of the law, which were the testimony, or witness of the covenant were in it. Any more - It shall be no more in use; neither shall men trouble their thoughts about it, or mention it.

17. The throne - Instead of the ark, the church typified by Jerusalem, shall be the place of God's residence, where by his spirit he will rule and act in his word and ordinances. Jerusalem - Dwelling in Jerusalem, or where the Lord placed his name, of old in Jerusalem, but now in the church. Neither - Both Jews and Gentiles shall now conform themselves to the will of God.

18. Judah - The two kingdoms shall become one. Shall come - Of their captivity, a promise of their enjoying again their ancient possession at their last conversion.

19. Put - Esteem thee as my child, 'till thou give some proof, of thy repentance. Give thee - How shall I put thee into possession of that pleasant land. Of nations - Great hosts and multitudes of nations, or Gentiles, that shall be joined to them in the gospel church. Thou shalt - On this condition, that thou wilt own me, and not return any more to idols.

21. A voice - Here the prophet seems to express Israel's repentance. Forgotten - This expresses, rather the matter or their prayer, than the cause of it.

23. The hills - From idols which were worshipped upon hills. Mountains - The multitude of sacrifices, which they offer in the mountains.

24. Shame - Sin, which causes shame, for that brought shame first into the world. Devoured - This hath been the fruit of our labour.

25. Lie down - An expression to set forth the greatness of their repentance and sorrow in great perplexity, not knowing what to do, throws himself down upon his couch or bed.

## IV

An invitation to true repentance, by promises, ver. 1-4. And judgments coming on them by the Babylonians, contrary to the predictions of their false prophets, for their sins, ver. 5-18. A grievous lamentation for the miseries of Judah, ver. 19-31.

1. If - If thou wilt return, return; make no longer delay. Remove - Thou shalt not go out of thine own land into exile.

2. Swear - This is put here for the whole worship of God, acknowledging an& owning God as the only God; which is strongly exprest by this act. In truth - That the matter and substance of it be true. In judgment - Deliberately, advisedly, and reverently. In righteousness - That none be injured by it, that the things we engage be both lawful and possible, and that we look to the performance.

The nations - This shall be a means to work upon the Heathen nations, to come into the same way of worship. They shall think themselves happy to be incorporated with thee, that it may be with them according to that promise, Gen. xii, 3. Glory - Whereas before they gloried in their idols, they shall glory in God alone.

3. For - The Lord turns now his speech from Israel to Judah. Break up - Prepare your hearts by making them soft, tender, and pliable, fit to embrace my word. A metaphor taken from plow- men. Thorns - Rid your hearts and hands of what may hinder you of embracing my word.

4. Circumcise - Put away your corruptions. Heart - Let it be inward, not outward in the flesh only.

5. The trumpet - The Lord being now about to bring enemies upon them, speaks in martial language, warning them of the nature of their approaching judgment.

6. Retire - Make haste away.

7. The lion - Nebuchadnezzar, so called from his fierceness and strength.

9. The heart - They shall have no heart to do any thing, they shall not be able to help their people, either by their counsel or arms. Prophets - False prophets that had nothing but visions of peace for them.

10. Deceived - Hast suffered them to be deceived by their false prophets. Whereas - To persuade them it should be well with them, when the sword is at the door, not only ready to take away the comforts of life, but even life itself.

11. At that time - There shall be tidings brought both to the country and city. A dry wind - A drying wind, such as shall blast and scorch where it comes, without any rain or moisture. It points at the stormy and furious irruption of the Babylonian army. In the plain - Where there is no stop in the way to break its fury. Toward - Directly, and designedly, coming in the way leading to my people. Not - Not such a gentle wind, as is made choice of to separate the chaff from the wheat; but so boisterous and violent, that it shall sweep away, and lay waste, all together.

12. Full - Hebrew. Fuller than they. A wind too strong for them. Shall come - It shall presently come to me, to receive my commission, and do my will.

13. As clouds - Denoting the suddenness of them, when not expected, clouds often rising on a sudden, and overspread the whole face of the heavens; or the great swiftness with which Nebuchadnezzar should march against them. As a whirlwind - Which, besides the swiftness, denotes also the confusion and amazement that they will cause.

14. Wash - As a means to prevent the judgments that are impending. Vain thoughts - Vain fancies of safety.

15. From Daniel - Daniel was the first place the Chaldeans came to, being the utmost boundary of Canaan northward. Ephraim was the innermost border of Israel in the north of Judea, intimating the march of the Babylonians thro' all Israel.

16. Make mention - These words are a proclamation, summoning the nations by the Chaldeans. Watchers - Chaldean soldiers, who shall so carefully encompass Jerusalem, that none shall escape. Give out - They give a shout, encouraging the soldiers to battle.

17. As keepers - They will watch that none relieve them, and that none get out to escape.

18. Bitter - Thy wickedness hath been the cause of bringing such a bitter enemy against thee, which hath reached unto thy very heart.

19. My bowels - Here begins the complaint of the prophet. My heart - Is disturbed within me. Because - I have heard in the spirit of prophecy; it is as certain, as if I now heard the trumpet sounding.

20. Destruction - Good Josiah slain, and four of his successors carried away, or slain. My tents - The enemy makes no more of overthrowing my stately cities, than if he were overturning tents made of curtains.

23. I beheld - I Jeremiah saw this in a vision. It - The land was squalid, and ruined, like the first chaos, for which reason possibly he calls Judah the earth, in allusion to Gen. i, 2. The heavens - He seems to proceed in his metaphor of the chaos. Every thing above and below seemed to be wrapped up in dismal blackness.

24. Trembled - He proceeds in his figurative expressions. Behold how the very mountains of Judea tremble! Moved - As easily as dust, or feathers in a whirl-wind.

25. No man - All being either slain, or carried captive, or fled.

27. Yet - In the midst of judgment he will remember mercy.

28. Mourn - Expressions to set forth the dreadfulness of the judgment; he makes the elements to personate mourners.

31. In travail - When the scripture would express any exquisite sorrow, it doth it by a woman in travail. First child - Which is usually the most painful. Spreadeth her hands - According to the use of persons in great anguish, clapping or wringing their hands together.

## V

None godly in Judah, ver. 1. They swear falsely, tho' God be a God us truth; they are incorrigible and senseless, and know not the law, or else wilfully violate it, ver. 1-6. Their idolatry, adultery, ver. 7-9. Contempt of God's word and prophets, which should be sadly verified, ver, 10-18. They forsake, forget, and fear not God, whose power is so great, ver. 19-24. They are rich through deceit and violence; their false prophets, ver. 25-31.

1. Run - God gives leave to all the earth to look into the state of Jerusalem, by which he vindicates himself in the face of the whole world from all severity towards his people, whatever he brings upon them. In the broad places - Even there, where men meet from all quarters. A man - It seems worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, for God condescends to pardon Jerusalem, if there be but one righteous man found in it; there he came no lower than ten. A man might walk the streets of Jerusalem long enough before he could meet with any one truly religious. Executeth - Among the magistracy. Seeketh - Among the commonalty, that deal faithfully and uprightly.

2. Though - Though when they swear, they use the form of an oath, and say, the Lord liveth, or by the living God: yet it is neither in truth nor righteousness.

3. O Lord - Dost not thou approve truth and faithfulness. Grieved - They have not repented. Consumed - God had not only lightly chastised them, but wasted them by several enemies, yet they have profited nothing by it.

4. Poor - The vulgar, that understand but little, of less conscience than the better sort. Judgment - The methods or ways of his providence.

5. But - These are more refractory than the other; no law of God is able to hold them.

6. A lion - Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army are here pointed at under the metaphor of beasts of prey of three kinds; compared to a lion, which denotes his great power, courage, and pride. A wolf - For their greediness and unsatiableness. A leopard - The Chaldean army is compared to a leopard, not for its speed only, but for its vigilancy and subtilty.

7. They then - Such is the natural effect of unsanctified prosperity.

10. Ye - Ye Babylonians, go execute my vengeance on them. Battlements - Lay her and all her fortifications level with the ground. For - I disown them.

12. Belied - Not believing that these words of the prophet were God's word.

13. Became wind - A proverbial expression, all the prophet's threats shall come to nothing. The word - The prophet's words are not from God. Thus - It shall fall upon their own heads that have thus threatened us.

14. It - The Chaldean army, shall consume and eat them up like fire.

15. Israel - By these are meant Judah; for Israel were in captivity before: called the house of Israel, not only because they descended from Jacob, but because they were the chief of that stock.

18. Nevertheless - I have not done with you yet.

20. Judah - By Judah and Jacob we are to understand the two tribes only.

21. And hear not - They are wilfully blind, and obstinately deaf, will neither see, nor hear the word, will, or works of God, of which he giveth two instances in the two following verses.

22. The sand - That need not make rocks for walls unto it, but can give a check to it by so small a matter as the sand.

23. Gone - From me.

24. The former rain - The former to prepare the ground for sowing, and the latter to prepare the corn for ripening. Reserveth - He gives seasonable harvests according to his appointment. God would let them know what a foolish, as well as wicked thing it is to set themselves against that God, that keeps the whole order of nature at his own disposal, which he can order as he sees men behave towards him.

26. They catch - Such a trap did Jezebel lay for Naboth, 1 Kings xxi, 9, 10. Such an one was that conspiracy of more than forty men against Paul, Acts xxiii, 13-15.

27. Their houses - They fill their houses with the goods of those they deceive, and over-reach.

28. Overpass - They go beyond the Heathens themselves in wickedness.

30. The land - Hebrew. This land: aggravating the greatness of the wonder, that such a thing should be in such a land.

## VI

God sends and strengthens the Babylonians against Judah, ver. 1-5. for her oppression and spoils, ver. 6-8. and obstinacy; which provokes God's wrath, ver. 9-12. Their covetousness, false confidence, and impudence; people and priests refuse to obey God, ver. 13-17. Their hypocritical worship shall not prevent their sure destruction, ver. 18-25. The people called to mourn, ver. 26.

The prophet encouraged under their wickedness, and the fruitlessness of his ministry among them, ver. 27-30.

1. Benjamin - Judah, when the ten tribes fell off, the tribe of Benjamin adhered to Judah, and was incorporated into them; if it be asked why the prophet rather speaks to Benjamin than to Judah, the reason probably may be, because he being of Anathoth was of that tribe, and therefore mentions them as his own countrymen. Gather - Gather yourselves together by the sound of the trumpet at Tekoa, one of those fenced cities twelve miles from Jerusalem that Rehoboam built. A sign - Fire a beacon. Beth- haccerem - Signifies the house of the vineyard, probably some high tower built among the vineyards for the keepers of them to watch them.

3. The shepherds - The Chaldean princes, with their armies, as so many flocks, shall come into this pleasant land. In his place - Each one in his quarter or station.

4. Prepare - These seem to be the words of God calling them to this work. Arise - This shews how ready they will be to obey God's call. The day goeth - We delay, and tarry too long, and the day spends apace. The shadows - They were so eagerly set upon it, that they watched the lengthening of the shadow, which shews the approach of the evening.

5. This night - They would lose neither day nor night; which shews that, they were extraordinarily stirred up by God in this expedition.

6. Said - To the Chaldeans: God would have the Jews to know, that they have not so much to do with the Chaldeans as with him; that they are his rod to scourge them for their sins. And thus God is said to hiss for such whom he will employ in such work, Isaiah v, 26; vii, 18. And he styles himself the Lord of hosts, to shew that it is in vain to contend in battle with them, whom he sends forth. Trees - Such as you may have need of to raise up works against the strong places. Cast a mount - Throw up one continued trench, as a mount round about it. Oppression - There are found in her all kinds of oppression and injustice.

8. Be thou instructed - I would yet willingly spare them if it might be. Depart - Hebrew. be disjointed, a most emphatical metaphor, whereby God would express how great grief it is to him to withdraw himself from them, even like the separating one limb from another.

9. Glean - Judah shalt be gleaned over and over, 'till there be a full end, none left. Turn back - As much as to say, they should not be content with one spoiling, but they should go back a second and a third time, to carry away both persons and spoil.

10. Their ear - An uncircumcised ear, signifies the rejecting of instruction; an uncircumcised heart, an obstinate and rebellious will. They cannot - They had brought themselves under that incapacity by their obstinacy and wilfulness. A reproach - They laugh at it, and scorn it.

11. I am full - I am, as it were, filled with the fire of God's wrath, which I am forced to discharge myself of. Abroad - The streets being the places where children are wont to sport. The husband - One sex as well as the other, shall be a prey to the enemy. Full of days - Such as had filled up the number of their days, as were at the edge of the grave.

13. Falsely - Hebrew. doing falsehood, as if that were their whole work, the proper sin of the priests and prophets, to deceive the people, and to flatter them by false visions.

14. They have - This refers peculiarly to the prophets; making light of these threatenings, daubing over the misery and danger that was coming on the people, by persuading them, that it should not come, or if it did, it would be easily cured.

15. Committed - Both by encouraging the people, and joining with them in their idolatries.

16. Stand - He now turns his speech to the people, and gives them counsel; by a metaphor taken from travelers, that being in doubt of their way, stand still, and consider, whether the direction they have received from some false guide, be right or not.

17. Trumpet - The voice of his prophet, intimating his loud crying upon the account of eminent danger.

18. Nations - He calls upon the nations round about to be spectators of his severity against Judah. What - The greatness of their punishment, as the effect of the greatness of their sins.

20. Sheba - A country in Arabia Faelix, to which country frankincense was peculiar. The sweet cane - The same that is mentioned as an ingredient in the holy oil, Exod. xxx, 23. To what purpose art thou at this trouble and charge to fetch these ingredients for thy incense.

21. I will say - I will suffer such things to be laid in their way, as shall be the occasion of their destruction. The neighbour - Men of all sorts and conditions.

22. Behold - God shall stir up the Chaldeans like a great storm. The sides - The uttermost parts of the Babylonian territories.

24. We - The prophet personates the peoples affections.

25. Go not forth - Expressing the great danger that there would be everywhere.

26. Gird thee - The prophet calls upon them to mourn in the deepest manner.

27. I have set thee - Here God speaks by way of encouragement to the prophet, and tells him, he had made him a fortified tower, that he might be safe, notwithstanding all the attempts against him. And try - As refiners do metals; hereby be is encouraged to reprove them more freely, God will give him prudence to see what is amiss, and undauntedness to oppose it.

29. The bellows - The prophet prosecutes his metaphor taken from refining of metals, intimating, that the prophets had spent their breath to no purpose, and their strength was consumed by their labour. The lead - The judgments which were heavy, as lead upon them, are all wasted, and do no good. In vain - Let the artist use his greatest skill and industry, yet is it all in vain.

30. Refuse - Such as will be rejected in payments.

## VII

A call to true repentance, ver. 1-7. Not to live in theft, murder, adultery, perjury, &c., to trust in the outward worship and temple of God, by the example of Shiloh, ver. 8-15. The prophet is forbid to pray for them, ver. 16. Their idolatry, and its judgment, ver. 17-20. Their sacrifices rejected, and obedience required, ver. 21-28. They are called to mourn for their abominations in Tophet, and their judgments, ver. 29-34.

2. The gate - The east gate, which was the publick place of going out and coming in, and where the people were then wont to assemble. Proclaim - Proclaiming signifies both the authority by

which he spake, and the divulging of what he spake plainly and boldly; possibly, it might be at some publick time, when all the males were to meet.

4. Saying - Because this was God's house, they flattered themselves that he would not suffer the Chaldeans to destroy it, therefore the prophet cautions them not to deceive themselves, trusting to the temple and its buildings, as the two courts and house, and holy of holies implied in the word these, which he doth as it were point to with his finger. The emphasis, in this threefold repetition, seems to relate to the confident, and reiterated boasts of the temple, that were in their mouths. These - The prophet standing in the gate at which the people entered, as it were, points at the several buildings pertaining to the temple.

6. Oppress not - Here they are cautioned against three sins, that this people were generally addicted to, oppression, blood, and idolatry; and instances in the worst of oppressions, of such as God hath more especially taken into his immediate protection.

9. Will ye steal - Can you think that this can be grateful to me, or advantageous to yourselves, to frequent my house, and yet retain these odious sins. Whom - Such as they had set up new, and never had any experience of, and therefore could have no reason to serve them.

10. Delivered - After they had appeared before God with their sacrifices, they thought they were privileged to return to all those wickednesses.

11. A den - Do you look upon this house as a sanctuary for robbers and murderers.

12. Shiloh - A place in the tribe of Ephraim. Where - Where I did at first give you the pledges of my presence. What I did - He utterly forsook it.

15. Even - The ten tribes.

16. Pray not - Certainly the prophet did pray that God would save a remnant, though not that he would revoke his decree; or save the body of them.

18. The children - Here God shews how busily they are employed from the youngest to the oldest for their idolatry. The queen - As the sun was looked upon as king, so the moon as the queen of heaven.

20. Shall not be quenched - He follows the threatening with shewing his resolution is not to be revoked.

21. Put - Ironical words, take those that are peculiar, and to be all burnt to me, and do what you will with them, I will have none of them. To your sacrifices - That part of your sacrifices, which you are allowed to eat, they are but as profane food.

22. For - God doth not condemn these offerings, save only comparatively in respect of obedience, not so much these, as obeying his commands.

25. Since the day - The church of God hath never wanted teachers raised up and sent by God.

28. Cut off - There is no believing them in any thing they say.

29. Cut off thine hair - This was an usual token of sorrow among the Jews. On high places - Upon the high places where thou wentest a whoring from me. The generation - A generation destined to the wrath of God.

30. In the house - It was not enough to have their idols abroad in the hills and groves, but they must bring them into God's house.

31. Tophet - It comes from Toph, a drum, because they beat drums to drown the children's screeches, when they burnt them in sacrifice upon the altars, called here high places, to Moloch. Tophet was situate in a pleasant valley near Jerusalem, a place in the possession of the children of one Hinnom, Josh. xv, 8.

## VIII

The calamity of the Jews, both dead and alive, ver. 1-3. Their brutish impenitency, ver. 4-7. Their vain boast of wisdom: their covetousness, security, impudence, ver. 8-12. Their grievous judgments, ver. 13-17. Bewailed by the prophet, ver. 18-22.

1. The bones - This denotes the utter desolation of the city, not only rasing the walls, but turning up the very sepulchres which were accounted sacred, and not to be violated.

4. Not arise - Will they never think of rising again? Not return - Will he wander for ever?

5. Deceit - Their false prophets, encouraging themselves in their wickedness, and pleasing themselves, that their miseries should not come upon them.

6. I - God.

7. Appointed time - The seasons of her going and coming. The judgment - God's vengeance, hovering over Jerusalem, and Judea.

8. How - These things considered where is your wisdom? He speaks to the whole body of the people. The Lord - This may have a more special eye to the priests. In vain - For any use they made of it; neither need it ever have been copied out by the scribe. A scribe was a teacher, one well versed in the scripture, or esteemed to be so.

13. Pass away - Shall be taken away by their enemies.

14. Why - The people at length seem to bethink themselves, and thus to bespeak each other. Silent - Keep close within our walls.

16. The snorting - The fury of the Chaldeans march is described by the snorting of their horses, which is a noise they make through their nostrils. Heard - Even to Jerusalem. Have devoured - It is spoken in a prophetical style, who use to express the certainty of what shall be, as if it actually were already.

17. Shall bite - There will be no appeasing their fury by any method.

18. Sorrow - The prophet now seems to speak, how greatly the calamity of this people affected him.

19. Why - As if God should seem to reply; let them not think it strange, seeing they have turned their backs upon me, and trusted to idols.

21. Am I hurt - The prophet here shews how deeply he is affected with the peoples misery. Black - I am as those that are clad in deep mourning.

## IX

The prophet's lamentation continues over their adultery, deceit, idolatry, which God would certainly punish, and they should be laid waste, when they should sufficiently lament, ver. 1-22. No trust in ourselves, but in God, who will punish all nations, ver. 23- 26.

2. A lodging place - Some retiring place, though it were but some mean hut in the wilderness.

5. Weary - They use industry, and contrivance in it, they spare no labour.

7. Try them - By melting them, I will bring upon them, the fire of the Chaldean war, that shall purge away those deceits in which they trust, that the remnant may be purified. For how - I have tried all other means.

10. Wailing - The prophet having taken up a lamentation for the slaughter of the people, now re-assumes it for the desolation of the whole land. The mountains shall not be able to secure them, nor the valleys to feed them.

12. Who is - Is there not a wise man among you, that will search into the cause of all these threatened judgments.

16. A sword - But I will follow them with the sword, 'till they be destroyed, such of them as were appointed for destruction; for otherwise, they were not all consumed, a full end was not to be made.

17. Women - Who were hired to tear their hair, and beat their breasts, with other mourning postures, a foolish custom which has obtained in most ages and countries. Cunning - Such as are most skilful in it.

20. Every one - It denotes how large and universal the mourning shall be.

21. Death - The unavoidableness of the ruin is expressed metaphorically, alluding to the storming of a city, wherein there is no respect had to sex, youth, or age.

22. As the handful - They shall be no more regarded than a few scattered ears that drop out of the reapers hand, which either lie on the ground and are eaten by birds, or trod to dirt by beasts. None - None shall have so much respect to them, as to afford burial.

24. Knoweth - Whether we make any curious distinction between understanding God, as if that be more speculative, whereby we rightly apprehend his nature; and knowing God, as if that be more practical, as directing the conversation, we need not here inquire; yet certainly both center in this, that we so know and understand God as to trust in him, and depend on him alone in all conditions. Exercise - Kindness, as it relates to his own people; judgment, in punishing the wicked; righteousness, as he deals justly and uprightly with both.

## X

They are forbid to be afraid of the tokens of heaven, and consult idols which are vain, ver. 1-5 and not to be compared with the majesty and power of God, who is Jacob's portion, ver. 6-16. The Babylonians destroy the temple; the brutish pastors and the flocks are scattered, ver. 17-22. The prophet's humble supplication, ver. 23-25.

2. Learn not - The Jews being to live among the Chaldeans in their captivity, where many of them were already, the prophet admonishes them against the Chaldean idolatries, who were all much addicted to astrology. The signs - This was so common among them, that Judicial astrologers, of what nation soever, were generally termed Chaldeans. The Heathen - Leave this to Heathens; it doth not become God's people.

9. Tarshish - Is the proper name of a sea-town in Cilicia, and being a noted port, it is usually put for the ocean, and may signify any place beyond the sea. Uphaz - Probably the best gold came from thence as the best silver from Tarshish.

10. But - All these are but false gods. Living - These are all but dead stocks and stones, Jehovah is the only living God, having life in himself, and giving life to all things else. An everlasting king - Time devours them all, but the true God is everlasting.

13. When - As in the former verse he relates God's unspeakable power and wisdom in his creating and fixing the stated order of things, so here he farther sets it forth in his providential ordering and disposing of them.

14. Every man - Every idolator.

15. Visitation - When God shall come to reckon with Babylon and her idols.

16. Portion - God, who vouchsafes to be the portion of his people. The former - Idols are things framed or formed, but God is the former of all things. The rod of his inheritance - So called, because the inheritances of Israel were measured by a line, reed, or rod.

17. Gather up - The prophet now enters upon another subject. Thy wares - Every thing thou hast any advantage by, all thy merchandise, as men use to do in case of invasion by an enemy. The fortress - The inhabitants of Jerusalem, the chief place of security in Judea.

18. Sing out - It denotes with how much violence and ease the Chaldeans shall hurry away the people into Babylon. And therefore it is said at this once, I will make one thorough quick work of it. May find it so - Though they would never believe it, yet they shall actually find the truth of my threatenings.

19. Woe is me - Here the prophet personates the complaint of the people of the land.

20. My tabernacle - He describes the overthrow of the land, or Jerusalem, by the breaking of the cords of a tabernacle, the use whereof is to fasten it on every side to stakes in the ground, which cords being broken the tabernacle falls.

21. The pastors - The rulers of church and state.

22. Noise - Rumour, report.

23. It is not - Lord we know it is not in our power to divert these judgments that are coming upon us, but thou canst moderate, and limit them as thou pleasest.

24. Correct me - Seeing thou wilt punish us, let it be a correction only, not a destruction. Let it be in measure; in the midst of judgment remember mercy. Anger - Lest if thou shouldst let out thy fury upon me, thou wouldst utterly consume me.

25. The Heathen - Such as do not acknowledge thee for their God. Call not - One part of worship put for the whole. If thou wilt pour out thy fury, let the effects of it be to thine enemies, not unto thine own people.

## XI

God's covenant, ver. 1-7. Their disobedience, ver. 8-10. Evils to come on them, ver. 11-17. and on the men of Anathoth, for conspiring to kill Jeremiah, ver. 18-23.

2. Of this covenant - The covenant here spoken of, was the covenant of the law of God, delivered by Moses, to which the people more than once promised obedience.

5. So be it - God having ended his speech, the prophet saith, Amen, either asserting the truth of which God had said, or wishing that the people would do according to their covenant.

8. Did them not - For this God threatens to bring upon them all his words of threatening, annexed to the covenant of the law.

9. A conspiracy - All sorts of people have done alike, as if they had conspired together to break my law.

11. I will not hearken - God will not hear them crying to him in their adversity, who refuse to hear him speaking to them in their prosperity.

13. That shameful thing - Baal, called a shameful thing, because it was what they had reason to be ashamed of, and what would certainly bring them to shame and confusion. Baal - Signifies Lord, and was a common name given to more idols than one; the Phoenicians used the name Baal, the Chaldeans, Bell. Learned men say, that the Asians called the same idol Baal, whom those of Europe called Jupiter. It is not improbable, that the Heathens acknowledging one supreme being, worshipped him in several creatures; some mistaking the Sun, Moon, and Stars to be he, others, other things; these they called Baalim, Lords, as they called the principal God, Baal.

15. My beloved - My people, saith God, though I was formerly their husband, yet have wrought lewdness with many, that is, committed idolatry with many idols, and now what have they to do more in my house? The holy flesh - Flesh of their sacrifices, being set before idols, as well as before God, became polluted, and was abomination to the Lord. Thou rejoicest - They were not only evil but gloried in their wickedness.

16. Fair - The Lord fixed thee when he brought thee first into Canaan, in a flourishing condition, like a fair olive-tree, fit to bear goodly fruit. Broken - But thou hast so behaved thyself, that he who planted thee, is about to pluck thee up. God is about to kindle a fire which will burn thee up, and to break thy branches.

18. Thou shewedst me - This may be understood with relation to that conspiracy which is mentioned in the following verses.

19. Let us destroy - We have no other mention of this conspiracy, but it is plain both from this verse, and what follows, that the men of Anathoth (which was Jeremiah's own town) were offended at his prophesying, and had conspired to kill him. Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof - Let us not only put an end to his prophesying, but to his life.

## XII

The prophet complains of the prosperity of the wicked: by faith sees their ruin, ver. 1-4. God admonishes him of his brethren's treachery against him, and laments his heritage, ver. 5- 13. A return from captivity promised to the penitent, ver. 14-17.

1. Talk with thee - Not by way of accusing thee, but for my own satisfaction concerning thy judicial dispensations in the government of the world. Wherefore - I know thy ways are just and righteous, but they are dark; I cannot understand why thou doest this.

2. Far - Thou art far from their inward parts, they neither fear thee, nor love thee.

4. He - They were bold to say, neither the prophet nor any other should see their last end.

5. If - If thou art not able to encounter lesser dangers, how wilt thou be able to overcome greater? I have greater dangers for thee to encounter than those at Anathoth; if thou art so disturbed with them, how wilt thou be able to grapple with those at Jerusalem. Jordan - Anathoth seems to be understood by the land of thy peace, that is, the land of thy friends wherein thou hadst a confidence: if thy enemies there tire thee, what wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan? In a place in which thou art like to meet with greater troubles, like the swelling of Jordan (which in harvest used to overflow its banks).

6. For even - The men of Anathoth, thine own town and country, and those of thy own family have conspired evil against thee secretly. A multitude - They have exposed thee to the rage of a multitude. Though - Tho' therefore they give thee fair words, yet repose no confidence in them.

7. My house - God by his house here understands the temple. Heritage - The whole body of the Israelites, whom God threatens to leave with respect to his special providence.

8. As a lion - Those that were my sheep, are become like lions.

9. The birds round about - It is usual for other birds to flock about a strange coloured bird, such as they have not been used to see.

10. A wilderness - They have caused God to turn the country which he had chosen for his portion, into a wilderness.

11. They - Hebrew. He hath made it desolate: but it cannot be meant of God, for it is God that speaketh, and God is he mentioned in the next words; it must therefore either be understood of Nebuchadnezzar, the instrumental cause; or (one number being put for another) of the people or the rulers as the meritorious cause, and in that rueful state into which their sins had brought it, it cried onto God. Because - And one great cause of this sore judgment was, the peoples not seriously considering what God had done or was doing against it.

12. Are come - The prophet, as usual, speaks of a thing as already done, which was very shortly to be done. No flesh - No rank or order of men.

13. Shall not profit - All the works of their hands, all their counsels and deliberations should be of no profit unto them. Because - The fierce anger of God shall be so shewed, that the returns of their labours or estates, the profits of their trades, shall be so small, that they shall be ashamed of them.

14. Behold - I will bring the sword upon them also, and they shall be led into captivity; and tho' they may have made inroads upon my people, and carried away some of them, yet I will fetch them out of their captivity.

16. If - If they will leave their idolatries, and learn to worship me, and swear by my name the Lord liveth, that is, pay that homage which they owe to the Divine being to me, the living and true God. Then - They shall have a portion among my people, which was eminently fulfilled in the conversion of the Gentiles.

## XIII

In the type of a linen girdle God prefigures their destruction, ver. 1-11. Under the parable of bottles filled with wine, is foretold their drunkenness with misery, ver. 12-14. He exhorts to prevent these judgments by repentance, ver. 15-27.

5. So - Most think Jeremiah did this in a vision, for it was a very long journey from Anathoth to Euphrates.

12. Do we not know - This is no strange thing.

13. Behold - There is a wine of astonishment and confusion, Psalm lx, 3. With that wine, saith God, I will fill all orders of persons, kings, priests, prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

16. Give glory - Glorify God, by an humble confession of your sins, by submitting yourselves to God, humbling yourselves under his word, and under his mighty hand, before God brings upon you, his great and heavy judgments.

19. The cities - The cities of Judah lay southward from Chaldea.

20. Where - The prophet speaks to the king, or to the rulers. In the multitude of the people is the king's honour.

21. What wilt thou say - Thou wilt have nothing to say, but be wholly confounded when God shall visit thee with this sore judgment, for by thy so often calling them to thy assistance, thou hast taught them to be captains over thee.

22. Thy skirts - Probably these phrases are fetched from the usual practice of soldiers when they have conquered a place and taken prisoners, to strip them. By skirts is meant the lower part of their bodies covered with the lower part of their garments.

26. Therefore - I will expose thee to shame and contempt.

27. Thy whoredom - Thy idolatries.

## XIV

A grievous famine prophesied, its miseries, ver. 1-6. The prophet prays, but God will not be entreated for them, ver. 7-12. Lying prophets no excuse for them, ver. 13-16. The prophet's complaint, ver. 17-22.

5. The hind - Hinds use not to get their food in fields, but upon mountains and in wildernesses, but the drought was such, that these creatures came into the lower grounds, and there brought forth their young. The hinds are loving creatures and as all creatures love their young, so hinds especially; but their moisture being dried up, they could not suckle them, but were forced to leave them, running about to seek grass to eat.

6. The wild asses - The wild asses wanting water, got upon high places, where was the coolest air, and sucked in the wind; and this it is said they did like dragons, of whom Aristotle and Pliny report, that they ordinarily stand upon high places sucking in the cool air.

7. Testify - That thou art righteous in what thou hast done. Do thou it - Do thou what we stand in need of; give us rain, though not for our sake, we deserve no such kindness from thee, yet for thy names sake: thy promise, or for thine honour and glory.

9. Astonished - In such disorder through some great passion, that he is able to do nothing. A mighty man - Like a man who in his own nature is strong, but through sickness so weakened, that he cannot put forth any strength for the succor of his friends. Yet - Yet (saith the prophet) thou art in the midst of us; of the whole land, according to what God had declared, Num. v, 3; xxxv, 34. Defile not the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.

10. Thus - Here begins the answer to the prophet's complaint and prayer in the nine first verses. The substance is, that for their manifold sins, he was resolved to punish them. They loved - They have been fond of their idols, and they have persisted in those sinful courses, notwithstanding all counsels.

21. The throne - The words are either to be understood of the throne of the house of David, called the Lord's throne, 1 Chron. xxix, 23, or else the temple, and the ark in it, the more special symbol of God's presence.

22. Rain - The present judgment under which they groan, was a drought, which he had described in the six first verses; the prophet imploring God for the removal of it, argues, from the impossibility of help in this case from any other way, none of the idols of the Heathens, which he calls vain things, nothing in themselves, and of no use, or profit to those that ran after them. Give showers - Without thy will? Art not - Lord, art not thou he alone who is able to do it? The scripture constantly gives God the honour of giving rain.

## XV

The Jews rejection, and judgments, especially of four kinds; the sins which procured them, ver. 1-9. The prophet complains, that the people curse and persecute him for these prophecies; they are threatened, and he instructed and comforted, ver. 10-21.

1. Cast them out - I am not able to abide the sight of them, therefore let them go forth.

4. Manasseh - Manasseh is here named as the son of Hezekiah for his shame, because of his degeneracy from so good a parent; it is expressly said, 2 Kings xxiii, 26, that not withstanding Josiah's reformation, yet the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his wrath, kindled against Judah, for the provocations of Manasseh.

6. I am weary - I am resolved to bear no longer.

7. A fan - Not a purging fan by affliction, to separate their chaff and dross from them, but a scattering fan. In the gates - This is added in pursuit of the metaphor of fanning, men usually chusing barn-doors to fan at, that they may have the advantage of the wind.

8. Their widows - The prophet still speaks of things to come as if present. In Jehoiakim's time we read of no such plenty of widows; they were multiplied when the city was besieged and taken in Zedekiah's time, to a great number, hyperbolically compared to the sands of the sea. The mother - Jerusalem was the mother of the Jewish people, against whom, Nebuchadnezzar the spoiler, at noon-day, was sent.

9. Seven - Seven signifies many: the prophet complains, that the country of Judah, that had been very numerous in people, now grew feeble. While - In the midst of her prosperity. Confounded - A part of them were confounded by the judgments of God which came upon them before their captivity.

10. I have not - I have done them no wrong, yet they speak of me all manner of evil.

11. Thy remnant - The latter words of the verse expound the former; for by remnant is meant the remnant of days that Jeremiah had to live.

12. The northern iron - As the northern iron and steel is the hardest, and no iron could break that, so God having edged and hardened their enemies, the Chaldeans, all opposition to them would signify nothing.

13. The substance - All thy precious things shall be spoiled, there shall be no price taken for the redemption of them.

15. Thou knowest - My sincerity, or my sufferings. Visit me - With thy love.

16. Thy words - The words which from time to time thou didst reveal to me, were by me greedily digested. I am called - I became a prophet by thy authority, therefore, do thou own and defend me.

17. I sat not - God had all along filled his mouth with such dreadful messages, that his whole prophetical life had been to him a time of mourning and solitude, a time when he sat alone, mourning and weeping in secret for the wrath of God revealed to him against his people.

18. Why - Jeremiah, though a great prophet, was (as Elijah) a man subject to like passions with other men.

19. If thou - These are God's words to the prophet, rebuking his distrust in God, and promising him, that if he did return from his distrust in God's providence, he would restore him to the former favour he had with him, and he should be his prophet to reveal his mind to the people; and that if he would separate the precious truths of God from the vile conceits of men, then God would continue him as his prophet, to speak in his name to the people. But - He charges the prophet to keep his ground, and not to go over to wicked men.

21. The wicked - The wicked Jews. The terrible - And the power of the terrible Chaldeans.

## XVI

The prophet is commanded to abstain from marriage, from mourning, or festival assemblies; hereby representing to them their approaching misery, ver. 1-9. Their sins which caused it, ver. 10-13. Their strange deliverance from Babylon, ver. 14, 15. After that their iniquity is recompensed, ver. 16-18. The prophet's comfort in the calling of the Gentiles, ver. 19-21

5. Enter not - Do not go to comfort such as mourn for any relations dead, (for their feastings upon those occasions were upon a consolatory account) those that die are most happy, for I will take away the peace of this people, and deprive them of all my mercy and loving-kindness.

6. Nor cut - Cutting themselves and cutting off their hair, were Pagan customs, which God forbad his own people; but yet it seemed they practiced them: but saith God, Men shall die so fast that they shall have no leisure to cut themselves.

7. Deal bread - It was a custom among them, when they had any friend, that had lost his relations, to send them some meat (for among the Hebrew all things they ate were called bread) and then to go and sup with them, and speak comfortably to them. The cup - They were also wont to send wine, that they might forget their sorrows; this is called, The cup of consolation.

8. Go - God did not only forbid his prophet to go into houses of mourning, but forbad him to go into houses, where they were wont to eat and drink upon a more chearful account.

13. Ye shall serve - What is now matter of choice to you, shall then be forced upon you.

14. Notwithstanding - God sweetens the dreadful threatenings preceding, with a comfortable promise of their restoration.

16. Fishers - Those enemies whom God made use of to destroy the Jews, hunting them out of all holes and coverts wheresoever they should take sanctuary.

18. I will recompense - Before I will restore them, I will plentifully punish them, (for so double here signifies, not the double of what their sins deserve.) Defiled - By their idolatry, blood and cruelty. Detestable - Unclean beasts offered to their idols, or innocent persons slain by them.

21. Therefore - Because all the mercy I have shewed them, will not learn them to know my might, I will once for all make them to understand it, by the dreadful strokes of my vengeance. And - They shall know that my name is Jehovah; that I am not such a one as their idols, but one who have my being from myself, and give life and being to all other things, and have all might and power in my hand, and can do whatsoever I please.

## XVII

The captivity of Judah for her sin, ver. 1-4. Trust in man cursed: in God, blessed, ver. 5-8. The deceitful heart and most secret practices are known to God, ver. 9-11. The salvation of God, ver. 12-14. The prophet complains of the mockers of his prophecies, ver. 15-18. Of keeping the sabbath, ver. 19-27.

1. Graven - Nor is it a thing done in secret, but it is engraven upon the horns of their altars. God's altar was four-square, and at each corner there was a rising part made of brass, these were called the horns of the altar. Now their sin is said to be engraven upon the horns of the altar, because the blood of the sacrifices which they offered to idols was sprinkled there, or because their altars had some inscription upon them, declaring to what idol that altar was consecrated.

2. Their children - This shewed how inveterate they were in this sin of idolatry, that they taught it their children.

3. My mountain - Jerusalem stood at the foot of an hill, and part of it on the side of it, upon the top of which hills, were many pleasant fields.

4. For ever - For a long time; so the word ever is often taken.

9. The heart - There is nothing so false and deceitful as the heart of man; deceitful in its apprehensions of things, in the hopes and promises which it nourishes, in the assurances that it gives us; unsearchable by others, deceitful with reference to ourselves, and abominably wicked, so that neither can a man know his own heart, nor can any other know that of his neighbour's.

11. Hatcheth them not - Having lost them, either by some man that has taken them from her, or by some vermin or wild beast. A fool - Shall lose it again before he dies, and then shall understand what a fool he was.

13. Depart - From what I have revealed to them as thy will, shall have no portion beyond the earth.

14. For thou art - He whom alone I have reason to praise for mercies already received.

15. Where - Daring the vengeance of God.

16. I hastened not - As I did not seek the office of a prophet, so when thou wast pleased to call me to it, I did not decline.

## XVIII

By the parable of a potter, God's absolute power and disposal of nations is set forth, ver. 1-10. Judah's unparalleled revolt: and her judgments, ver. 11-17. The prophet prays against his conspirators, ver. 18-23.

6. Cannot I do - That God hath an absolute sovereign power to do what he pleases with the work of his hands: but he acts as a just judge, rendering to every man according to his works.

14. Of Lebanon - Lebanon had rocks, and also fruitful valleys; snow fell upon these rocks, and upon a thaw ran down into the lower places. Reason teaches men not to forsake a greater good for a less, tho' that greater good was but a poor creature comfort, not to be compared with God.

15. Vanity - Idols. Ancient paths - The ways wherein Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the ancient patriarchs walked. To walk - In a way not cast up, not fit for God's people to walk in.

16. Desolate - Not that this was the end they aimed at, but it was the end these courses would certainly issue in.

17. East wind - The east wind was in those parts the fiercest wind. As the east-wind scatters the chaff, so saith God, I will scatter them. In their calamity - And when they shall be in great calamity, I will turn my back upon them, I will not regard their prayers.

18. For - We have the church on our side; the regular priests and the prophets, they know God's mind as well as he. Let us smite him with the tongue - Expose him, representing him to be what the people hate.

21. Therefore - But is it lawful for God's servants to pray for evil against their enemies? It is not lawful for Christians. It is doubtless our duty, to pray for the conversion, forgiveness, and eternal salvation of our worst enemies.

## XIX

Under the type of breaking a potter's vessel is foreshewn the desolation of the Jews for their sins committed in the valley of Hinnom, and elsewhere, ver. 1-15.

4. This place - Either this city, or this valley, which they had turned to an use quite contrary to the end for which God gave it them.

5. To burn - This and the following verse, contain another great sin of this people, with the punishment which God proportions to it. The sin in the general was idolatry, but a most barbarous species of it, mentioned also chap. vii, 31; xxxii, 35, where it is said, they made their sons and their daughters pass thro' the fire to Molech; the place where they did it is called Tophet, ver. xix, 6, of which also mention is made, Isaiah xxx, 33. Baal and Molech, signify the same thing; Baal signifies a Lord, Molech a King. Both Baal and Molech seem common names to all idols.

7. In this place - In this place, among others, I will make void all the counsels that the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, have taken to escape my righteous judgments.

12. As Tophet - That is, a place of slaughter and burials.

14. Then - Jeremiah had now dispatched the errand upon which God had sent him to Tophet, coming back by God's direction, he stands in the court, which was common to all people, where the most might hear.

## XX

Pashur smiting Jeremiah for this prophecy, receives a new name, and fearful doom, ver. 1-6. Jeremiah's impatience under their treachery and contempt, ver. 7-10. Rejoices in hope of vengeance, ver. 11-13. Curses his birth, ver. 14-18.

1. Immer - The course of Immer was the sixteenth course of the priests, 1 Chron. xxiv, 14. Pashur was his son, that is descended from him.

3. Not called - God's meaning was, not that he should by men be no longer called Pashur, but that his condition should not answer that name Pashur, which signifies, a flourishing priest; but Magor- missabib, that is, fear and terror on all sides.

7. Hast prevailed - Thou prevailedst against me. Jeremiah at first excused himself to God, chap. i, 6, but the Lord prevailed against him replying, ver. i, 7, Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go

to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak, ver. i, 9. This is all that is here meant, namely, God's over-ruling him contrary to his own inclinations.

8. Since - Since I first began to be a prophet, I have faithfully discharged my office, and that with warmth and zeal. Spoil - I have prophesied that violence and spoil was coming. Because - Because of that scorn and derision with which they treated him.

9. I said - He did not speak this openly, but in his heart. But - He found in his heart a constraint to go on.

10. Prevail - Desiring nothing more than that I might be enticed to speak or do something which they might make matter of a colourable accusation.

11. But - The prophet recovering himself out of his fit of passion, encourageth himself in his God, whom he calls the mighty and terrible one, so declaring his faith in the power of God, as one able to save him, and in the promise and good will of God toward him; therefore he saith, The Lord is with me; such was the promise of God to this prophet, when he first undertook the prophetical office, chap. i, 8. Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee saith the Lord: from hence be concludes, that though he had many that pursued after his life, yet they should stumble in their ways of violence, and should not prevail. Ashamed - That they should be ashamed of what they had done, or be brought to shame for what they had done; for prosper they should not: or they acted like fools, and did not deal prudently for themselves (so this word is translated, Isaiah lii, 13,) yea, they should become a reproach, and their reproach should be a lasting perpetual reproach that should not be forgotten.

14. Cursed - This sudden change makes some think that these words proceeded from Jeremiah rather as a repetition of a former passion into which the abuses of his enemies had put him, than as the immediate product of his spirit at this time.

16. The cities - Sodom and Gomorrah; by the cry in the morning and shouting at noon, he means the shouts and noises that enemies make when they break in upon a place.

## XXI

King Zedekiah in the siege sends to Jeremiah to inquire of the event, ver. 1, 2. He foretells a hard siege and miserable captivity, ver. 3-7. He counsels the people to fall to the Chaldeans, ver. 8-10. And upbraids the king's house, ver. 11-14.

2. Inquire - Zedekiah, as he was none of the best, so he was none of the worst of the kings of Judah. Having some reverence of God, he sends the prophet to inquire of the Lord.

8. Behold - I tell you the way you should take, if you would save your lives.

9. His life - This is a proverbial expression, signifying a man's possession of his life as a prey, or booty recovered from the enemy.

12. Execute judgment - That is, justice, without partiality, and do it quickly.

13. Of the valley - The inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem are here intended. Jerusalem itself was built in part upon the rocky mountain of Zion, but a great part was in the valley, and the higher mountains, about mount Zion, made that mountain itself, in comparison with them, as a valley. The

plain - Though also a rock of the plain, that is, near to the plain. Which situation of this place, made the Jews think it to be impregnable.

14. The forest - By the forest he either means the forest of Lebanon or their houses, made of wood cut out of that forest. And it - And this fire shall not end in the destruction of this city, but in the total destruction of all the country round Jerusalem.

## XXII

God sends the prophet to court with promises, ver. 1-4. and threats against the king's house and Jerusalem, ver. 5-9. The judgment of Shallum, ver. 10-12. Of Jehoiakim, ver. 13-19. And of Coniah, ver. 20-30.

6. Gilead - Gilead was a country fertile for pastures; upon which account the Reubenites and Gadites, being men whose estate lay in cattle, begged it of Moses for their portion. Lebanon also was a very pleasant place: they were both in the lot of Gad and Manasseh. Perhaps God compares the king of Judah's house to these places, in regard of the height and nobleness of the structure, or for the pleasantness and delightfulness of it.

10. Weep not - For Josiah your dead prince. Josiah is happy, you need not trouble yourselves for him; but weep for Jehoahaz, who is to go into captivity.

11. Shallum - Most think that this Shallum was Jehoahaz. Went forth - He was carried away from Jerusalem presently after he was set up, imprisoned at Riblah, and died in Egypt.

16. Was not this - They only truly know God who obey him; men vainly pretend to piety who are defective in justice and charity.

19. Of an ass - None attending him to his grave, none mourning for him.

20. Lebanon - Jerusalem was the place to which this speech is directed: the inhabitants of which the prophet calls to go up to Lebanon. Both Lebanon and Bashan were hills that looked towards Assyria, from whence the Jews looked for help. Abarim - Abarim is the name of a mountain, as well as Lebanon and Bashan. Go and cry for help from all places, but it will be in vain; for the Egyptians and Assyrians to whom thou wert wont to fly, are themselves in the power of the Chaldeans.

22. Pastors - Thy rulers and governors, they shall be blasted by my judgments, as plants are blasted by winds. Thy lovers - And those that have been thy friends, Syria and Egypt.

23. Lebanon - Jerusalem is called an inhabitant of Lebanon, because their houses were built of wood cut down out of the forest of Lebanon. Cedars - Their houses were built of the Cedars of Lebanon. How gracious - What favour wilt thou find when my judgments come upon thee, as the pains of a woman in travail come upon her.

24. Coniah - By Coniah he means Jehoiakim, whose name was Jeconiah, 1 Chron. iii, 13, (for all Josiah's sons had two names, and so had his grandchild Jeconiah) here in contempt called Coniah. The signet - Tho' he were as dear as a signet, which every man keeps safe.

28. Is this - The prophet speaks this in the person of God, affirming that this prince, who was the idol of the people, was now become like a broken idol. A vessel - So cracked, or so tainted, that they can make no use of it.

30. Childless - He is said to be childless, either because all his children died before their father; or because he had no child that sat upon the throne, or ever had any ruler's place in Judah.

## XXIII

Woe against wicked pastors, the scattered flock shall be gathered, Christ shall rule and save them, ver. 1-8. Against false prophets, ver. 9-32. And mockers of the true, ver. 33-40.

2. That feed - They are said to have fed this people, because it was their duty so to do.

5. Behold - Even the Jewish doctors, as well as the Christian interpreters, understand this as a prophecy of the Messiah who is called the branch, Isaiah iv, 2; liii, 2. And here, he is called the righteous branch, not only because himself was righteous, but because he maketh his people righteous. Shall execute - Protecting the innocent, and defending his people throughout the world, judging the prince of the world, and by his spirit governing his people.

6. Judah - During the reign and kingdom of the Messiah the people of God typified by Judah and Israel shall be saved with a spiritual salvation, and God will be a special protection to them. And this - The name wherewith this branch shall be called, shall be, The Lord our righteousness. This place is an eminent proof of the Godhead of Christ, he is here called Jehovah, and what is proper to God alone, namely to justify, is here applied to Christ. He who knew no sin, was made sin, (that is, a sacrifice for sin) for us, that we might be made, the righteousness of God in him.

8. They shall dwell - Possibly part of this prophecy remains yet to be accomplished for the Jews are not yet come to dwell in their own land.

9. Like a man - And he was even astonished and stupefied, and like a drunken man, at the apprehensions of the wrath of the Lord ready to be revealed against them, and considering also what words the holy God had put into his mouth, to speak against them.

10. Adulterers - Under this term all species of uncleanness are comprehended. Swearing - By false-swearing, or by idle and profane swearing. The pleasant places - The wrath of God was extended to all places whether more or less inhabited. Their courses - The prophets did not only err in single acts, but the whole course of their actions was evil, and particularly their power, rule and government, was not right.

13. They prophesied - Pretending they had their instructions from Baal, and so caused the ten tribes to err, which then were called Israel in contradistinction to Judah.

16. Hearken not - People are under no religious obligation to hear any thing but the revealed will of God, and are not to obey those that call to them for what that doth not call to them.

18. For who - Which of those prophets, that prophesy such terrible things against this city is a privy-counsellor to God? The words seem to be the words of the false prophets.

20. The anger - The prophet speaks of the judgment as of a messenger, which should not return till it had done its errand, and executed what God had resolved it should effect. Ye shall consider

- And though you will not now believe it, yet hereafter when it shall be too late, you shall consider it perfectly.

28. What is the wheat - There is as much difference between my will and their dreams, as there is betwixt the chaff and the wheat.

30. That steal - That conspire together what to say to deceive the people, and so steal what they say one from another.

31. He - That is, the Lord saith.

33. What is - The false prophets, and corrupt priests, would ordinarily mock the true prophets; and ask them what was the burden of the Lord.

34. That shall say - That is, that shall in derision say thus, mocking at my threatenings. And his house - I will not only punish him, but his whole family.

35. Thus shall ye say - I will have you speak more reverently of me and my prophets.

36. Mention no more - Not in scorn and derision. For - These false and irreverent speeches which are in every man's mouth, shall be burdensome to them, shall bring down vengeance upon them. Perverted - Because you have derided, the words of God, the living God.

37. Thus shalt thou say - To my true prophet. You shall speak to them reverently.

38. Because - Because you go on in your scoffing.

## XXIV

Under the type of good and bad figs, ver. 1-3. He fore- shews the return of some from captivity, ver. 4-7. and the ruin of Zedekiah and the rest, ver. 8-10.

1. And behold - Probably a vision.

5. Acknowledge - I will acknowledge them for their good; I will shew them favour, being of the number of those who were not leaders to sin, but led away by the ill example of others, and who being carried away grew sensible of their sins, and so accepted of the punishment of their iniquities.

## XXV

Their disobedience to the prophets reproved, ver. 1-7. The seventy years of captivity foretold, ver. 8-11. and after that the destruction of Babylon, ver. 12-14. By a cup of wine is foreshewn the destruction of all nations, ver. 15-33. The howling of the shepherds, ver. 34-38.

9. Nebuchadnezzar - In this work shall be my servant; though you will not be my servants in obeying my commands.

10. Moreover - Nay, I will not only deprive you of your mirth, but of those things that are necessary for you, as necessary as bread and light, the millstone shall not move, you shall not have the light so much as of a candle.

12. Accomplished - Counted from the time that the Jews were carried away in the time of Jeconiah or Jehoiakim, 2 Kings xxiv, 15, 16. Desolations - This was fulfilled by Darius, the king of Persia, Dan. iv, 31, of these seventy Nebuchadnezzar reigned thirty six, 2 Kings xxv, 27. Evil-merodach thirty two, and Belshazzar at least two, Dan. viii, 1.

15. The cup - God made Jeremiah to see the appearance of such a cup in a vision.

20. Of Uz - Some part of Arabia Petraea, near to Idumaea. Of the Philistines - Uzzah, Ekron, Ashdod, and Askelon, were four of their cities, the fifth which was Gath is not here named. For before this time it was destroyed, either by Psammeticus, father to Pharaoh Necho, or by Tartan, captain general to Sargon, king of Assyria, of whom read, Isaiah xx, 1, that he took Ashdod, which may be the reason that here mention is made of no more than the remnant of Ashdod.

22. Beyond the sea - Probably those parts of Syria that coasted upon the mid-land sea.

23. Tema - Tema descended from Ishmael, Gen. xxv, 15, his posterity inhabited in Arabia, Isaiah xxi, 13, 14, where they are joined with those of Dedan. Buz - Buz was one of the posterity of Nahor, Gen. xxii, 21. These were people mixed with the Saracens or Arabians.

25. Zimri - Those descended from Zimran, Abraham's son by Keturah, Gen. xxv, 2. Elam - The Persians. The Medes - The Medes came from Madai the son of Japhet.

26. The north - All under the government of the Chaldeans. Of Sheshach - And the king of Babylon, who was last of all to drink of this cup of the Lord's fury.

34. Shepherds - Shepherds and the principal of the flock, in this place mean civil rulers. A pleasant vessel - Like a crystal glass, or some delicate vessel, which breaks in pieces and cannot again be set together.

38. Because - The effects of this rising up of God out of his covert is the desolation of the land through the fierceness of the enemy, caused by the fierce anger of God.

## XXVI

The prophet, by God's command, in the court of the temple, threatens that the temple shall be as Shiloh, and the land a curse: exhorts to repentance, ver. 1-7. He is apprehended and arraigned, ver. 8-11. His apology, ver. 12-15. The princes clear him by the example of Micah, ver. 16-19. and of Urijah, ver. 20- 23. and by the care of Ahikam, ver. 24.

10. When - When the nobles, and other civil magistrates, heard of the tumult, they came from the king's court, where the nobles and great officers of nations usually are, to the temple. At the entry - It was the place where their sanhedrim, who were to judge of false prophets, were wont to sit.

11. The priests - "In the corrupt state of all kingdoms, the ecclesiastical officers always were the greatest enemies to the faithful ministers of God." They speak to the members of the court who are called princes, and to the people who were in the court.

18. Micah - This was that Micah, whose prophecies are part of holy writ, as appears by Micah i, 1; iii, 12, where are the very words of the prophecy here mentioned, the substance of whose prophecy was the same with this, that Zion should be plowed up, and the place where the temple stood, should become so desolate that trees should grow there, as in a forest.

19. Thus - Now, if we should take a quite contrary course, and put this man to death, we should do ourselves no good, but procure great evil against our souls; that is against ourselves.

20. And there was - This is a story which we have recorded in no other part of scripture. They are probably the words of some others, who were enemies to Jeremiah.

23. Cast his body - Not in the sepulchers of the prophets, but amongst the vulgar people.

24. Nevertheless - Tho' Jeremiah's enemies pleaded this instance of Urijah, a case judged in this very king's reign; yet the hand, that is, the power and interest of Ahikam, one of Josiah's counsellors, and the father of Gedaliah, was with Jeremiah.

## XXVII

The prophet sends yokes to five neighbouring kings, thereby foreshewing their subjection to Nebuchadnezzar, ver. 1-7. He exhorts them to yield, and not to believe false prophets, ver. 8- 11. The like he doth to Zedekiah, ver. 12-18. The remnant of the vessels shall be carried to Babylon, and continue there 'till the appointed time, ver. 19-22.

2. Thus saith - God commands the prophet to procure some yokes with bonds to make them more fast; and to put one of them upon his own neck, that therein he might be a type both to his own people, and also the people afterward mentioned, that they should be in bondage to the king of Babylon.

3. Of Edom - These nations were neighbours to the Jews, and their princes had their ambassadors resident in Jerusalem.

7. All nations - That is, all these nations. His son - And Evil- Merodach his son, and Belshazzar his grand-child. Until - Until the period of his kingdom shall come, which was after seventy years, according to chap. xxix, 10.

## XXVIII

Hananiah's false prophecy: Jeremiah's answer, ver. 1-9. Hananiah breaks Jeremiah's yoke: he foretells an iron yoke, and Hananiah's death, ver. 10-17.

1. The fourth year - Perhaps the fourth year of the sabbatical course is here intended. Of Gibeon - it is probable from the place where he lived, which was one of the cities of the priests; that he was a priest.

12. Then - Some time after.

13. But - Thou hast further incensed God against them, and provoked him to make their judgment heavier.

17. Died - Within two months after Jeremiah had thus prophesied; so dangerous a thing it is for ministers to teach people contrary to the revealed will of God.

## XXIX

Jeremiah's letter to the captives in Babylon, to be quiet there, ver. 1-7. Not to believe false prophets; nor expect to return 'till after fifty years, ver. 8-14. The destruction of those who remained in Judah for their disobedience, ver. 15-19. The fearful end of two lying prophets, ver. 20-23. Shemaiah's letter against Jeremiah, ver. 24-29. Who reads his doom, ver. 30-32.

1. Captives - There were two carryings into Babylon, the latter about eleven or twelve years after the former, the first was in the time of Jehoiakim, When the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths were carried away.

3. By the hand - Zedekiah having some occasion to send two messengers to Babylon. Jeremiah knowing that as there were false prophets at Jerusalem, who fed people with hopes of a speedy return, so there were some with them in Babylon, writes the following letter, and sends it by these two messengers, to quiet the peoples minds.

10. After - From this text it appears that the seventy years captivity, were to be accounted from the first carrying into captivity in the time of Jehoiakim, so that eleven years of it were elapsed, before Zedekiah was carried away.

11. To give - This deliverance will not depend upon your merits, but upon my own mercy, and kind thoughts and purposes I have for the seed of Abraham my servant, and I am resolved in my own thoughts what to do, I intend not the blotting out of the name of Israel from the earth, but to give such an end to their trouble as themselves expect and desire.

15. Because - The prophet here turns his speech to some wicked Jews, that were in Babylon, or in Judea.

16. Of the king - Zedekiah.

24. Nehelamite - It is probable there was such a place as Nehelam, from whence he was.

26. Priest - Zephaniah was the second priest. In the stead - In the stead signifies, that thou shouldest be like the good high priest Jehoiada. Mad - That thou mightest take care of persons, who being mad or frantick make themselves prophets.

## XXX

God shews Jeremiah the deliverance and return of the Jews, ver. 1-9. He comforts Jacob, ver. 10-17. Their return shall be gracious. Wrath on the wicked, ver. 18-24.

8. In that day - In the day when God should deliver the seed of Jacob out of trouble. His yoke - The yoke of the king of Babylon, that power of his, which for seventy years he exercised over the Jews. Of him - Of the Jews.

9. But - Either this must be understood of the kingdom of Christ, under which the Jews that received him were made spiritually free: or there is a time yet to come, when this ancient people of God shall be restored to a farther civil liberty than they have enjoyed ever since the captivity of Babylon.

11. In measure - Not in equity only, but with moderation. Unpunished - But yet God will not let his own people go unpunished, that by it they may be reclaimed, and the world may take notice that God is of purer eyes than that he can, in any persons, behold iniquity.

12. For - They had sinned to that degree that God had resolved they should go into captivity.

13. No medicine - The prophet's design was to convince them, that there was no present remedy, but patience, though their false prophets might promise a cure.

14. Thy lovers - The Egyptians and Assyrians.

23. A continuing - Not a sudden blast, that shall presently go over, but a vengeance that shall abide.

24. Consider - And though at present they will not consider, yet afterward, when they see things come to pass, then they shall consider what I have told them.

## XXXI

The restoration of Israel published, ver. 1-14. Rachel mourning is comforted, ver. 15-17. Ephraim repenting is brought home, ver. 18-21. Christ promised, ver. 22-26. His care over the church, ver. 27-30. His new covenant, ver. 31-34. The stability and enlargement of the church, ver. 35-40.

2. To rest - In Canaan.

5. Samaria - Samaria was the metropolis of the ten tribes. Mountains are convenient for vineyards, being free from shades and exposed to the sun. Shall plant - God promises them a liberty to plant, and that they should enjoy their plantations, eating them as common things, which they could not do 'till the fifth year.

6. Arise - This was fulfilled under the gospel; for both Galilee and Samaria received the gospel.

9. With weeping - Some think that it had been better translated, they went weeping; for though the verb be the future tense in the Hebrew, yet that tense has often the signification of the preterperfect tense, thus it answereth, Psalm 1xxvi, 5, 6. He that goeth forth weeping, bearing

precious seed, shalt doubtless come again rejoicing. There is a weeping for joy, as well as for sorrow, and thus the text corresponds with that, Zech xii, 10. I will pour upon them the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn. By rivers - And they shall have no want as they had when they came out of Egypt, through the wilderness, where they often wanted water.

11. Hath redeemed - God will as certainly do it, as if he had already done it. In their deliverance as well from Babylon as Egypt, they were types of the deliverance of God's people, by Christ; as well as in their entering into Canaan, they were types of the saints, entering into heaven.

12. And sing - All the phrases in this verse signify one thing, the happy state of the Jews, after their return from captivity. The height of Zion means the temple. A watered garden - They shall be a beautiful, flourishing, and growing people. Soul seems here to be taken for the whole man. Not sorrow - In that manner they have been. But under these expressions is also promised the spiritual joy which the true Israel of God will have under the gospel, and the eternal joy they shall have in heaven.

15. In Ramah - That is, in Canaan, and particularly in Ramah, where Nebuzar-adan, chap. xl, 1, disposed of the prisoners he had taken, setting some at liberty, ordering others to death, and carrying the rest away to Babylon, which caused a bitter weeping and lamentation. Rachel - Rachel is here brought in, having been buried near that place, as if she were risen up from the grave, and lamented the Jewish nation which came out of her loins (for so Benjamin did, which was one of the two tribes that made the kingdom of Judah.) Were not - Because her children either were not absolutely, being slain by the pestilence, the famine, and the sword of the king of Babylon, or were no longer her children, being transplanted into Babylon. And there was a lamentation like this, when Herod caused the infants of two years old to be slain in Bethlehem, and in the coasts round about Bethlehem, of which Ramah was one.

18. I have heard - The prophet here shews the change that would be wrought in the hearts of the Israelites preceding this return from their captivity. As a bullock - Which ordinarily are very unruly when they are first put into it.

19. Surely - After God had changed our hearts, we repented. I smote - After God had instructed us, by his prophets, by our afflictions, and by his Holy Spirit, we smote upon our thighs in testimony of our sorrow. The reproach - The just punishment of the sins which I had long ago committed.

20. For since - From the time I spake against him by my threatenings, I remember him with the affection and compassion of a father.

21. Set up - Thou shalt return to these cities which thou now leavest, therefore take good notice of the way, set up marks by which thou mayest know it again, make thee pillars or some high heaps of stones in the way, mind well the way that the Assyrians and the Babylonians carried thee, for thou shalt come back the same way.

22. Backsliding - Running after idols; or seeking help from foreign nations, instead of applying to God. A woman - This seems to be a promise of the Jewish church in its time, and of the gospel-church, prevailing over all its enemies; though, considering the fewness of the church's members, with the multitude of its enemies, and their power, it seemed as strange a thing, as for a woman to prevail against a strong and mighty man.

23. The Lord of hosts - These prophecies of the restoration of the Jews, are ordinarily prefaced with these two attributes of God, the one of which asserts his power to do the thing promised; the other his goodness to his people.

25. For - The words are a promise, that God would give his people abundance of ease and plenty.

26. Upon this I awaked - Probably this Revelation was made to Jeremiah, in a dream.

27. I will sow - That is, I will exceedingly multiply them, both with men and with cattle.

31. Behold - And not only with the Jews, but all those who should be ingrafted into that Olive. It is not called the new covenant, because it was as to the substance new, for it was made with Abraham, Gen. xvii, 7, and with the Jews, Deut. xxvi, 17, 18, but because it was revealed after a new manner, more fully and particularly, plainly and clearly. Nor was the ceremonial law any part of it, as it was to the Jews, a strict observance of that. It was likewise new in regard of the efficacy of the spirit attending it, in a much fuller and larger manner.

32. Not according - The covenant which God made with the Jews when they came out of the land of Egypt, was on God's part the law which he gave them, with the promises annexed; on their part (which made it a formal covenant) their promise of obedience to it.

33. With - That is, with those who are Jews inwardly. And write it - The prophet's design is here to express the difference betwixt the law and the gospel. The first shews duty, the latter brings the grace of regeneration, by which the heart is changed, and enabled for duty. All under the time of the law that came to salvation, were saved by this new covenant; but this was not evidently exhibited; neither was the regenerating grace of God so common under the time of the law, as it hath been under the gospel.

34. I will forgive - God makes the root of all this grace to be the free pardon, and the remission of their sins.

36. Those ordinances - The ordinances of nature, which are God's establishments for the working of natural causes in their order.

37. I will cast off - That is, I will never cast off all the seed of Israel.

38. The city - Shall be built round, as largely as ever.

39. The line - That is, it shall be built round about upon its old foundations.

40. The valley - A valley, so called from the multitude of Sennacherib's army slain there. Of the ashes - So called from the ashes of the sacrifices carried thither. Holy - All these places shall be parts of the holy city, and God's name shall be sanctified, and he shall be worshipped in them all. For ever - If we interpret the word for ever of a perpetuity, the church of God must here be understood, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.

## XXXII

Jeremiah in the siege of Jerusalem being imprisoned by Zedekiah, buys a field, takes witnesses, draws a writing, seals and delivers it to Baruch to preserve, as tokens of the peoples return, ver. 1-15. He prays with admiration of God's majesty and works; and represents his own conflict, ver. 16-25. God confirms the captivity for their sins, ver. 26-35. but promises a gracious return, ver. 36-44.

5. Until I visit him - Perhaps in mercy; it is certain Zedekiah was not put to death, only carried to Babylon, where some think he afterward found favour with the king of Babylon.

9. The money - The price of land was strangely fallen at this time, when the enemy was besieging the chief city of the country.

11. I took - It is probable, that upon such sales among the Jews, two instruments were made, the one sealed up, to be kept by the purchaser, the other open, to be shewed to the Judges, and by them ratified.

12. Baruch - This Baruch (chap. xlvi, 4, 26,) was a scribe, and an attendant upon Jeremiah. Witnesses - He made this purchase with all the usual formalities; he signed and sealed it before witnesses, and delivered it to Baruch to keep, in the presence of all the Jews.

20. Who hast set signs - Who didst wonders of justice in the land of Egypt, such as are remembered even to this day.

24. The mounts - Rather engines of war with which those nations used to batter walls, or to shoot great stones into places besieged.

34. Have set - Their idols.

39. One heart - I will give them union and concord, one mind and judgment. One way - They shall all worship me according, to the rule I have given them.

40. I will make - This promise manifestly relates to those Jews that should receive the Lord Jesus Christ, unless it be to be understood of a national conversion of the Jews, not yet effected.

## XXXIII

The taking of Jerusalem, carrying away the people, their return, ver. 1-8. Joyful state and settled government, ver. 9-14. Christ the branch of righteousness, his everlasting kingdom and priesthood, and blessed seed, ver. 15-26.

2. The Lord - The maker thereof, of Jerusalem, or of these promises, his name is Jehovah; he hath a sufficiency in himself to make good his word.

5. They - The Jews sally out and fight with their enemies, but to no purpose, but to fill their houses with their own dead bodies, whom I will cause in my anger to be slain.

6. I will cure - The miserable disturbed state of a nation being compared to wounds and sickness, the restoring of it to a peaceable prosperous state is fitly called its health and cure. I will bring them again to a quiet and peaceable state in which they shall abide many days.

9. They shalt fear - And not only so but shall fear to engage against a nation so beloved and favoured by me.

12. Is desolate - That is, a great part of which is, and the other part shall soon be desolate.

13. Shall pass - So as to keep tally of them, as they were wont to do both morning and evening in those countries.

15. The branch - The kings they had hitherto had of the line of David, were most of them unrighteous men, but God promises that after the captivity, they should have a branch of David

who would execute judgment and righteousness in the land, for the protection and government of those that feared him.

16. Saved - It is the opinion of some that a spiritual salvation and security is promised under these expressions, but by the most and best interpreters, a temporal salvation. This was typical of that spiritual and eternal salvation which is promised to the true Israel of God; as their rest in Canaan typified that rest which remaineth for the people of God. The Lord our righteousness - There is no such name any where given, either to the Jewish or Christian church, as the Lord our righteousness, but the full import of that name is spoken of Christ, Isaiah xlv, 23, which text is applied to Christ, Rom. xiv, 11 Phil ii, 10.

17. David - That is, apparently a promise relating to Christ, for David's line had failed long since, had it not been continued in Christ, whose kingdom is and shall be an everlasting kingdom.

18. A man - That is, a ministry to abide in the church to the end of the world, nor is it unusual for God in the Old Testament to express promises to be fulfilled under the gospel by expressions proper to the Old Testament.

20. My covenant - The same with the ordinances mentioned, chap. xxxi, 35. God's law established in the course of natural causes, by virtue of which the day and night, orderly succeed one another. The succession of the gospel ministry in the church of God to abide for ever, shall be as certain as the succession of darkness and light.

22. Of David - Christ is himself called David, whose seed and whose Levites are multiplied in the multiplying of Christians and of faithful ministers under the gospel, which are the things here promised.

24. The two families - The families of David and Aaron. Despised - Spoken scornfully of my people, as if they should never be a nation more, having rulers of themselves, and a ministry.

## XXXIV

The captivity of king Zedekiah, and the city, ver. 1-7. The princes and people by solemn covenant, according to the law, dismiss their bond servants, but the Babylonians leaving the siege, they reassume them, ver. 8-11. For this God threatens a return of the enemy, and the destruction of Jerusalem, ver. 12-22.

5. Ah Lord - The Jews in their chronology, give us the form of the lamentation thus. Alas! Zedekiah is dead, who drank the dregs of all ages: that is, who was punished for the sins of all former ages.

17. Behold - You shall perish by the sword, famine and pestilence, and those of you who escape them, shall be slaves, in many nations.

18. Cut the calf - It seems these Jews in their making of the solemn covenant with God about releasing their servants used this rite; they caused a calf, or heifer to be cut in pieces, and the parts to be laid in the temple, right over-against one another; then they recited this covenant, and passed between the parts of the heifer so cut; silently agreeing that God should cut them in pieces like that beast if they did not make their words good.

22. Behold - I will put into their hearts to return.

## XXXV

By the obedience of the Rechabites, ver. 1-11. God condemns the Jews disobedience, ver. 12-17. The Rechabites are blessed, ver. 18, 19.

1. The word - This is another evidence that the prophecies of this book are not left us in that order wherein they were delivered; for those which we had in the two or three foregoing chapters being in the time of Zedekiah, must needs be ten or eleven years after this.

2. Rechabites - These Rechabites had their name from Rechab their father, descended from Hemath, a Kenite, who is also called Hobab, Judg. iv, 11, or Jethro the father in law of Moses.

4. Igdaliah - A prophet. The princes - The chamber were the princes were wont to meet.

6. Jonadab - Jonadab of whom we read, 2 Kings x, 15, was the father, that is the progenitor of the Rechabites, at three hundred years distance.

7. That ye may live - Jonadab cautions his sons by a thrifty, sober, labourious life, to which they had been bred, in keeping flocks, to avoid any thing which might expose them to the envy or hatred of the people amongst whom they were come to sojourn.

10. Tents - Moveable habitations, which they could with little labour remove to feed their flocks.

19. For ever - For ever here signifies the ever of the Jewish state, or church.

## XXXVI

Jeremiah causes Baruch to write his prophecy; and publickly to read it, ver. 1-10. The princes send to fetch the roll and read it, ver. 11-18. They advise Baruch and Jeremiah to hide themselves, ver. 19. The king tears part of the roll, and burns it, ver. 20-26. Jeremiah denounces his judgment, ver. 27-31. Baruch writes a new copy, ver. 32.

2. A roll - Parchments, which anciently were their books. All the words - All the Revelations he had from God for twenty-two years last past. God would have them recorded, that there might be a memorial of them, that so the truth of them might appear, when God should bring them to pass; the time of which now drew near.

6. Upon the fasting day - It was undoubtedly, because of the concourse of people which the prophet knew would that day be in the temple, that he chose that day, when some would be present from all parts of Judah.

10. Then read - Most likely out of some window, or balcony, the people being below, and hearing it.

18. He pronounced - This could not but add to the princes fear, they must needs conceive that without a special influence of God, it had been impossible, that Jeremiah should have called to mind all that he had spoken at several times in so many years.

22. The ninth month - Answered to part of our November and December.

23. He - The king not having patience to hear above three or four columns, or periods, cut it in pieces and burned it in the fire.

25. Elnathan - These princes seemed to have had a greater dread of God upon their hearts than the rest.

26. Hid them - God by his providence kept them both out of their hands; directing them to find such a place of recess as the kings messengers could not find out.

30. None to sit - That is, none that shall be king any considerable time. Jeconiah his son was set up, but kept his throne but three months.

## XXXVII

The Egyptians raise the siege of the Chaldeans: and king Zedekiah sends to Jeremiah, to pray and inquire of the Lord for them, ver. 1-5. He prophesies the Chaldeans return and victory, ver. 6-10. He is apprehended for a fugitive, beaten, and put into prison, ver. 11-15. He assures Zedekiah of the captivity; and, entreating for liberty, obtains some favour, ver. 16-21.

10. And burn it - When God is resolved upon an effect, the instruments are little to be regarded. It is not the arm of flesh, but the power of God which is in that case to be considered.

12. Went forth - Jeremiah knowing the city would suddenly be taken, and that he could be no farther useful to the people, taking advantage of the withdrawing of the Chaldean army, resolves to go to his own country, to Anathoth, in the crowd of people that were going out.

13. Of Benjamin - The gate that looked toward the inheritance of that tribe.

16. The dungeon - The Hebrew words signify some pit, or deep hole, where were some cells or apartments, in which they were wont to keep those whom they judged great malefactors.

17. Is there - Hath God revealed any thing to thee, concerning the issue of the return of the Chaldean army.

## XXXVIII

Jeremiah prophesies; is by the princes, with the king's permission, cast into a dungeon; but is by Ebed-melech, with the king's consent, taken out again, ver. 1-13. He has a secret conference with the king, in which he counsels him by yielding, to save his life, ver. 14-23. By the king's command he conceals the conference from the princes, ver. 24-27. He abides in prison 'till Jerusalem is taken, ver. 28.

5. For the king - I see I am as it were no king. I can do nothing against you, you will do what you please.

10. Thirty men - Probably the king commanded Ebed-melech to take thirty men to guard him against any opposition.

19. Lest they - Lest the Chaldeans should deliver me into the hands of those Jews which have fallen to them.

22. The women - Thou that art afraid of the insultings of men, shalt fall under the insultings of the women. Thy friends - For this thou mayest thank thy priests, and false prophets. And they - Have forsaken thee, every one shifting for himself.

## XXXIX

Jerusalem is taken: Zedekiah's sons are slain, his eyes put out, he is sent to Babylon, All the nobles of Judah are slain: the city is burnt, and the chief of the people carried captives, ver. 1- 10. Nebuchadrezzar's charge concerning Jeremiah, ver. 11-14. God's promise to Ebed-melech, ver. 15-18.

1. Tenth month - This month answers to part of our December and January.

3. The middle gate - The city was encompassed with two walls, before they came to the wall of the temple; the gate in the inner wall is supposed to have been that which is called the middle gate. They would not at first venture farther, 'till they might without hazarding their persons.

5. Riblah - Riblah was upon the borders of Canaan. Zedekiah was a tributary to the king of Babylon, and so subject to his power, having made a covenant with him, and secured his allegiance by his oath to him.

12. Take him - It is probable, that Nebuchadnezzar had been informed, Jeremiah had constantly told the king, that the Chaldeans should take the city, and as steadily persuaded both the king and princes to surrender it to them.

15. Now the word - These four verses mention a matter that happened before the things mentioned in the foregoing verses.

## XL

Jeremiah being set free by Nebuchadnezzar, goes to Gedaliah, ver. 1-6. to whom the remaining Jews repair, ver. 7-12. Johanan revealing Ishmael's conspiracy, is not believed, ver. 13-16.

1. Ramah - Ramah was a city in the tribe of Benjamin near Gibeon. Babylon - Jeremiah was by mistake and expressly contrary to the king's orders carried amongst the other prisoners; probably

the captain of the guard at that place called over his prisoners, and among them found the prophet contrary to his expectation.

5. Now - Jeremiah before he was gone out of the presence of Nebuzar-adan, declaring that he was more inclined to stay in his own country, Nebuzar-adan bid him, Go back.

8. Ishmael - It is likely these were commanders of parties, which either were within the city 'till it was taken, and then escaped, or where somewhere in the country, and not so much regarded by the Chaldeans, who were more intent upon the conquest of the city, than pursuing these little parties.

10. I will dwell - I have choice made of Mizpah, a city upon the frontiers, to make my residence, it being a convenient place for me to receive orders from the king of Babylon. But ye - Gather such fruits as the country affords, as you use to do in the times of peace.

12. Returned - Probably upon the king of Babylon's first invading Judah, many fled, and more as he went on his conquests, over- running the country; and it is likely at the taking of the city, many escaped, and fled into several countries, as they had opportunity, or judged this or that country would be safest; some fled to Moab, some to Ammon some to Edom, some one way, and some another: but when they heard that the king of Babylon had set a governor of their own religion and country over them, they came back to him; and there being few people left in the land, which was wonderfully fruitful, they gathered plenty of grapes, and other summer fruits.

13. Moreover - They had been with him before, but now they come to discover a conspiracy against his life.

## XLI

Ishmael, under a colour of friendship kills Gedaliah and others, both Jews and Chaldeans, ver. 1-9. He purposes to carry the residue captive to the Ammonites, but they are rescued from him by Johanan, who intends to flee into Egypt, ver. 10-18.

1. Now - Three months after the city was taken. Ishmael - The same Ishmael that came to Gedaliah, ver. 8, 9, to whom he swear protection; only here we are told he was of the royal blood, which might both raise his spirits, as having a more legal pretense to the government, and rendered him a fitter instrument, for Baalis the king or queen of the Ammonites to make use of. The princes - Some of the princes, who had escaped the army of the king of Babylon.

3. Slew - All those who were about the court of Gedaliah.

4. No man - No man who lived at any distance from Mizpah.

5. There came men - Who possibly had not heard of the temple being burnt. Cut themselves - With all indications of mourning used in those countries.

8. He forebare - His covetousness prevailed over his cruelty.

## XLII

Johanan and the people desire Jeremiah to inquire of God, promising obedience to his will, ver. 1-6. Jeremiah assures them of safety in Judea, ver. 7-12. and destruction in Egypt, ver. 13-18. Reproves their hypocrisy and obstinacy, ver. 19-22.

6. Good or evil - Whether grateful or ungrateful to us.

10. I repent - I am satisfied with the punishment your nation hath undergone, and as to the remainder, will change the course of my providence.

## XLIII

Johanan and the commanders discredit Jeremiah's prophecy, ver. 1-3. and with the people, carry him and Baruch into Egypt, ver. 4-7. He prophesies by a type, the conquest of Egypt by the Babylonians, ver. 8-13.

7. Tahpanhes - It was at this time the place where the king of Egypt made his residence.

12. Carry them - He shall carry away both the idols, and the inhabitants of Egypt captive. With the land - With the spoils of the land of Egypt, he shall clothe his army.

13. Beth-shemesh - Beth-shemesh is the name of a city, which had its name from a famous temple of the sun.

## XLIV

Jeremiah represents to the people in Egypt, the former sins and punishment of Judah, ver. 1-10. He prophesies of their destruction in Egypt, ver. 11-14. Their obstinacy, ver. 15-19. Threatened, ver. 20-28. For a sign, the destruction of Egypt is foretold, ver. 29, 30.

1. At Migdol - It seems the Jews that went into Egypt had planted themselves at these four places. Migdol was a city upon the borders of the Red Sea. Noph was a city, which the Greeks and Latines called Memphis; it is thought to be that, which is now called Cairo. Pathros was the province, since called Thebais.

14. For none - Only such shall escape, as have been forced into Egypt against their wills; and as did not fall in with the idolatry of the Egyptians.

15. All the men - It should seem those that did it were mostly women, and that they did it with some privacy, so that all their husbands did not know of it.

26. The Lord liveth - There shall not any be left alive of the Jews that are in Egypt, to swear The Lord God liveth.

29. This shall be a sign - Signs are usually antecedent to the thing signified, but the word is taken in a larger notion in this place for that which should attend the thing signified by it.

## XLV

Jeremiah instructs and comforts Baruch, ver. 1-5.

3. I find no rest - Upon Baruch's reading the prophecies both he and Jeremiah were advised to hide themselves. This probably disturbed Baruch, and made him lament his condition.

5. Seek them not - Dost thou expect what none is like to meet with who feareth God? Upon all flesh - I am bringing calamities upon the whole nation.

## XLVI

The overthrow of Pharaoh's army, ver. 1-12. The conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar, ver. 13-26. God's people comforted, ver. 27, 28.

1. The word - This verse contains the title of all the ensuing discourses; for, tho' there be some verses in these chapters that relate to the Jews, yet they are all concerning their restoration. The prophecies of judgments from the beginning of this chapter to the fifty-second, are all against foreign nations, which are called Gentiles.

4. Brigandines - Coats of mail.

6. Let not the swift - It is in vain for the swift to flee away, the mighty men shall not escape, but they shall stumble and fall at Carchemish, which was near the river Euphrates, and northward from Egypt.

9. And the Lydians - They were all auxiliaries to the Egyptians in this expedition.

10. Made drunk - These phrases only metaphorically signify, the great slaughter God would make that day amongst the Egyptians.

12. Stumbled - Stumbling one upon another, so that both those that went before, and those who followed after, should fall together.

14. Declare - Publish this over all the land of Egypt.

17. Pharaoh - Hath made a great noise, but it cometh to nothing. Passed - That is, he hath passed the time himself fixed when he would cone, and fight the Chaldeans.

18. Surely - He shall as certainly come and encompass you with his armies, as Tabor is encompassed with mountains, and as Carmel is by the sea.

20. A serpent - Egypt is now like an heifer that makes a great bellowing, but the time shall come when she shall make a lesser noise like the hissing of a serpent. With axes - For the Chaldeans shall come with an army, armed with battle-axes, as if they came to fell wood in a forest.

23. Tho' - Tho' it seem impenetrable.

## XLVII

The destruction of the Philistines, Tyrians, Zidonians, and others by the seaside, ver. 1-7.

1. Before - In the time of the Philistines prosperity.

4. The day - Which God hath set, and appointed for their ruin. Caphtor - Tyre and Sidon were neighbours to the Philistines, and so were often called to their help. The Philistines and Caphtorim were related, for their first progenitors, Philistim and Caphtorim, were both the sons of Mizriam the son of Ham, one of the sons of Noah.

5. The remnant - Those who lived in the valleys near Ashkelon. But thyself - Why will you afflict yourselves, when all your mourning will do you no good.

6. O thou sword - Perhaps they are the words of the prophet, lamenting the havock which he made among the Philistines by the Chaldeans.

7. How - God lets the prophet know that he had given this sword its commission, and therefore it could not stop 'till Ashkelon and the people on the sea-shore were destroyed by it.

## XLVIII

The judgment of Moab, ver. 1-6. for their pride, ver. 7-10. for their security and human confidence, ver. 11-15. especially for their contempt of God, and insolence towards his people, ver. 26- 46. Their restoration, ver. 47.

2. Heshbon - Heshbon was one of the principal cities of the Moabites. Probably the enemies sat there in counsel, when they had taken it, against the other parts of the country.

3. Horoniam - Another city of Moab.

5. Luhith - To this city the Moabites fled for sanctuary, and flying made so great an out-cry that their enemies who pursued them heard it.

6. And be - Save your lives, though all ye have be lost.

7. Trusted - In thy idols. Chemosh - Chemosh was their principal idol.

9. Give wings - The Moabites have need of wings like a bird to escape that ruin which is coming upon them.

11. At ease - The Moabites ever since they began to be a people, have been a quiet people. Settled - Like a cask of wine, that has not been racked but has continued in the same state. Not emptied - A metaphor of wine which is drawn out from vessel to vessel, when it is drawn off the lees. It is expounded by the next words. Therefore - And this is the reason why they retain their old sins, pride, presumption, and luxury.

12. Wanderers - The Chaldeans, who wandered from their own country to conquer other people. Break his bottles - He had before compared the Moabites, to wine settled upon the lees, here he saith, that God would send those that should not only disturb, but destroy them.

13. Bethel - The golden calves, which Jeroboam set up at Daniel and Bethel.

16. Is near - Josephus tells us this destruction came upon the Moabites five years after the siege of Jerusalem.

17. Staff - A staff and a rod are as well, ensigns of power and government, as instruments to punish offenders.

18. Dibon - Dibon, Aroer, and Ataroh were built by the children of Gad. It should seem the Moabites were not come into the possession of them. In thirst - It was a place well watered, but God threatens she should be in thirst, that is, driven into some dry, barren countries. The spoiler - The king of Babylon.

20. Arnon - Arnon was the name of a river; it was the border of Moab: probably the adjacent country or city might take its name from the river.

25. The horn - That is the beauty and the strength of Moab.

26. Drunken - Fill him with the intoxicating wine of God's vengeance.

27. Was he found - Why didst thou deal by Israel as men deal by thieves, when they are brought to shame?

28. O ye - Still the prophet speaks of the Moabites, as a people whose armies were routed, and calls to them to leave their houses in cities, not promising themselves any security, either to or from their houses, or from the walls of the cities, but to get them to rocks, which are naturally fortified, and from whence (if from any place) security may be promised.

30. I know - He shall never execute what he thinks to do. But - His boastings and his lies, still never effect his designs.

31. Kir-herez - A city of Moab.

32. Sibmah - Sibmah was famous in those days for vines. Jazer - Jazer was it seems first taken, and carried into captivity.

36. Pipes - The prophet means such pipes as they were wont to use at funerals, and other sad occasions.

40. He - Nebuchadnezzar shall come swiftly, and spread himself over Moab.

43. Fear - A variety of dangers upon all sides.

45. Heshbon - Heshbon was it seems a place of force. The crown - That is, the glory.

47. Bring again - It seems this is to be understood of a spiritual reduction of them, by calling them into the kingdom of the Messiah.

## XLIX

The judgment of the Ammonites, ver. 1-5. Their restoration, ver. 6. The judgment of Edom, ver. 7-22. Of Damascus, ver. 23-27. Of Kedar, and Hazor, ver. 28-33. Of Elam, and its restoration, ver. 34-39.

1. No heir - During the long tract of time that there were wars between the Jews and Ammonites, the land of Gad and Reuben which lay beyond Jordan, fell into the hands of the Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites. Hence it is that the prophet saith, Hath Israel no sons? God had given that country of Gilead to Manasseh, Reuben, and Gad; and as mens estates ought to descend to their heirs, so this land should have descended to their posterity, but the Ammonites had taken and possessed it.

3. Ai - A city of the Ammonites, not the same mentioned, Josh. vii, 2, for that was on the other side Jordan. By the hedges - Where they might be hidden, and not so easily seen.

4. Flowing - Either flowing with water, or plenty of corn and grass.

5. Right forth - So that you shall be glad to flee, and never look back. Gather up - None will receive or entertain you.

6. I will bring - Probably this refers to the conversion of the Ammonites, as well as other Heathens, to Christ.

7. Edom - The Edomites were the posterity of Esau the eldest son of Isaac, but disinherited; the blessing being given to his younger brother Jacob, who was head of the twelve tribes of Israel. God promised him that he should have a fat, and plentiful country, tho' his brother should be his Lord; and foretold, that he should break his brother's yoke from off his neck: the land of Seir was his country. The Edomites coasted southward upon Canaan, the Israelites passed by their coasts to go into Canaan, their way lay thro' Edom, but their king refusing to suffer them to go through, God ordered them to go another way. Balaam prophesied their ruin. They were enemies to the Israelites in the time of Saul, 1 Sam. xiv, 47, and David, 2 Sam. viii, 14, and Amaziah, 2 Kings xiv, 17, who slew of them ten thousand, and took Selah, calling it Jokteel. Many of the prophets foretold their ruin, Jeremiah in this place, Ezek xxv, 12-14 Joel iii, 19 Amos ix, 11, 12, and others. Teman - Was a city of Edom.

8. Dedan - Was a city of Arabia joining to Idumea, Isaiah xxi, 13, they being neighbours to the Edomites are called to flee, and to get into caves, where they might dwell deep in the earth and be in some security.

9. If - Edom shall be totally destroyed; their destruction should not be like the gleaning of grapes, where the gatherers content themselves with taking the principal clusters: nor yet like the robbings of thieves, who take for their hunger, and when they have got enough leave the rest.

12. They - The Jews, who in comparison with others did not deserve to drink of the cup, yet have drank of it, and can you think to escape? When an Israelite hath not escaped the justice of God, an Edomite must not expect it.

13. Bozrah - Edom is expressed under the name of Bozrah, (a part for the whole) Bozrah being its principal city.

14. An ambassador - He speaks after the manner of earthly princes, who use to send their ambassadors to other princes to declare their minds to them. God hath inclined them to come against Edom.

19. Behold - The Edomites shall come up fiercely against Nebuchadrezzar, but will suddenly flee, yea even from their own country. Appoint - Into whose hands shall I give that country. For who - For I can do whatsoever I please. Will appoint - And who will appoint me a time to plead with men? Who is - Where is that king or potentate that will stand before me?

20. Teman - Edom and Teman signify the same thing. The least - The least of Nebuchadrezzar's forces shall drag them out of their lurking places.

23. Damascus - Being the head of this country, is put for the whole country. Hamath - Hamath and Arpad were two cities also of Syria. On the sea - Their inhabitants that live near the sea shall be troubled.

25. Of my joy - A city of great renown. The king of Syria is here supposed to speak.

27. Ben-hadad - Was the common name of the kings of Syria.

28. Kedar - Was one of the sons of Ishmael, whose posterity inhabited part of Arabia Petraea. Hazor was the head city to several kingdoms in Joshua's time.

29. They - The Chaldeans.

30. Flee - These seem to be the prophet's words.

31. Arise - The result of Nebuchadrezzar's counsels, giving charge to his armies to march against the Kedarens, who lived at ease and took no care, nor had any neighbours that could assist them.

34. Against Elam - Probably the Persians.

38. My throne - God calls the throne of Cyrus or Alexander his throne; because he gave it the conqueror.

39. But - We had the like promise as to Moab, chap. xlviii, 47, and as to Ammon, ver. xlix, 6, the same latter days either signify after many days, or in the time of the Messiah. In the former sense it may refer to Cyrus, who conquered Persia. In the latter sense it refers to the spiritual liberty which some of these poor Heathens were brought into by the gospel. We read Acts ii, 9, that some of the Elamites were at Jerusalem at pentecost, and were some of those converted to Christ.

## L

The judgment of Babel, and the land of Chaldea, for their idolatry, tyranny and pride; with gracious promises of the redemption of Israel intermixed, ver. 1-46.

2. Bel - Bel and Merodach were the two principal idols of the Babylonians.

3. The north - From Media which lay northward to Babylon and Assyria.

4. In those days - In the days wherein God shall begin to execute judgment upon Babylon, (which was in the time of Cyrus) the children of Judah shall come out of captivity, and some of the children of Israel hearing that their brethren were gone out of Babylon, shall go up also from the several places into which they were disposed by the Assyrians: weeping for their sins, or for joy that God should shew them such mercy.

6. Their shepherds - Their civil and ecclesiastical governors have been a cause of it. The former by their wicked commands and example; the latter by example as well as doctrine. Turned them -

To offer sacrifices unto idols. From mountain - From one idolatry to another. Forgotten - They have forgotten me.

7. Habitation - Some think this is a name here given to God, who indeed is the habitation of justice, but whether the Chaldeans would call him so, may be a question. Others therefore think the preposition in is understood, making this the aggravation of the Jews sins, that they were committed in a land which ought to have been an habitation of justice.

8. Remove - God commands his people to remove out of Babylon, and to go forth chearfully like the he-goats of a flock leading the way.

10. Satisfied - Satisfied with spoil and plunder.

11. Because - They rejoiced at the ruin of the Jews. Fat - The cause for which Babylon is threatened, was doubtless their luxury of all sorts commonly attending great wealth.

12. Mother - Your country, shall be ashamed of you, who are not able to defend her.

15. Given her hand - Acknowledging themselves overcome, and yielding. As she hath done - Unmerciful men find no mercy.

16. Every one - Either such strangers as for commerce had their abodes in Babylon, or such assistance as the Babylonians had gotten against their enemies.

17. Israel - The whole twelve tribes. Lions - Enemies cruel as lions had carried them into captivity.

20. Not found - God will no longer punish the sins of the Jews, they should be sought for as to punishment and not found. Reserve - Whom I save from the captivity of Babylon.

21. Merathaim - The names of some places which Cyrus took in his way to Babylon.

22. The land - Of Chaldea.

26. Open her store-houses - The granaries, or treasures of the Babylonians.

27. Bullocks - The great and rich men of Babylon.

28. The vengeance - The revenge which God had taken for his holy temple, which the Chaldeans had destroyed.

33. Together - Together in this place signifies no more than that they were both oppressed, or alike oppressed.

34. Plead - He will actually and readily effect it.

36. Dote - Their soothsayers and wizards shall dote, not foreseeing what will be. Dismayed - Their hearts shall fail them when this day comes.

37. Horses - Through they be full of chariots and horses, the enemy shall destroy them. Mingled people - People that were not native Chaldeans, but under their dominion.

38. Dried - This phrase has a plain reference to Cyrus's stratagem used in the surprize of Babylon; one part of it was fortified by the great river Euphrates, which Cyrus diverted by cutting several channels, 'till he had drained it so low, that it became passable for his army; others think that a want of rain is here threatened.

40. No man - Cyrus only made them tributaries, and took away their government. But Seleucus Nicanor, a Grecian prince, utterly destroyed Babylon, so that in the time of Adrian the Roman emperor, there was nothing left standing of that great city.

## LI

The severe judgment of God against voluptuous, covetous, tyrannical and idolatrous Babel, in the revenge, and for the redemption of Israel, ver. 1-58. Jeremiah delivers the book of this prophecy to Seraiah, to be cast into Euphrates, in token of the perpetual sinking of Babylon, ver. 59-64.

5. Forsaken - Not utterly forsaken.

6. Soul - By soul is meant life, and by iniquity the punishment of the Babylonian's iniquity.

7. Drunken - She had made all the nations about her drunken with the Lord's fury. Mad - Through the misery they felt from her.

9. We - The prophet seems to personate the mercenary soldiers, saying, they would have helped Babylon, but there was no healing for her.

10. Some - These words are spoken in the person of the Jews, owning the destruction of Babylon to be the mighty work of God, and an act of justice, revenging the wrongs of his people.

12. Set up - These seem to be the prophet's words to the Babylonians, rousing them out of their security. Historians tell us that the city was fortified by walls of fifty cubits high, and two hundred cubits broad, and by a very deep and large ditch.

13. Waters - Babylon is said to dwell upon many waters, because the great river Euphrates, did not only run by it, but almost encompass it branching itself into many smaller rivers, which made several parts of the city, islands.

23. Break in pieces - The sense of all these three verses is the same; that God had made use, and was still making use of the Babylonians to destroy many nations, to spoil much people, wasting their goods, routing their armies, killing all sorts of their inhabitants.

25. Mountain - Babylon was very high for its power, and greatness, and had very high walls and towers, that it looked at a distance like an high rocky mountain. They had destroyed many people. Burnt - Thy cities and towers which appear like a mountain shall be burnt.

27. As caterpillars - The Median horses are compared to their insects, either with respect to their numbers, or in regard of the terror caused by them when they came, being a great plague to the places which they infected.

29. The land - Babylon, or the land of Chaldea.

31. At one end - Cyrus entered the city at one end, by the channel of the river, which he had drained, and surprized Belshazzar in the midst of his feast.

32. The passages - The passages over the river Euphrates, and all the other passages by which the Babylonians might make their escape, were guarded with soldiers. Reeds - On the border of the river Euphrates were vast quantities of great and tall reeds, which with the mud in which they stood, were as another wall to the city; but the Medes had burnt them so as the way was open.

33. Threshing floor - Babylon had been a threshing instrument, by which, and a threshing-floor in which God had threshed many other nations; God now intended to make it as a threshing-floor wherein he would thresh the Chaldeans. Tread her - So they used to prepare their threshing-floors against the time of harvest. The time - The harvest which the justice of God would have from the ruin of the Chaldeans.

34. Me - The prophet speaks this in the name of the Jews. Cast me out - As beasts of prey eat what they please of other beasts they have preyed upon, and leave the rest in the field.

36. Dry up - Alluding to what Cyrus did.

38. They - The Babylonians, upon the taking of their city.

39. Heat - When they shall grow hot with wine, I will make them a feast of another nature. Interpreters judge that Belshazzar, Dan. v, 1, made a feast to a thousand of his Lords, when he and his wives, and concubines, drank wine in the vessels belonging to the temple, during which feast the city was taken. And not awake - While they were merry with their wine, they fell into a sleep which they never awoke out of.

41. Sheshach - A name given to the city of Babylon.

42. The sea - A multitude of enemies.

44. Bel - Bel was the principal Babylonian idol. Bring forth - All the vessels of the temple, 2 Chron. xxxvi, 7, and whatever gifts the Babylonians had presented to him. The wall - And the city of Babylon shall be also ruined.

45. Go out of her - At all hazards escape for your lives.

48. Then - All the creatures in heaven and earth shall rejoice at the vengeance which God shall take upon Babylon.

49. Of all the earth - This term must be understood in a restrained sense; the Chaldeans coming up from all parts of Chaldea to help Babylon, were slain there, as by the means of Babylon the Israelites were slain that came from all parts of Judea to help Jerusalem.

50. Ye - Ye Jews, leave Babylon as soon as liberty is proclaimed. Remember - And remember in Judea the great things both of justice and mercy which God hath done.

51. We - We Jews are ashamed to hear the enemies reproaching us, for our God, or for our religion. Strangers - Pagans that were strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, are come, not to worship, but to plunder, the sanctuaries of the Lord; even into the courts of the priests and of the Israelites; yea, into the most holy place.

52. Wherefore - For this profanation of my holy place, I will be revenged not only upon their idols, but upon the worshippers of them, and cause a groaning of wounded men over all the country of the Chaldeans.

55. The great voice - The noises caused from multitudes of people walking up and trafficking together. A noise - The noise of her enemies that shall break in upon her shall be like the roaring of the sea.

56. Because - Little more is said here than was before, only the words hint the taking of Babylon by a surprize when the king, and the inhabitants were not aware of it, which we had before also told us, ver. 39, 40. Requite - The wrongs done to his people.

57. Drunk - A plain allusion to the posture the king of Babylon, and the thousand of his lords were in, when their city was taken while they were drinking wine in the bowls that were brought from the temple at Jerusalem.

58. Weary - Though the people should labour to quench this fire, or to rebuild this city, yet it would be all lost labour.

59. In the fourth year - This circumstance lets us know that this prophecy was many years before Babylon was destroyed; for it was seven years before Jerusalem was taken; so as it must be above sixty years before it was fulfilled in the first degree.

61. Shalt read - Probably to the Jews, that were in Babylon.

62. Shalt say - Thou shalt testify that thou believest what thou hast read.

64. Weary - With that weight of judgment which shall be upon them. The words - The prophetical words of Jeremiah; for the matter of the next chapter is historical, and the book of Lam. is not prophetical.

### LII

A repetition of the reign of Zedekiah: of the siege, taking, and destruction of Jerusalem, with the causes thereof, and what farther happened there, ver. 1-30. Evil-merodach advances Jehoiakim, ver. 31-34.

2. Zedekiah - It is generally thought that this chapter was not penned by Jeremiah, who, it is not probable, would have so largely repeated what he had related before; and could not historically relate what happened after his time, as some things did which are mentioned towards the end of the chapter. Probably it was penned by some of those in Babylon, and put in here as a preface to the book of Lamentations.

24. Three - It is probable there were more keepers of the door, but the captain of the guard took only three of the chief.

30. All the persons were four thousand and six hundred - How amazingly were the Jews diminished, that this handful was all who were carried captive!

34. All the days of his life - Here ends the history of the kingdom of Judah. I shall only observe the severe judgment of God upon this people, whose kingdom was made up of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and half the tribe of Manasseh. In the numbering of the persons belonging to these two tribes, Num. i, 27, 35, 37, (counting half of the number of the tribe of Manasseh) we find one hundred twenty-six thousand one hundred: Num. xxvi, 22, 34, 41, we find of them one hundred forty-eight thousand four hundred and fifty. Here, ver. lii, 30, we find no more of them carried into captivity, than four thousand and six hundred. From whence we may judge what a multitude of them were slain by the sword, by the famine, and pestilence! It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, to mock his messengers, despise his words, and misuse his prophets, 'till there be no remedy, 2 Chron. xxxvi, 16.

## NOTES ON THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

THIS book in Greek, Latin, and English, has its name from the subject matter of it, which is Lamentation. So also among the Hebrew writers; but in the Hebrew it takes its name from the first word of the book, as the five books of Moses have. That it was wrote by Jeremiah none can question, because in the Hebrew it is styled, The book of Jeremiah. There is little controversy about the time, or occasion of writing it. That the occasion was the miseries of the people, by reason of the famine,

sword, and captivity, is evident. Probably Jeremiah began to write upon the death of Josiah, and continued to the time of the captivity, setting down all the miseries the people suffered all along to that time. The design of the writing, as to those whom it immediately concerned, is plain and obvious, namely, to affect the people with those judgments which came upon them for their sins: as to us (upon whom the ends of the world are come) to mind us to take heed of their sins, lest we be sharers in their plagues. The book is made up of complaints of their lamentable condition; petitions to God for mercy; and prophecies both of their better estate, and the ruin of their enemies. In the four first chapters are several alphabets of letters beginning the several verses, each verse beginning with a new letter, only chap. 3, every three verses begin with a new letter. It seems the chapters were so composed, for the advantage of their memories. The whole book lets us see from what an height of dignity, to what a depth misery sin may bring a nation, how much soever interested in God; and directs us to our duty in a state of affliction.

## I

Jeremiah laments the former excellency and present misery of Jerusalem for her sin, ver. 1-11. She complains of her grief, ver. 12-17. Confesses God's judgments to be righteous: and prays to him, ver. 18-22.

1. A widow - She that had a king, or rather a God, that was an husband to her, now was forsaken of God, and her king taken from her.

3. Because - Because of the servitude and oppression exercised among them: oppression by their rulers, and servitude more generally; keeping their servants beyond the year of jubilee, when they ought to be set at liberty. The straits - Those that pursued them overtook them in places where they could not escape.

4. She - Persons of all ages and ranks are in bitterness.

10. Pleasant things - Has laid violent hands on them. The things of the sanctuary were always pleasant things to those that feared God.

11. Bread - Even in a land that ordinarily flowed with milk and honey, they were at a loss for bread to eat. Given - And gave any thing for something to satisfy their hunger. Vile - Miserable or contemptible.

12. Is it nothing - The prophet speaks in the name of the Jewish church.

13. Fire - A judgment as consuming, and afflictive as fire.

14. Is bound - Put upon my neck on account of my transgressions. Wreathed - My punishments are twisted as cords; I have a complication of judgments upon me, sword, famine, pestilence, captivity.

15. An assembly - God had called an assembly of Chaldeans against the city, to crush the inhabitants of it. Trodden - God had trodden upon the Jews as men use to stamp grapes in a wine-press.

16. The comforter - God.

17. Jerusalem - Is become loathsome and filthy.

19. Deceived - They did not answer my expectation.

20. Death - By famine and pestilence.

21. They - The neighbouring nations. Like me - But thou hast foretold their destruction also, and hast by me proclaimed it: and thou shalt in that day bring them into as sad a condition as I am in now.

## II

Jeremiah laments the misery of Jerusalem, and its causes, and their enemies derision, ver. 1-17. An exhortation to true sorrow and repentance, and a fervent prayer, ver. 18-22.

1. His footstool - His temple; but suffered the Chaldeans to destroy it. Cast down - That is, thrown them down from the highest glory and honour, to the meanest degree of servitude.

2. Polluted - Dealt with them as with a polluted thing; cast them off, brake them in pieces.

3. The horn - All their beauty and strength. Drawn back - God hath drawn back his assistance which he was wont to give the Jews against their enemies. Round about - God consumed them, not in this or that part, but round about, as a fire seizing an house at once on all sides.

4. He - That is, God, (whom by their sins they had provoked and made their enemy) behaved himself as an enemy. And slew - All their young men, and maidens who were pleasant to look upon.

6. His tabernacle - His temple. The places - The synagogues. The king - By the king and the priests are meant persons of greatest rank and eminency, though it is thought here is a special reference to Zedekiah the king of Judah, and Seraiah who was the high priest; the former of which was miserably handled, the latter slain.

7. They - The enemies with their triumphs and blasphemies, made as great a noise, as those that sang holy songs, or played on instruments, were wont to make to the glory of God.

8. The wall - The strength and security of the Jews. A line - Artificers used with lines not only to mark out places for building, but also for destruction, to direct them what to cut off; and such a line is here meant.

9. Among the Gentiles - In miserable captivity. The law - Is no more read, opened or observed. Her prophets - They had but very few prophets, from this time to the time of the gospel, and very few of those at this time alive had any Revelation from God.

10. The virgins - The whole city is in a mournful posture.

11. Mine eyes - This whole verse is but expressive of the prophets great affliction for the miseries come upon the Jews. He wept himself almost blind. Bowels - His passion had disturbed his bodily humours, that his bowels were troubled. Liver - His gall lying under his liver. All these are expressions of great affliction and sorrow. Swoon - During the famine, occasioned by the long siege.

12. Bosom - When they died in their mother's arms.

13. Who - There was no people whose condition was in any degree parallel to the misery of the Jews: nor was there any cure for them, their breach was like a sea breach where the waters come in with such a torrent, that there is no making any defense against them.

14. The prophets - False prophets told you vain stories. Not discovered - Whereas they ought to have made you sensible of your sins, and this might have prevented your captivity. False burdens - False stories to encourage you in sin, and so cause your banishment.

18. O wall - That is, those that are upon it.

20. Whom - Not the Heathen, but to thy own people. Women - Wilt thou suffer women to satisfy their hunger with the fruit of their own bodies?

22. My terrors - As my people were wont to be called together from all parts in a solemn day, so now my terrible enemies, or terrible things are by thee called together.

## III

The faithful bewail their misery, ver. 1-21. They nourish their hope by considering the justice, providence, and mercies of God, ver. 22-36. They stir up themselves to repentance, patience, prayers and confidence of deliverance for themselves, and divine vengeance on their enemies, ver. 37-66.

1. I am the man - It seems, this is spoken in the name of the people, who were before set out under the notion of a woman.

4. Made old - All my beauty is gone, and all my strength.

5. Builded - He hath built forts and batteries against my walls and houses.

9. Enclosed - He has defeated all my methods and counsels for security, by insuperable difficulties like walls of hewn stone. Crooked - Nay, God not only defeated their counsels, but made them fatal and pernicious to them.

15. Wormwood - With severe and bitter dispensations.

16. Ashes - Mourners were wont to throw ashes on their heads.

19. Wormwood - Wormwood and gall, are often made use of to signify great affliction.

21. This - Which follows, concerning the nature of God, and his good providences.

23. Faithfulness - In fulfilling thy promises to thy people.

27. Bear - Quietly and patiently to bear what afflictions God will please to lay upon us. And if God tame us when young, by his word or by his rod, it is an unspeakable advantage.

28. Born it - That he keep his soul in subjection to God, because God hath humbled him by his rod.

29. In the dust - Both this and the former verses let us know the duty of persons under afflictions.

33. Willingly - Not from his own mere motion without a cause given him from the persons afflicted. Hence judgment is called God's strange work.

36. To subvert - Here are three things mentioned, which God approveth not.

37. Who - Nothing comes to pass in the world, but by the disposal of divine providence. This seems to be spoken in the name of the people of God, arguing themselves into a quiet submission, to their afflictions, from the consideration of the hand of God in them.

38. Evil - Doth not evil or trouble come out of God's mouth from his direction, and providence, as well as good?

39. Wherefore - The Jews, check themselves in their complaints from the consideration, that nothing had befallen them, but what was the just reward of their sins.

42. Thou - Thou hast plagued us according to the just desert of our sins.

49. Mine eye - The prophet speaks this of himself.

53. Dungeon - Dungeon seems here to be taken for the lowest condition of misery.

54. Cut off - I am undone, there is no hope for me.

56. Heard - In former afflictions. Hide not - Shew me now the same favour.

58. O Lord - Thou hast been wont to take my part against my enemies.

60. Seen - Thou hast been a witness to all their fury.

63. I am - At feasts, and at their merry meetings, I am all the subject of their discourse.

66. Persecute - Many passages of this nature which we meet with are prophecies, some of them may be both prophecies and prayers.

## IV

Zion bewaileth her misery: confesseth her sins, ver. 1-6. Miseries of the chief ones: women who killed and dressed their own children, ver. 7-12. The sin of the false prophets and priests, their vain hope, ver. 13-19. Their king taken prisoner, ver. 20. Edom is threatened, and Zion comforted, ver. 21, 22.

1. The top - Are scattered in the head of every street.

2. Earthen pitchers - The nobles, the priests, and the good men, are looked upon no better than earthen vessels, the workmanship of an ordinary potter.

3. Cruel - The Jewish women are become cruel to their children, or forced to appear so, having through the famine no milk to give them, nor any thing to relieve them. Ostriches - Like ostriches that lay their eggs, and leave them in the sand.

6. Of Sodom - Their punishment was greater, because more lingering, and gradual, whereas Sodom was overthrown in a moment, and that by no human hands that abode upon her, causing her a continued torment.

7. Nazarites - Her Nazarites in this place signify her separated ones, who either in respect of birth, education, estate, or place of magistracy, were distinguished from the rest of the people.

8. Not known - So that those who before knew them, do not know them now.

13. Priests - The ecclesiastical men were a great cause of the first and last destruction of Jerusalem. And so they are of most other places that come to ruin, through their neglect of their duty, or encouraging others in their wicked courses.

14. They - The prophets and priests wandered up and down the streets polluting themselves with blood, either the blood of the children which they slew, or the just men, mentioned ver. 13, the slaughter of whom they either encouraged, or at least did not discourage; so that one could not

touch a prophet or priest, but he must be legally polluted, and there were so many of them, that men could not walk in the streets, but he must touch some of them.

15. Touch not - The Jews that made conscience of keeping the law against touching dead bodies, cried to the other Jews to leave the city as themselves did, the city being now so full of dead bodies that they could not stay in it without polluting themselves.

16. The anger - These words seem to be the language of their enemies triumphing over them. They - Their enemies had no regard to the most venerable persons among them.

17. A nation - The Egyptians.

18. They - The Chaldeans.

20. The anointed - Zedekiah, who though a bad man yet afforded some protection to the Jews. We said - We promised ourselves that though the land of Judah was encompassed with Pagan nations, yet through Zedekiah's valour and good conduct we should live comfortably.

21. Rejoice - The prophet speaks ironically, Rejoice; but thy joy shall be but for a little time. Drunken - Thou shalt be intoxicated with it, and make thyself naked as drunken men sometimes do.

22. Captivity - Not for thy past sins. Thy sins - By the punishment of them.

## V

An humble prayer, presenting to the Lord their great misery, ver. 1-15. Confessing their sins, ver. 16-18. Imploring deliverance, ver. 19-22.

3. We - We are all of us without a king, (our common father) we are deprived of thy fatherly protection, and many young children among us are left without an earthly parent.

4. Sold - Whereas at other times there was abundance of wood and water throughout Judea.

6. We - The ten tribes were all carried captives into Assyria, and many of the kingdom of Judah fled into Egypt. Giving the hand may signify labouring for them: or, yielding up themselves to their power.

7. Their iniquities - The punishment of them.

9. The sword - The enemies lay encamped in all the plains, so that they could stir out no way but the sword of the Chaldeans was upon them.

13. Fell - Not being able to stand under the burdens laid upon them.

16. The crown - All our honour, splendour and dignity.

19. Thy throne - Altho' for our sins thou sufferest our throne to be cast down, yet thou art the same, thy power is not diminished, nor thy goodness abated.

21. Renew - Restore us to our former estate.

# NOTES ON THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

THE name Ezekiel signifies, The strength of God. And God did indeed make his face strong against all opposition. It was the tradition of the Jews, that for his boldness and faithfulness in reproving them, he was put to death by the captives in Babylon. The prophecies of this book were spoken and written in Babylon, to the Jews who were captives there. Ezekiel prophesied in the beginning of their captivity, to convince them when they were secure and unhumbled; Daniel, in the latter end of it, to comfort them, when they were dejected and discouraged. There is much in this book which is very mysterious, especially in the beginning and latter end of it. But tho' the visions are intricate, the sermons are plain, and the design of them is, to shew God's people their transgressions. And tho' the reproofs and threatenings are very sharp, yet toward the close we have very comfortable promises, to be fulfilled in the kingdom of the Messiah, of whom indeed Ezekiel speaks less than almost any of the prophets. The visions, which are his credentials, we have, chap. 1-3. The reproofs and threatenings, chap. 4-24. We have messages sent to the neighbouring nations, foretelling their destruction, chap. 25- 35. To make way for the restoration of Israel, and the re-establishment of their city and temple, which are foretold, chap. 36-48.

## I

The time when this prophecy was delivered, the place where, and person by whom, ver. 1-3. His vision of the glory of God, in his attendance, surrounded with angels, (here called living creatures) ver. 4-14. In his providences, represented by the wheels and their motions, ver. 15-26. And in the face of Jesus Christ, sitting upon the throne, ver. 26-28.

1. Thirtieth year - From the finding the book of the law in the eighteenth year of Josiah, from which date to the fifth year of the captivity are thirty years. Fifth day - Probably it was the sabbath-day, when the Jews were at leisure to hear the prophet. River - Perhaps retiring thither to lament their own sins, and Jerusalem's desolation. Chebar - A river now called Giulap, arising out of the mountain Masius, and falling into Euphrates, somewhat below a city called by the same name.

2. The month - Thamus, as ver. 1, answering to our June and July. Fifth year - This account observed will guide us in computing the times referred to ver. 1. These five of Jehoiachin, and the eleven of his predecessor, added to fourteen of Josiah's reign, after he found the law, make up thirty years, ver.

1. Jehoiachin - Who is also called Jechoniah, and Coniah. It may be of use to keep an account, when and where God has manifested himself to us in a peculiar manner. Remember, O my soul, what thou didst receive at such a time, at such a place: tell others what God did for thee.

3. The word - What was visions, ver. 1, is here the word, both as signifying and declaring the mind of God, what he would do, and as continuing his commands to Ezekiel and to the people. Ezekiel - He speaks of himself in a third person. Priest - He was of the priests originally; he was a prophet by an extraordinary call. The hand - He felt the power of God opening his eyes to see the

visions, opening his ear to hear the voice, and his heart to receive both. When the hand of the Lord goes along with his word, then it becomes effectual.

4. Looked - I very diligently surveyed the things that were represented to me in the vision. Whirlwind - This denotes the indignation and judgments of God; a quick, impetuous and irresistible vengeance. North - From Babylon, which lay northward from Judea; and the prophet, tho' now in Babylon, speaks of the Jews, as if they were in Jerusalem. A fire - An orb or wheel of fire: God being his own cause, his own rule, and his own end. Brightness - Yet round about it was not smoak and darkness, but a clear light. The midst - Of the fire.

5. The likeness - Such a representation of the holy angels as God saw fit to make use of, came out of the midst of the fire: for angels derive their being and power from God: their glory is a ray of his.

6. Wings - With two they flew, denoting the speed of their obedience; and with two they covered their body, denoting their reverence.

7. Feet - Their thighs, legs and feet, were of a human shape. Straight - Not bowed to this or that part, which argues weakness. The sole - That which is properly the foot. A calf's - A divided hoof spake the cleanness of the creature. They - Their feet.

8. Under - Their power and manner of exerting it is secret and invisible. Sides - On each side of the chariot one of these living creatures flood, and so on each side hands were ready to act as they were moved. They four - It is doubled to confirm the truth and certainty of the thing.

9. Their wings - The wings of the two cherubim which went foremost, and the wings of the two hindermost, were joined together when they moved. Went - This explains the former words, assuring us, that every one of those living creatures are ready, and unwearied in doing the pleasure of their Creator.

10. A man - Each face is compared to what is most excellent in its kind, man excels in wisdom, lions in strength, the ox in patience and constancy of labour, the eagle in speed and high flight.

11. Divided - So each face appeared distinct above the shoulders, and there the wings divided from each other were united to the body of the living creature.

12. Straight - Which way soever they went, each living creature had one face looking straight forward. The spirit - The will, command, and breathing of the Spirit of God, both gave and guided their motions. Was to go - Going is attributed here to the Spirit of God, by allusion, for he who is in every place cannot properly be said to go from or to any place. Turned not - They looked not back, they turned not out of the way, they gave not over, 'till they had compleated their course.

13. The fire - This fire stood not still, but as the Hebrew is, Made itself walk up and down. It moved itself, which is too much to ascribe to creatures: God only moved all these living creatures.

14. Ran - They ran into the lower world, to do what was to be done there: and when they had done, returned as a flash of lightning, to the upper world, to the vision of God. Thus we should be in the affairs of this world: though we run into them we must not repose in them, but our souls must presently return like lightning, to God, their rest and center.

15. Living creatures - By each of the living creatures stood one wheel, so that they were four in number, according to the number of living creatures. Four faces - By this it appears, each wheel had its four faces. While he was contemplating the glory of the former vision, this other was presented to him: wherein the dispensations of providence are compared to the wheels of a machine, which all contribute to the regular motion of it. Providence orders, changes: sometimes one spoke of the wheel is uppermost, sometimes another. But the motion of the wheel on its own axle-tree,

is still regular and steady. And the wheel is said to be by the living creatures, who attend to direct its motion. For all inferior creatures are, and move, and act, as the Creator, by the ministration of angels directs and influences them: visible effects are managed and governed by invisible causes.

16. Work - All that was wrought, whether engraved or otherwise was of one colour. Beryl - A sea green. One likeness - The same for dimensions, colour, frame, and motion. In the middle - It is probable, the wheels were framed so as to be an exact sphere, which is easily rolled to any side.

17. They - The wheels. Four sides - The wheels being supposed round every way as a globe, by an exact framing of two wheels one in the other; the four semi-circles which are in two whole wheels, may be well taken for these four sides on which these wheels move, and such a wheel will readily be turned to all points of the compass. Returned not - They returned not 'till they came to their journey's end; nothing could divert them, or put them out of their course. So firm and sure are the methods, so unalterable and constant the purposes of God, and so invariable the obedience and observance of holy angels. So subject to the sovereign will of God are all second causes.

18. The rings - The circumference of the wheels. Dreadful - Their very height imprest a fear on the beholder. Them four - Every one of the four wheels. How fitly do the wheels, their motion, their height, and eyes, signify the height, unsearchableness, wisdom, and vigilance of the Divine Providence.

20. The spirit - The Spirit of God. These angels in their ministry punctually observed both his impulse and conduct. They - The wheels, inferior agents and second causes. Their spirit - The wheels concurred with the spirit of the living creatures, so that there was an hearty accord between those superior and inferior causes. For - An undiscerned, yet divine, mighty, wise, and ever- living power, spirit, and being, actuated all, and governed all.

21. For - The same wisdom, power, and holiness of God, the same will and counsel of his, that guides and governs the angels, does by them order and dispose all the motions of the creatures in this lower world.

22. Likeness - The appearance or resemblance. As crystal - For splendour, purity, and solidity, all that was above these creatures and wheels was beautiful and very majestic, and 'tis therefore called terrible, because it impressed a veneration upon the mind of the beholders.

23. Under - Below at a great distance, stood these living creatures. Straight - Stretched forth, ready for motion. One - Each of the four had two other wings with which they covered their bodies.

24. The voice - Thunder. Speech - The prophet heard the voice in an articulate manner. An host - A tumultuous voice of men. Stood - Having done their office they present themselves before God, waiting for the commands of their Lord.

26. A man - Christ, God-man, who here appears as king and judge.

27. Amber - In this colour does Christ appear against the rebellious Jews; he that would have visited them clothed with the garments of salvation, now puts on the garments of vengeance, expressed by such metaphors. Brightness - Majesty, justice, and unstained holiness, shine round about him.

28. The bow - A like appearance of Christ in a surrounding brightness, as of the rainbow you have, Rev. iv, 3. Mercy, and truth, and both according to covenant are about the throne of Christ. Glory - It was not the full glory of God, but such as the prophet might bear. I fell - With deep humility and reverence.

## II

Ezekiel is commissioned to prophesy to the Jewish captives, ver. 1-5. Is cautioned not to be afraid of them, ver. 6. Has words put into his mouth, signified by the vision of a roll, which he is ordered to eat, ver. 7-10.

1. And - He that sat upon the throne, Jesus Christ. Son of man - A phrase which is ninety-five times, at least, used in this prophecy to keep him humble who had such great Revelations. Stand - Arise, fear not. And with this command God sent forth a power enabling him to rise and stand.

2. The spirit - The same spirit which actuated the living creatures.

5. Shall know - They that obey shall know by the good I will do them, those that will not, by the evil which I will bring upon them.

6. Words - Accusations, threats, or whatever else a malicious heart can suggest to the tongue. Briars - Which usually run up among thorns, are a very fit emblem of the frowardness and keenness of sinners against God and his prophet. Scorpious - Malicious, revengeful men. They that will do any thing to purpose in the service of God, must not fear the faces of men.

8. Hear - Obey. Open - This was done only in a vision.

9. Roll - Their books were not like ours, but written in parchment and in the length of it, and so one piece fastened to another, 'till the whole would contain what was to be written, and then it was wrapped or rolled about a round piece of wood, fashioned for that purpose.

10. And - The person, who held out his hand. Spread - Unrolled it. Within &c. - On both sides, on that side which was inward when rolled, and on that side also that was outward.

## III

His eating the roll, ver. 1-3. Farther instructions and encouragements given him, ver. 4-11. He is carried to the captive Jews, ver. 12-15. An illustration of his office by that of a watchman, ver. 16-21. The restraining and restoring of his liberty of speech, ver. 22-27.

1. Eat - This was done in a vision. Findeth - In the hand which was sent to him.

3. Belly - The mouth is the proper instrument of eating, but when meat is digested, the belly is said to eat. Fill thy bowels - This denotes the fulness of the measure wherewith we should read, meditate, and digest the word of God. Honey - It was sweet to receive things by Revelation from God, and so to converse with God. And usually the first part of the ministerial work is pleasant.

4. Speak - What things I shall shew thee, and in what words I shall declare them to thee.

6. Many people - Divers nations, that thou shouldest need divers tongues, to speak to them all in their own language.

7. All - The far greater part, tho' not every particular person.

8. I have - I have given thee, constancy, and manly carriage. The more impudent wicked people are in their opposition to religion, the more openly and resolutely should God's people appear in the practice and defense of it.

11. Captivity - Of the first captivity under Jeconiah's reign, who succeeded his father Jehoiakim, slain for his conspiracy with Egypt against Nebuchadnezzar.

12. A voice - An articulate sound, of many angels, attended with the rushing of the wheels, added to the noise of their wings. Blessed - Praised be the gloriously holy and just God. His place - Coming down from heaven.

13. Rushing - The wheels of providence moved over against the angels, and in concert with them.

14. Spirit - Caught him up into the air. Took - Carried me to the place where the captive Jews were crowded together. Bitterness - Not at all pleased with my work. He went in the heat of his spirit; because of the discouragements he foresaw he should meet with. But the hand of the Lord was strong upon him, not only to compel him to the work, but to fit him for it.

15. Tel-abib - A part of Mesopotamia, which was shut up within Chebar westward, and Saocora eastward. By - On that part of the river Chebar, which runs west-ward of Tel-abib. Where - Where I found them sitting astonished, at the sight of their change from freedom and honour to servitude and shame. Seven days - Mourning no doubt all that while, and waiting 'till the spirit of prophecy should open his mouth.

20. I Lay - Permit it to be laid before him. He shall - Perish in his sin. Remembered - Shall not be profitable to him; "he that apostatizes is the worst of men, because he falls from known ways of goodness and holiness."

22. There - At Tel-abib. Go forth - Withdraw from the multitude.

23. As the glory - We are not now to expect such visions. But we have a favour done us nothing inferior, if we by faith behold the glory of the Lord, so as to be changed into the same image. And this honour have all his saints.

24. Shut - To foresignify the shutting up of the Jews in Jerusalem.

25. Not go - Thou shalt be straitly confined.

26. I - I will make thee as dumb as if thy tongue clave to the roof of thy mouth.

27. But - When ever I shall reveal any thing to thee. Open - I will give thee power to speak. Let - 'Tis his duty and safety. Forbear - 'Tis at his own peril.

## IV

Two things are here represented to the prophet in vision,

1. The fortifications that shall be shortly raised against the city, signified by his laying siege to the portrait of Jerusalem, ver. 1-3. And lying first on one side, and then on the other side before it, ver. 4-8.
2. The famine that would rage therein, signified by his eating coarse fare, and little of it, so long as this typical representation lasted, ver. 9-17.

1. Portray - Draw a map of Jerusalem.

2. Lay siege - Draw the figure of a siege about the city. Build - Raise a tower and bulwarks.

3. A wall - That it may resemble a wall of iron, for as impregnable as such a wall, shall the resolution and patience of the Chaldeans be.

4. Lay - Take upon thee the representation of their guilt and punishment. House of Israel - The ten tribes. The number - By this thou shalt intimate how long I have born with their sins, and how long they shall bear their punishment.

5. I have laid - I have pointed out the number of years wherein apostate Israel sinned against me, and I did bear with them. Years - These years probably began at Solomon's falling to idolatry, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, and ended in the fifth of Zedekiah's captivity.

6. Accomplished - That is, almost accomplished. House of Judah - Of the two tribes. Forty days - Probably from Josiah's renewing the covenant, until the destruction of the temple, during which time God deferred to punish, expecting whether they would keep their covenant, or retain their idolatries, which latter they did for thirteen years of Josiah's reign, for eleven of Jehoiakim's, and eleven of Zedekiah's reign, and five of his captivity, which amount to just forty years. But all this was done in a vision.

7. Set - While thou liest on thy side thou shalt fix thy countenance on the portrait of besieged Jerusalem. Uncovered - Naked and stretched out as being ready to strike.

8. Bands - An invisible restraint assuring him, that those could no more remove from the siege, than he from that side he lay on.

9. Take - Provide thee corn enough: for a grievous famine will accompany the siege. Wheat - All sorts of grain are to be provided, and all will be little enough. One vessel - Mix the worst with the best to lengthen out the provision.

10. By weight - Not as much as you will, but a small pittance delivered by weight to all. Twenty shekels - Ten ounces: scarce enough to maintain life. From time to time - At set hours this was weighed out.

11. The sixth part - About six ounces.

12. As barley cakes - Because they never had enough to make a loaf with, they eat them as barley cakes. With dung - There was no wood left, nor yet dung of other creatures. This also was represented in a vision.

17. May want - So because they served not God with chearfulness in the abundance of all things, He made them serve their enemies in the want of all things.

## V

The destruction of Jerusalem, represented by a sign, the cutting and burning and scattering of hair, ver. 1-4. Sin, the cause of this destruction, ver. 5-7. Wrath, misery and ruin threatened, ver. 8-15.

1. Take - Thus foretel the mourning, reproach, and deformity that are coming, for all this is signified by shaving the head and beard.

2. A third part - Described on the tile, chap. iv, 1, a type of what should be done in Jerusalem. The days - When the three hundred and ninety days of thy lying against the portrayed city shall be ended. With a knife - To signify them that fall by the sword. Scatter - To typify them that fell to the Chaldeans, or fled to Egypt, or other countries.

3. Take - Of the last third. Bind - As men tied up in the skirt of their garment what they would not lose: to signify the small remnant.

4. Of them - Out of that little remnant. In the fire - For their sin against God, their discontents at their state, and conspiracies against their governor, another fire shall break out which shall devour the most, and be near consuming all the houses of Israel.

5. This is Jerusalem - This portrayed city, is typically Jerusalem. The midst - Jerusalem was set in the midst of the nations, to be as the heart in the body, to invigourate the dead world with a divine life, as well as to enlighten the dark world with a divine light.

6. More - More than the heathen.

7. Multiplied - In idols, superstitions, and wickedness. Neither - You have exceeded them in superstition and idolatry, and fallen short of them in moral virtues.

9. Not done - Though the old world perished by water, and Sodom by fire, yet neither one or other was so lingering a death.

10. Scatter - This was verified when they were fetched away, who were left at the departure of the besiegers, and when the very small remnant with Johanan fled into Egypt.

11. Sanctuary - My temple. Detestable things - Thy idols.

13. Comforted - In executing my vengeance. In my zeal - For my own glory.

15. Taunt - A very proverb among them. Instruction - Sinners shall learn by thy miseries, what they may expect from me.

17. Bereave thee - Of your children, friends, and your own life. Pestilence and blood - Thy land shall be the common road for pestilence and blood. Tho' this prophecy was to be accomplished presently, in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; yet it may well be supposed to look forward, to the final destruction of it by the Romans, when God made a full end of the Jewish nation, and caused his fury to rest upon them.

## VI

A threatening of the destruction of Israel for their idolatry, ver. 1-7. A promise of the gracious return of a remnant, ver. 8-10. Directions to lament the sins and calamities of Israel, ver. 11-14.

2. The mountains - The inhabitants of the mountains, who were secure in their fastnesses.

3. Rivers - To those who dwell by river sides, or in the valleys. High places - The places of your idolatrous worship.

4. Cast down - Before the altars of your idols, which you fly to for refuge.

5. And - Thus the idols were upbraided with their inability to help their worshippers, and the idolaters, with the folly of trusting in them.

6. Your works - All your costly work for your idols.

8. Remnant - It is the Lord that preserves a remnant, the enemies rage would destroy all.

9. Shall remember - So as to turn unto me. Broken - I am much grieved. Whorish heart - Idolatrous hearts depart from God, as an adulterous wife departs from her husband. Loath - With a mixture of grief towards God, of indignation against themselves, and abhorrence of the offense.

10. In vain - Either without cause, the sufferers gave him just cause to pronounce that evil; or without effect. Their sins where the cause, and their destruction is the effect of their sufferings.

11. Smite - To shew thy wonder, indignation, sorrow, and pity, for their sins and sufferings.

12. Far off - Either by flight, or captivity. Shall fall - Who dwell near to Jerusalem, or would retire to it, when the Babylonians approach.

14. Wilderness - The horrid wilderness of Moab. Therein the fiery serpents so much annoyed Israel. Accordingly the land of Canaan is at this day one of the most desolate countries in the world.

## VII

In this chapter the prophet tells them, that a final ruin is coming, ver. 1-6. A ruin just at the door, ver. 7-10. An unavoidable ruin, because of their sins, ver. 11-15. That their strength and wealth would be no fence against it, ver. 16-19. That the temple, which they trusted in, should itself be ruined, ver. 20- 22. That it should be an universal ruin, the sin that brought it being universal, ver, 23-27.

1. An end - An end of God's patience, and of the peace and welfare of the people.

4. Recompense - The punishment of them.

5. An evil - An evil and sore affliction, a singular, uncommon one.

6. An end - When the end is come upon the wicked world, then an only evil comes upon it. The sorest of temporal judgments have their allays; but the torments of the damned are an evil, an only evil.

7. The morning - The fatal morning, the day of destruction. Sounding - Not a mere echo, not a fancy, but a real thing.

10. Is come - Of your wickedness; pride and violence in particular.

11. None - They shall be utterly wasted for their sins. Wailing - The living shall not bewail their dead friends, because they shall judge the dead in a better case than the living.

12. Mourn - Men usually part with their estates grieving that they must transmit their right to others; but let them now think how little a while they could have kept them, and how little time they shall keep them who have bought them.

13. Yet alive - For if any should survive the captivity, yet the conqueror wasting and destroying all, would confound all ancient boundaries. Touching - The evils threatened are designed against all the multitude of Israel. Strengthen - Nor shall any one man of them all he able to secure himself, by any sinful contrivance.

14. They - The house of Israel have summoned in all fit for arms. None - There is not a man going to the war. Wrath - That displeasure which takes away their courage.

15. Without - In the countries. Within - The besieged city. Field - Whoever is in the field.

16. Iniquity - Either for the punishment of their iniquity, or for their iniquity itself.

18. Baldness - Either by pulling off the hair amidst their sorrows, or cutting it off in token of mourning.

19. Cast - That they may be the lighter to fly. Removed - Carried away into Babylon. Not satisfy - They shall afford them no comfort. Stumbling-block - This silver and gold they coveted immeasurably, and abused to pride, luxury, idolatry and oppression; this that they stumbled at and fell into sin, now they stumble at and fall into the deepest misery.

20. The beauty - The temple, and all that pertained to it, which was the beauty and glory of that nation. He set - God commanded it should be beautiful and magnificent. Images - Their idols. Far from them - I have sent them far from the temple.

21. It - My temple.

22. Turn - Either from the Jews, or from the Chaldeans, neither relieving the one nor restraining the other. Secret place - The temple, and the holy of holies. Robbers - The soldiers.

23. A chain - To bind the captives.

24. The pomp - The magnificence and glory, wherein they boasted; or the temple that the Jews gloried in.

26. Seek - But in vain. The priest - He shall have no words either of counsel or comfort to say to them. Ancients - Nor shall their senators know what to advise.

27. The king - Zedekiah. The prince - Every magistrate. Troubled - Hang down, and melt away. What can men contrive or do for themselves, when God is departed from them? All must needs be in tears, all in trouble, when God comes to judge them according to their deserts, and so make them know, that he is the Lord, to whom vengeance belongeth.

## VIII

God in vision brings Ezekiel to Jerusalem, ver. 1-4. There he sees the image of jealousy, ver. 5, 6. The elders of Israel worshipping all manner of images, ver. 7-12. The women weeping for Tammuz, ver. 13, 14. The men worshiping the sun, ver. 15, 16. Threatenings against them, ver. 17, 18.

1. Sixth year - Of Jeconiah's captivity. Sixth month - Elul or our August. The elders - The chief of those that were now in captivity. They were come either to spend the sabbath in religious exercises, or to inquire what would become of their brethren in Jerusalem. The hand - The spirit of prophecy.

2. A likeness - Of a man; the man whom he had seen upon the throne. Fire - This fire might denote the wrath of God against Jerusalem.

3. And - This, and all the passages to the end of the 16th verse, was done in vision only. Inner gate - To the door of the gate of the inner court. The north - The temple courts had four gates towards the four quarters, and this was the north gate, which opened into the great court where Ahaz had set up his Damascen altar, and where the idols were set up. The image - Baal, which Manasseh had set up, Josiah had destroyed, but succeeding kings had again set it up. Jealousy - Because it was so notorious an affront to God, who had married Israel to himself.

5. Northward - Ahaz had removed it from the middle of the court and set it near this north gate, to which it gave name. Entry - In the very passage to the temple, to affront the worship of God.

6. They - The generality of the Jews. Great abominations - The notorious idolatries. Here - In this court, in view of my temple. Far off - Not that they designed this, but no other could be expected.

7. The door - The second door, for there were two in the north side.

8. A door - A private door, by which the priests entered into the chamber of their imagery, to perform idolatrous worship to their images.

9. Are doing - Under the approach of judgments, in this very place, under the walls of my temple.

10. Every form - Of such creatures as the Egyptians, or any others with whom the Jews had acquaintance, worshipped.

11. Seventy - Heads of the tribes or families, who should have been examples of true religion, not ringleaders in idolatry. Shaphan - Mentioned 2 Kings xxii, 9. Shaphan was forward in reforming under Josiah and his son is as forward in corrupting the worship of God.

12. Seeth not - They deny God's care of them and their affairs, and therefore they must chuse some other God.

13. Greater - Either because added to all the rest: or, because some circumstances in these make them more abominable.

14. The door - Of the outer court, or court of the women, so called, because they were allowed to come into it. Weeping - Performing all the lewd and beastly rites of that idol, called by the Greeks, Adonis.

15. Greater - These later wickednesses may be accounted greater, because acted in a more sacred place.

16. Inner court - The innermost, that which was next the temple, called here the Lord's house. At the door - Before he saw abominations in the gates of the courts, now he is come to the very house itself. The porch - That stately porch, beautified with the curious and mighty brass pillars, Jachin and Boaz. Altar - The brazen altar for burnt-offerings, which was placed in the court before the front of the temple, and is here represented in its proper place. Their backs - In contempt of God, and his worship. The sun - In imitation of the Persians, Egyptians, and other eastern idolaters; these Jews turn their back on God who created the sun, and worship the creature in contempt of the Creator.

17. Violence - All injustice is here meant towards all sorts of men, whom they first despise and next destroy. Returned - From injustice against man they return to impiety against God. The branch - As the worshippers of Bacchus waved their Thyrsus, the stalk wreathed with ivy, and bowed their bodies and often kissed the branches, so did these idolatrous Jews.

18. Will not hear - The time was, when God was ready to have heard, even before they cried: but now they cry aloud, and yet cry in vain. It is the upright heart which God regards, and not the loud voice.

## IX

Instruments prepared to destroy the city, ver. 1-2. The glory removes to the threshold of the temple, ver. 3. Orders given to mark a remnant, ver. 3, 4. The execution of them who were not marked begun, ver. 5-7. The prophet intercedes, but in vain, ver. 8-10. The report of him that had marked the remnant, ver. 11.

1. He - The man whom he had seen upon the throne. Them - Those whom God hath appointed to destroy the city: perhaps angels. Every man - Every one; 'tis an Hebrew idiom. Each of these had a weapon proper for that kind of destruction which he was to effect; and so, some to slay with the sword, another with the pestilence, another with famine. In his hand - Denoting both expedition in, and strength for the work.

2. And - As soon as the command was given, the ministers of God's displeasure appear. Men - In appearance and vision they were men, and the prophet calls them as he saw them. The north - Insinuating whence their destruction should come. One man - Not a companion, but as one of authority over them. With linen - A garment proper to the priesthood. They - All the seven.

3. The glory - The glorious brightness, such as sometimes appeared above the cherubim in the most holy place. Gone up - Departing from the place he had so long dwelt in. He was - Wont to sit and appear. Threshold - Of the temple, in token of his sudden departure from the Jews, because of their sins.

4. That sigh - Out of grief for other mens sins and sorrows. Cry - Who dare openly bewail the abominations of this wicked city, and so bear their testimony against it.

5. The others - The six slaughter-men.

6. At my sanctuary - There are the great sinners, and the abominable sins which have brought this on them.

7. And slew - The slaughter also was in vision.

8. Was left - Left alone, now both the sealer, and the slayers were gone.

## X

The scattering the coals of fire upon the city, ver. 1-7. The removal of the glory of God from the temple, ver. 8-22.

2. He - That sat on the throne. Scatter - That it may take fire in all parts, and none may escape.

3. The right side - The north-side, the side towards Babylon, from whence the fire came which consumed the city. The man - Christ, the Lord of angels, who now attend his coming and commands. The cloud - As the sign of God's presence. The inner court - The court of the priests, who were chief in the apostacy.

4. The glory - The visible token of the presence of the God of glory. Went up - In token of his departure from the temple. And stood - Shewing his unwillingness to leave, and giving them time

to return to him, he stands where he might he seen, both by priests and people, that both might be moved to repentance.

5. Was heard - As a mighty and terrible thunder.

6. And stood - Either as one that deferred execution, to try whether the city would repent, or as one who was to give some farther order to the angels, that were to be the ministers of his just displeasure.

7. One Cherub - One of the four. And took - As a servant that reaches what his master would have. Went out - Out of the temple.

9. Looked - Attentively viewed. Beryl stone - Of sea-green.

10. They - The wheels. This intimates the references of providence to each other, and their dependences on each other: and the joint tendency of all to one common end, while their motions appear to us intricate and perplexed, yea, seemingly contrary.

11. When - The wheels moved by the cherubim, or that spirit of life, which moved the living creatures. They went - They were so framed, that they could move on all four sides without the difficulty and delay of turning. Head - Of the living creatures.

12. And - Now he describes both the cherubim and wheels as full of wisdom, and as governed by an excellent wisdom. The wheels - Which the four cherubim had to move, govern, and direct.

13. The wheels - As to their frame and motion. It was cried - Still there was one who guided, as by vocal direction. Unto them - To each of them.

14. Every one - Of the living creatures, chap. i, 6.

17. For - There is a perfect harmony between second causes in their dependence on, and subjection to, the one infinite, wise, good, holy, and just God. The spirit of God directs all the creatures, upper and lower, so that they shall serve the divine purpose. Events are not determined by the wheel of fortune, which is blind, but by the wheels of providence, which are full of eyes.

18. And stood - On the right side of the house, where the cherubim were in the inner court.

19. And every one - The glory, the cherubim, the wheels, all stood, respiting execution, and giving opportunity of preventing the approaching misery. The east gate - The last court, the court of the people.

20. I knew - Either by special assurance as a prophet, or by comparing them with those which he had often seen in the temple.

## XI

God's message of wrath to those who remained secure at Jerusalem, ver. 1-13. A message of comfort to the dejected captives at Babylon, ver. 14-21. The glory of God removes farther, ver. 22, 23. The vision disappears, of which Ezekiel gives an account, ver. 24, 25.

1. Jaazaniah - Not him that is mentioned chap. viii, 11. Pelatiah - Named here for that dreadful sudden death, whereby he became a warning to others.

2. He - The Lord sitting on the cherub.

3. It - The threatened danger and ruin by the Chaldeans. The caldron - This is an impious scoff, yet mixt with some fear of the prophet, Jer. i, 13.

6. Ye - Many murders have you committed yourselves, and you are accountable to God for all those whom the Chaldeans have slain, seeing you persuaded them, thus obstinately to stand out.

7. Bring you forth - Not in mercy, but in wrath, by the conquering hand of Babylon.

9. Deliver you - Defeating all your projects for escape.

10. Will judge - My just judgments shall pursue you, whithersoever you fly.

11. Your caldron - The place of your sufferings; greater are reserved for you in a strange land. Judge you - I will do more against you at Riblah, where the captive king had his children, and others with them, first murdered before his eyes, and then his own eyes put out; Riblah is called the border of Israel: for Syria was adjoining to Israel on the north, and Riblah was on the frontiers of Syria.

13. Pelatiah - Mentioned ver. 1, a principal man among the twenty-five princes, who made all the mischief in Jerusalem. It should seem this was done in vision now, (as the slaying of the ancient men, chap. ix, 6,) but it was an assurance, that when this prophecy was published, it would be done in fact. And the death of Pelatiah was an earnest of the compleat accomplishment of the prophecy. A full end - By slaying all, as this man is cut off.

15. Thy brethren - Thy nearest kindred, which it seems were left in Jerusalem. Their degeneracy is more noted in the repetition of the word brethren. Gone far - Ye are gone far from the Lord; as much as the Heathens accused the Christians of atheism.

16. Say - In vindication of them. Although - The obstinate Jews at Jerusalem will call them apostates; but I the Lord sent them thither, and will own them there. Scattered - Dispersed them in many countries which are under the king of Babylon: yet they are dear to me. A little sanctuary - A little one in opposition to that great temple at Jerusalem. To him they shall flee, and in him they shall be safe, as he was that took hold on the horns of the altar. And they shall have such communion with God in the land of their captivity, as it was thought could be had no where but in the temple.

18. They - They who assemble upon Cyrus's proclamation first, and then upon Darius's proclamation, shall overcome all difficulties, dispatch the journey, and come safely to their own land. Take away - They shall abolish superstition and idolatry from the temple.

19. One heart - Cyrus shall give them leave, and I will give them a heart to return; and on their way shall there be great utility; and, when come to Jerusalem, they shall own me, and my laws, and with one consent, build Jerusalem and the temple, and restore true religion. The stony - That hard, inflexible, undutiful, incorrigible disposition.

21. Heart - Soul and affections. Walketh - Either secretly adhere to, or provide for the service of idols, called here detestable things.

23. Went up - The glory of the Lord removes now out of the city, over which it had stood some time, waiting for their repentance. The mountain - Mount Olivet. He removed thither, to be as it were within call, and ready to return, if now at length in this their day, they would have understood the things that made for their peace.

24. The spirit - The same spirit which carried him to Jerusalem, now brings him back to Chaldea. Went up - Was at an end.

## XII

The prophet by removing his stuff, and quitting his lodgings is a sign of Zedekiah's flight out of Jerusalem, ver. 1-16. By eating his meat with trembling, he is a sign, to set forth the famine and consternation in the city, ver. 17-20. An assurance that these things shall be fulfilled, ver. 21-28.

2. Eyes to see - They have capacity, if they would, to understand, but they will not understand, what thou speakest.

3. Stuff - Vessels or instruments, wherein thou mayest put what is portable.

4. In their sight - Before 'tis quite night, that they, who should learn by this sign, may see and consider it.

5. Dig - Come not through the door, but as one who knows there is a guard upon the door, get to some back part of thy house, and dig there thyself, either to make the greater haste, or to keep all secret; for all will be little enough for them that must act what thou dost represent. Carry out - Through the hole thou hast dug.

6. Bare it - In testimony of the servitude they shall be reduced to, who then must do what servants or beasts were wont to be employed in. Cover thy face - As unwilling to be seen or known. For - I have set thee for a sign to them, and thou shalt tell them the meaning of these things in due time.

7. I brought forth - Here is a transposing of his actions, and rehearsal of that in the first place, which was acted in the second place.

10. Say - Though they inquire not, yet tell them what I mean hereby, that this prophecy is a burden which the kingdom shall groan under. The prince - Zedekiah.

11. I am your sign - My person is the emblem of yours, and my actions of that you shall do. And the like shall be done to you, O inhabitants of Jerusalem. We cannot say concerning our dwelling place, that it is our resting place. For how far we may be tossed from it before we die, we cannot foresee.

12. The prince - Zedekiah. Shall bear - Disguised, as a servant, in hope to conceal himself, chuses the twilight as the time that would best favour his design. They shall dig - This was fulfilled when they broke down the wall to fly, Jer. xxxix, 4. Cover his face - Zedekiah did by this aim at concealing himself.

13. It - Neither the land nor the city; for his eyes will be put out at Riblah.

16. Declare - By relating those sins, for which God was justly angry, and for which he punished them, though they were his own people. Thy - The Chaldeans. See how God brings good out of evil! The dispersion of sinners, who had done God much dishonour and disservice in their own country, proves the dispersion of penitents, who shall do him much honour and service in other countries!

19. The people - Thy fellow captives. And of the land - Those that dwell in the countries round about Jerusalem. Her land - Jerusalem's land, so called because it was the head city thereof. Desolate - Because it shortly shall be laid waste, emptied of inhabitants, wealth and plenty. Violence - Injustice, oppression and tyranny of the Jews toward one another.

22. That proverb - That short saying commonly used. Days - Of wrath and vengeance, are to come a great while hence. Every vision - Threatening vision, which Jeremiah and Ezekiel would fright us with, comes to nothing.

25. I will speak - There has been and shall be a succession of God's ministers, by whom he will speak, to the end of the world. Even in the worst times, God left not himself without witness, but raised up men that spoke for him, and spoke from him.

## XIII

The prophet shews the sin and punishment of the false prophets, ver. 1-16. Of the false prophetesses, ver. 17-23.

2. That prophesy - Out of their own deceiving hearts, not from God.

3. Foolish prophets - Foolish prophets are not of God's sending: for whom he sends, he either finds fit, or makes fit. Where he gives warrant, he gives wisdom. Their own spirit - Not the spirit of God. Seen nothing - God hath shewed them no vision.

4. Thy prophets - Thy prophets, not mine. Like the foxes - Hungry, and ravening, crafty, and guileful. In the deserts - Where want makes them more eager after their prey.

5. Ye - Vain prophets. Gone up - As in a besieged city, whose wall is broken down, a valiant soldier would run up into the breach to repel the enemy; so true prophets partly by prayer, and partly by doctrine, labour to preserve God's people. Hedge - The house of Israel is the Lord's vineyard, through the hedge whereof many breaches are made. To stand - Not with arms, but with fasting, prayer, and repentance.

6. Vanity - Things that have no foundation.

9. Mine hand - My power striking them. In the assembly - Have no seat among the rulers, nor voice among the counsellors. Written - Not registered among those that return, Ezra ii, 1, 2. Enter - They shall never come into the land of Israel. They shall not be written in the book of eternal life, which is written for the just ones of the house of Israel, saith the Chaldea paraphrast.

10. Peace - They told sinners, no harm would happen to them. And those are the most dangerous seducers, who suggest to sinners that which tends to lessen their dread of sin, or their fear of God. These are compared to men who build a slight tottering wall, which others daub with untempered mortar; sorry stuff, that will not bind, nor hold the bricks together: doctrines not grounded on the word of God.

14. Ye shall know - Those that deceived others, will in the end be found to have deceived themselves. And no doom will be more fearful, than that of unfaithful ministers.

15. Accomplish - Fulfil what my prophets foretold.

18. Sew pillows - A figurative speech, expressing the security, which they promised to every one that came to them. Kerchiefs - Triumphal caps, which were made by these prophetesses, and put upon the head of every who one consulted them, and by these they were to interpret, as a promise of victory over the Babylonians. Stature - That is, of every age, whether younger or elder, which

usually is seen by their stature. To hunt - All this is really spreading a net, as hunters do, to catch the prey. Will ye save - Can you preserve them alive, whom you deceive by your promises?

19. Pollute me - Pretending my name for what I never spake. My people - My own people. Handfuls of barley - For a mean reward. To slay - You denounce evil to the best, whom God wilt keep alive. To save - Declaring safety, to the worst, whom God will destroy.

20. There - At Jerusalem. Grow - You promise a flourishing, growing, state to all inquirers; and this is the net with which you hunt souls. Tear them - With violence, and suddenness.

23. See no more vanity - They shall see all their predictions vanish, which shall so confound them, that they shall pretend no more to visions.

## XIV

The elders of Israel come to inquire of the prophet, ver. 1-5. They are ordered to repent, or not to pretend to inquire of God, ver. 6-11. Tho' Noah, Daniel and Job were to pray for the people, yet they would not prevail, ver. 12-21. Yet a remnant shall escape, ver. 22, 23.

1. Elders - Men of note, that were in office and power among the Jews, who were come from Jerusalem.

3. Set up - Are resolved idolaters. The stumbling block - Their idols which were both the object of their sin, and occasion of their ruin.

4. According - According to his desert, I will give answer, but in just judgment.

5. Take - That I may lay open what is in their heart, and discover their hypocrisy, and impiety. Through their idols - It is always through some idol or other, that the hearts of men are estranged from God: some creature has gained that place in the heart, which belongs to none but God.

7. The stranger - Every proselyte. I the Lord - He shall find by the answer, 'twas not the prophet, but God that answered: so dreadful, searching, and astonishing shall my answer be.

8. A sign - Of divine vengeance.

9. The prophet - The false prophet, who speaks all serene, and quiet, in hope of reward. Have deceived - Permitted him to err, or justly left him in his blindness.

13. When - At what time soever.

14. Noah - Who 'tis probable prevailed with God to spare the world for some years, and saved his near relations when the flood came. Daniel - Who prevailed for the life of the wise men of Chaldea. Job - Who daily offered sacrifice for his children, and at last reconciled God to those that had offended.

17. That land - What land soever it be.

19. In blood - In death and destruction, not by the sword.

21. How much more - If they could not be able to keep off one of the four, how much less would they be able to keep off all four, when I commission them all to go at once.

22. Their way - Their sin and their punishment. Comforted - In this proof of the truth of God.

23. Comfort you - That is, you will be comforted, when you compare their case with your own: when they tell you how righteous God was, in bringing these judgments upon them. This will

reconcile you to the justice of God, in thus punishing his own people, and to the goodness of God, who now appeared to have had kind intentions in all.

## XV

God by the similitude of a vine, foreshews the utter destruction of Jerusalem, ver. 1-8.

2. The vine-tree - Israel is here compared to a vine, which, when fruitless, is utterly unprofitable. This the prophet minds them of to humble them, and awaken them to fruitfulness. A branch - One branch of a tree in the forest is of more use than the whole vine- tree is, except for its fruit.

3. A pin - Will it afford even a pin to drive into a wall or post, on which you may safely fasten any weight.

4. For fuel - When for its barrenness it is cut down, it is fit only to burn.

6. Given - Doomed for food to the fire.

8. Because - They have been so perpetually trespassing, that it seems a continued act.

## XVI

The mean beginning of the Jewish church and nation, ver. 1- 5. The many favours God bestowed upon them, ver. 6-14. Their treacherous and ungrateful requital, ver. 15-34. Terrible judgments threatened, ver. 35-43. An aggravation of their sin and of their punishment, ver. 44-59. A promise of mercy to a remnant, ver. 60-63

3. Jerusalem - The whole race of the Jews. Thy birth - Thy root whence thou didst spring. Thy father - Abraham, before God called him, (as his father and kindred) worshipped strange gods beyond the river, Josh. xxiv, 14. An Amorite - This comprehended all the rest of the cursed nations.

4. In the day - In the day I called Abraham to leave his idolatry. Salted - Salt was used to purge, dry, and strengthen the new-born child. Nor swaddled - So forlorn was the state of the Jews in their birth, without beauty, without strength, without friend.

5. To the loathing - In contempt of thee as unlovely and worthless; and in abhorrence of thee as loathsome to the beholder. This seems to have reference to the exposing of the male children of the Israelites in Egypt. And it is an apt illustration of the Natural State of all the children of men. In the day that we were born, we were shapen in iniquity: our understandings darkened, our minds alienated from the life of God: all polluted with sin, which rendered us loathsome in the eyes of God.

6. When I passed by - God here speaks after the manner of men. Live - This is such a command as sends forth a power to effect what is commanded; he gave that life: he spake, and it was done.

7. Thou art come - Thou wast adorned with the choicest blessings of Divine Providence. Thy breasts - Grown up and fashioned under God's own hand in order to be solemnly affianced to God.

8. When I passed - This second passing by, may be understood of God's visiting and calling them out of Egypt. Thy time - The time of thy misery was the time of love in me towards thee. I spread my skirt - Espoused thee, as Ruth iii, 9. Entered into a covenant - This was done at mount Sinai, when the covenant between God and Israel was sealed and ratified. Those to whom God gives spiritual life, he takes into covenant with himself. By this covenant they become his, his subjects and servants; that speaks their duty: and at the same time his portion, his treasure; that speaks their privilege.

9. Washed - It was a very ancient custom among the eastern people, to purify virgins who were to be espoused. And I anointed - They were anointed that were to be married, as Ruth iii, 3.

10. Broidered - Rich and beautiful needle-work. Badgers skin - The eastern people had an art of curiously dressing and colouring the skins of those beasts, of which they made their neatest shoes, for the richest and greatest personages.

11. A chain - Of gold, in token of honour and authority.

14. My comeliness - "That is, thro' the beauty of their holiness, as they were a people devoted to God. This was it that put a lustre upon all their other honours, and was indeed the perfection of their beauty. Sanctified souls are truly beautiful in God's sight, and they themselves may take the comfort of it. But God must have all the glory for whatever comeliness they have, it is that which God has put upon them."

15. Playedst the harlot - Thou didst go a whoring after idols. Thy renown - Her renown abroad drew to her idolatrous strangers, who brought their idols with them. Pouredst out - Didst readily prostitute thyself to them; every stranger, who passed thro' thee, might find room for his idol, and idolatry. He it was - Thy person was at the command of every adulterer.

16. Thy garments - Those costly, royal robes, the very wedding clothes. High places - Where the idol was. With divers colours - With those beautiful clothes I put upon thee. The like things - As there was none before her that had done thus, so shall there be none to follow her in these things.

17. Images - Statues, molten and graven images. Commit whoredom - Idolatry, spiritual adultery. And possibly here is an allusion to the rites of Adonis, or the images of Priapus.

18. Coveredst - Didst clothe the images thou hadst made. Set mine oil - In lamps to burn before them.

19. For a sweet savour - To gain the favour of the idol. Thus it was - All which is undeniable.

20. And those - These very children of mine hast thou destroyed. Sacrificed - Not only consecrating them to be priests to dumb idols; but even burning them in sacrifice to Molech. Devoured - Consumed to ashes. Is this - Were thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast proceeded to this unnatural cruelty?

21. For them - For the idols.

24. In every street - Idol temples were in every street; both in Jerusalem and her cities.

25. At every head of the way - Not content with what was done in the city, she built her idol temples in the country, wherever it was likely passengers would come.

26. Great of flesh - Naturally of a big, make, and men of great stature.

30. How weak - Unstable, like water. An imperious woman - A woman, that knows no superior, nor will be neither guided nor governed.

31. Not as an harlot - Common harlots make gain of their looseness, and live by that gain; thou dost worse, thou lavishest out thy credit, wealth, and all, to maintain thine adulterers.

34. Contrary - Here we may see, what the nature of men is, when God leaves them to themselves: yea, tho' they have the greatest advantage, to be better, and to do better.

38. Blood - Thou gavest the blood of thy children to idols in sacrifice; I will give thee thine own blood to drink.

42. My jealousy - The jealousy whereto you have provoked me, will never cease, 'till these judgments have utterly destroyed you, as the anger of an abused husband ceases in the publick punishment of the adulteress. No more angry - I will no more concern myself about thee.

44. The mother - Old Jerusalem, when the seat of the Jebusites, or the land of Canaan, when full of the idolatrous, bloody, barbarous nations. Her daughter - Jerusalem, or the Jews who are more like those accursed nations in sin, than near them in place of abode.

45. Thou - The nation of the Jews. Thy mother's daughter - As much in thy inclinations, as for thy original. Loatheth - That was weary of the best husband.

46. Thine elder sister - The greater for power, riches, and numbers of people. Her daughters - The lesser cities of the kingdom of Israel. Thy left hand - Northward as you look toward the east. Thy younger sister - Which was smaller and less populous. Thy right hand - Southward from Jerusalem.

47. Not walked after their ways - For they, all things considered, were less sinners than thou. Nor done - Their doings were abominable, but thine have been worse.

49. This was - The fountain and occasion of all. Fulness of bread - Excess in eating and drinking. Strengthen - She refused to help strangers.

51. Hast justified - Not made them righteous, but declared them less unrighteous, than thou; of the two they are less faulty.

52. Hast judged - Condemned their apostacy, and hast judged their punishment just.

53. When - Sodom and Samaria never were restored to that state they had been in; nor were the two tribes ever made so rich, mighty, and renowned, though God brought some of them out of Babylon: the words confirm an irrecoverably low, and despised state, of the Jews in their temporals. Then - Then, not before.

54. A comfort - Encouraging sinners like those of Sodom and Samaria.

56. Not mentioned - The sins of Sodom, and her plagues, were not minded or mentioned by thee.

57. Before - The time of her pride was, when they were not yet afflicted, and despised by the Syrians. And all - The nations that were round about and combined in league against the house of David. Her - Syria, the chief whereof were the Philistines.

58. Thy lewdness - The punishment thereof.

59. In breaking the covenant - So will I break my covenant with thee.

60. Nevertheless - The Lord having denounced a perpetual punishment to the impenitent body of the Jewish nation, doth now promise to the remnant, that they shall be remembered, and obtain covenanted mercy. My covenant - In which I promised I would not utterly cut off the seed of Israel, nor fail to send the redeemer, who should turn away iniquity from Jacob. With thee - In the loins of Abraham, and solemnly renewed after their coming out of Egypt, which is the time, called the days of thy youth, Isaiah xliv, 2. Establish - Confirm and ratify. It shall be sure, and unfailing. An

everlasting covenant - Of long continuance, as to their condition in the land of Canaan, and in what is spiritual, it shall be absolutely everlasting.

61. Then - When that new covenant shall take effect. Receive - Admit into church-communion, the Gentiles, now strangers, but then sisters. Thine elder - Those that are greater and mightier than thou; that by their power, wealth and honour are as much above thee as the elder children are above the younger. Thy younger - Thy lesser or meaner sister. For daughters - As daughters hearken to, and obey, so shall the Gentiles brought into the church, hearken to the word of God, which sounded out from Jerusalem. But not - Not by that old covenant which was violated; nor by external ceremonies, which were a great part of the first covenant, but by that covenant which writes the law in the heart, and puts the fear of God into the inward parts.

63. Open thy mouth - Neither to justify thyself, or to condemn others, or to quarrel with thy God. Because of thy shame - Such a confusion for thy sin will cover thee. Indeed the more we feel of God's love, the more ashamed we are that ever we offended him. And the more our shame for sin is increased, the more will our comfort in God be increased also.

## XVII

The parable of two eagles and a vine, ver. 1-10. The application of it, ver. 11-21. A promise to raise the house of David again, ver. 22-24.

2. A riddle - A dark saying. The house of Israel - The remainders of the house of Israel, whether of the ten, or of the two tribes.

3. A great eagle - Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is compared to a great eagle, the king of birds, swift, strong, rapacious. Great wings - Mighty provinces on each side of his kingdom. Long winged - His kingdom was widely extended. Full of feathers - And full of people. Divers colours - Who were of divert nations, languages and manners. Lebanon - Jerusalem the chief city of the country where this great, fruitful and pleasant hill was. And took - Took, captive and carried away with him the king of Judah, Jehoiachin. The cedar - The nation.

4. The top - Both the king of Judah, now eighteen years old, and the nobles and chief of the land. Into a land - Babylon, which was a city of mighty trade.

5. The seed - Mattaniah, whom he called Zedekiah. Planted - Settled him on the throne of Judah. As a willow - The prophet compares this new made king to a willow, which grows no where so well as near great waters.

6. Of low stature - They grew and flourish, while they owned their state tributary to Babylon. Toward him - Nebuchadnezzar as their protector, and sovereign Lord. The roots - All the firmness, fruitfulness, and life of this state, was in subjection to him.

7. Another - The king of Egypt. This vine - Zedekiah, his nobles and people. Did bend - Sought his friendship. Shot forth - Sent ambassadors, and trusted to the power of Egypt. Water it - That they might add to their greatness, as trees grow by seasonable watering them. By the furrows - Alluding to the manner of watering used in Egypt, by furrows or trenches to convey the water from the river Nile.

8. Was planted - By Nebuchadnezzar, in a very hopeful condition, where it might have been fruitful, and flourished.

9. Say - Tell them what will be the issue of all this, and tell it to them in my name. It prosper - Shall Zedekiah and his people thrive by this? Pull up - Utterly overthrow this kingdom. Cut Off - Put to the sword the children of Zedekiah, and of the nobles. The leaves - All the promising hope they had shall vanish. Without great power - The king of Babylon shall do this easily, when it is God that sends him. For God needs not great power and many people, to effect his purposes. He can without any difficulty overturn a sinful king and kingdom, and make no more of it than we do of rooting up a tree that cumbers the ground.

10. Yea - Suppose this vine were planted by the help of Egypt. The east wind - When the king of Babylon, who like the blasting wind comes from the northeast, shall but touch it, it shall wither. In the furrows - Even amidst its greatest helps, to make it flourish.

15. He - Zedekiah. Shall he break - Can perjury be the way for deliverance?

18. Given his hand - Solemnly confirming the oath.

20. Plead - I will punish him.

21. All - Not strictly, but the greatest part.

22. The highest branch - Of the royal seed; of the highest branch that is heir to the throne; namely, the Messiah. An high mountain - Upon mount Zion. Eminent - Not for outward splendour, but for spiritual advantages.

23. In the mountain - In Jerusalem. All fowl - All nations. In the shadow - There they shall find peace and safety.

24. The trees - The great ones on earth. The high tree - The kingdom of Babylon, which was brought low indeed, when overthrown by Darius and Cyrus.

## XVIII

God reproves a corrupt proverb, ver. 1-4. It shall be well with the righteous, ver. 5-9. but ill with the wicked man, tho' he had a good father, ver. 10-13. It shall be well with a good man, tho' he had a wicked father, ver. 14-18. Therefore God is righteous, ver. 19-20. It shall be well with penitents, but ill with apostates, ver. 21-29. An exhortation to repentance, ver. 30-32.

2. The land of Israel - The two tribes, not the ten. The fathers - Our fore-fathers. Have eaten - Have sinned. The childrens - We their children, who were unborn, suffer for their sins.

4. Behold - There can be no colour of partial judgment in the proceedings of God, who is equally God to all. All souls - All persons. The soul - The person, whether father or son, shall die, shall bear his own punishment.

6. Hath not eaten - Hath not committed idolatry, offering sacrifice, and eating of the things sacrificed to idols; whose temples and altars were on mountains, chap. 20. & 28. Hosea iv, 13.

8. Increase - Illegal interest. Iniquity - Injustice of every kind.

9. Shall live - Shall be delivered from famine, pestilence, and sword, and shall see good days.

13. His blood - Hebrew. 'Tis plural, bloods; both the blood of the innocent which he murdered, and his own blood which thereby he forfeited; the blood of his own soul and life: that is the whole blame of his misery in time and eternity, shall lie upon himself.

17. Hath taken off - Withdrawn his hand from hurting or wronging the poor, tho' he had power to do it securely.

20. Shall not bear - This is a most unquestionable truth; and tho' perhaps it may seem otherwise in some cases, yet could we see perfectly the connection between persons and persons; could we see the connection of sins and sins, and how easily, secretly, and undiscerned men become guilty of the same sins, we should see father and son, though perhaps one of them might not do the evil, both guilty, and neither punished for the sin farther than if it was his own: nor do the scriptures, Exod. xx, 5 Deut. xxviii, 18, doom persons to punishment for sins from which they are wholly free; but if children shall follow their fathers in sin, then if they die for those sins, 'tis because these are their own, not as they are their fathers. The righteousness - It shall be well with the righteous, for he shall eat the fruit of his doing, he shall be rewarded as a righteous one. The wickedness - The reward of wickedness. "The son shall not die, not die eternally, for the iniquity of the father, if he do not tread in the steps of it: nor the father for the iniquity of the son, if he do all he can to prevent it.

22. Not mentioned - Not to him.

25. The way - His whole management of affairs. Not equal - Not right, or consistent with his own declaration, and law.

28. He shall surely live - "That is, he shall be restored to the favour of God, which is the life of the soul."

31. Make you a new heart - Suffer me to do it in you.

32. I have no pleasure - Sinners displease God when they undo themselves; they please him when they return.

## XIX

The kingdom of Judah and house of David is compared to a lioness, and their princes to lions taken in nets, ver. 1-9. The kingdom and house are compared to a vine, and these princes to branches, now broken off and burnt, ver. 10-14.

1. For the princes - Jehoahaz, Jehoiachim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.

2. What - What resemblance shall I use to set out the nature, deportment, and state of the mother of these princes? Thy - One of whom was upon the throne at once, and therefore the prophet speaks to one at a time. Mother - The land of Judea, and Jerusalem, the chief city of it, the royal family of David. Lioness - Tho' chosen of God to execute justice; yet they soon degenerated into the fierce and ravening nature of the lioness. Lay down - Associated, and grew familiar with neighbour kings, called here lions; fierce and bloody. Her whelps - Her sons, successors to the crown. Young lions - Either foreign princes and kings, or some of the fierce, unjust, tyrannizing princes at home.

3. Brought up - Advanced, caused him to take the throne after the slaughter of Josiah. One - Jehoahaz the second son of Josiah. Became - Soon shewed his fierce, cruel, and bloody disposition.

4. The nations - The Egyptians heard what he did.

5. Made him - King, and infused the lion-like maxims into him.

6. He - Jehoiachim. Went up - He continued eleven years on the throne; whereas Jehoahaz was taken as soon as he first ventured out. The lions - Heathen kings, with whom he entered into leagues. He became - Fierce, ravenous, unsatiable.

7. He knew - By taking them, he came to know their places, which are here called, what he made them, desolate. Roaring - By the perpetual violent threats of this cruel king.

8. The nations - Which were tributary to Nebuchadnezzar. Set against - By order of the king of Babylon. The provinces - Which belonged to the Babylonish kingdom.

10. Thy mother - O thou prince of Israel. By the waters - In a very fruitful soil. Full of branches - Full of children; when Josiah died, he left four behind him, beside other branches of the royal line.

11. Strong rods - Many excellent persons endowed with qualifications befitting kings, that they might sway the scepter. Exalted - Above the ordinary majesty of other kingdoms. Thick branches - This kingdom equalled, if not excelled, the greatest neighbour-kingdoms, and her kings exceeded all their neighbouring kings, in riches and power.

12. The east wind - God raised up the king of Babylon to pull up this sinful kingdom. Dried up - Blasted all her fruit, deposed her king, captivated him, his family, and the whole kingdom. Strong rods - All the choice men.

13. She - A few of the branches of the last pruning. In the wilderness - Tho' Babylon was in a very fruitful place, yet the cruelty of the Babylonians, made it to the Jews as terrible as a wilderness.

14. Fire - The fire of rebellion, kindled by Zedekiah, who is of the blood-royal. No strong rod - The regal dignity is ceased.

## XX

The prophet consulted by the elders, signifies God's displeasure against them, ver. 1-3. Gives them a history of God's dealings with their fathers, and their treacherous dealings with God in Egypt, ver. 4-9. In the wilderness, ver. 10-26. In Canaan, ver. 27-32. Judgments denounced against them, ver. 33-36. Mercy promised to a remnant, ver. 37-44. A word dropt toward Jerusalem, ver. 45-49.

1. The seventh year - Of Zedekiah's reign, two years and five months before Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. Came - Yet resolved before-hand what they would do.

3. Are ye come - Are ye in good earnest?

4. Wilt thou - Wilt thou not convince and reprove them? And denounce my judgments against them? The abominations - What their fathers have done, they approve, and have outdone; by that let them know what to expect.

5. When I chose - When I shewed that I had chosen them. The history of the rebellions of the children of Israel, begins as early, as their beginning. So does the history of man's apostasy from his Maker. No sooner have we read the story of his creation, but we meet with that of his rebellion. So we see here, it was with Israel; a people designed to represent the body of mankind, both in their dealings with God, and in God's dealing with them. Lifted up my hand - Or stretched out and made bare my arm; that is, magnified my power for their deliverance. When I lifted up mine hand - Shewed my power in performing my oath, and assuring them of doing what was farther promised.

6. I had espied - God speaks after the manner of men. Milk and honey - Literally milk and honey in abundance were in the land of Canaan. Proverbially it speaks the plenty and abundance of all the blessings of life.

7. Of his eyes - To which you have looked for help.

8. To accomplish - To make an end of them.

9. For my name's sake - For the glory of my mercy and faithfulness. Polluted - Reproached and blasphemed.

12. A sign - Of their being peculiarly my people.

13. In the wilderness - Where they most needed my care and favour; where the preserving their life from destruction by the noxious creatures, and from famine by the barrenness of the wilderness, was a continued miracle.

15. I lifted up my hand - I swear. Them - So all the murmuring, disobedient, unbelieving generation was excluded, and their children were brought in.

18. Walk ye not - Live not as your fathers did.

20. Hallow - Remember to keep them holy.

22. I withdrew - God seems to take the posture of one that was just going to smite, yet draws back that he might spare.

23. I lifted - I swear.

25. Wherefore - Because they rejected my good laws and judgments. I gave them - Not by enjoining, but by permitting them to make such for themselves. Not good - That were pernicious to the users.

26. Polluted - I permitted them to pollute themselves. Might know - Be forced to own, that the Lord is a mighty king in punishing those that would not have him a gracious king in governing them.

29. What - What mean you that you go to the high place? What do you find so inviting there, that you will leave God's altar, where he requires your attendance, to frequent such places as he has forbidden you to worship in? Bamah - That is, the high place.

31. Shall I be inquired of - Are you fit to ask counsel of me, whom you have so obstinately forsaken and reproached?

32. And that - God to convince them, tells them what they think and have purposed. Shall not be - Shall be quite frustrated. We will be - Will unite with them in marriages, commerce, and religion too; and then we shall be safe among them.

34. The people - Sidonians, Ammonites, Moabites, or whoever they were, to whom the apostate Jews betook themselves, where they thought to lurk, God will bring them thence into Babylonish captivity.

35. Bring you - Drive you. The wilderness - Into the most horrid parts of the world; into the mountainous parts of Media, Hyrcania, Iberia, Caspia, Albania, and Scythia. Plead with you - Pass sentence, and execute it on you.

36. Your fathers - Who died there, and never entered Canaan.

37. I will cause - I will bring you out by number, so that you shall either own my scepter, or by a conquered subjection, yield to my sword and power. Under the rod - Referring to the manner of shepherds in that country, who did tell their sheep in, and out of the fold. Bring you - The voluntary and obedient into covenant with myself.

38. The rebels - The stubborn sinners.

39. But pollute - But while ye are such idolaters, forbear to take my name into your lips.

40. Mine holy mountain - Sion, God's holy hill, Psalm ii, 6. Holy by designation, and God's own appointing it for his temple and presence. Of the height - Sion, tho' lower than many other hills, yet was above them all for God's peculiar presence. In the land - Their own land. Your offerings - When I have brought you into the land, then I will require your offerings as formerly: you shall see my temple built, Jerusalem filled with inhabitants, and my worship restored.

41. Sanctified - Magnified and praised for the good I do to my people.

43. Remember - Review your former ways with sorrow: remember, and grieve.

46. The south - Look toward Jerusalem, and the land of Canaan. Drop thy word - Let thy word distil, begin with softer words, before thou shower down with the vehemency of a storm. The forest - Jerusalem, which was become like a forest.

47. Every green tree - All that flourish, and all that are poor. All faces - All persons and orders of men, from one end of the land to the other.

49. Parables - So absolutely, that we cannot understand him.

## XXI

An explication of the prophecy in the close of the last chapter, with directions to the prophet upon it, ver. 1-7. A prediction of the sword that was coming on the land, ver. 8-17. A prospect given of the king of Babylon's coming to Jerusalem, to which he was determined by divination, ver. 18-24. Sentence passed on Zedekiah, ver. 25-27. The destruction of the Ammonites, ver. 28-32.

2. The holy places - The temple and all parts of it.

3. The righteous - It is no unusual thing, that in publick calamities, those who are indeed righteous should be involved with others.

4. All flesh - All the Jews that dwell in the land.

5. Shall not return - It shall not return into the scabbard 'till it hath done full execution.

6. Sigh therefore - Thereby express deep sorrow. Breaking of thy loins - Like a woman in travail.

7. Because - The saddest news you ever heard is coming.

9. Furbished - Made clean and bright.

10. Of my son - To whom God saith, Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Psalm ii, 9. This sword is that rod of iron, which despiseth every tree, and will bear it down.

12. It - The devouring sword. Upon thy thigh - In token of thy sense of what they must suffer.

13. If - But if the king and kingdom of Judah despise this trial, both shall be destroyed and be no more.

14. And smite - In token of amazement and sorrow. Of the slain - Wherewith many shall be slain. Privy chambers - Where they were hidden in hope to escape.

15. All their gates - Both of cities, of palaces, and of private houses. Wrapt up - And hath been carefully kept in the scabbard, that it might not be blunted.

16. Go - O sword, take thy own course.

17. Smite my hands - In token of my approbation.

19. Appoint - Paint, or describe them on a tile. One land - That is, Babylon. Chuse - Pitch on some convenient place, where thou mayest place Nebuchadnezzar's army, consulting where this one way divides into two, which was on the edge of the desert of Arabia. At the head - Where each way runs, toward either Rabbath, or Jerusalem; for there Nebuchadnezzar will cast lots.

20. To Judah - The Jews.

21. Stood - The prophet speaks of what shall be, as if it were already. To use - To consult with his gods, and to cast lots. Arrows - Writing on them the names of the cities, then putting them into a quiver, and thence drawing them out and concluding, according to the name which was drawn. He consulted - Perhaps by a divine permission, the devil gave them answers from those images. In the liver - They judged of future events, by the entrails, and more especially by the liver. 22. The divination - The divination which concerned Jerusalem, was managed on his right hand.

23. Them - The Jews. That have sworn - Zedekiah, his princes, and nobles, who swore allegiance to the king of Babylon, these perjured persons will contemn all predictions of the prophet. He - Nebuchadnezzar. The iniquity - The wickedness of their perjury and rebellion. They - Zedekiah, and the Jews with him

24. Your transgressions - Against God, and against the king of Babylon. Discovered - To all in court, city, and country. With the hand - As birds, or beasts in the net, are taken with the hands, so shall you, and be carried into Babylon.

25. And thou - Zedekiah. Whose day - The day of sorrows, and sufferings, and punishment is at hand. Shall have an end - Shall bring the ruin of king and kingdom, and with the overthrow of your state, the means of sinning shall end too.

26. The diadem - The royal attire of the head, which the king daily wore. Shall not be the same - The kingdom shall never be what it hath been. Him that is low - Jeconiah. The advance of this captive king, came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of his captivity.

27. Shall be no more - Never recover its former glory, 'till the scepter be quite taken away from Judah, and way be made for the Messiah. He hath an incontestable right to the dominion both in the church and in the world. And in due time he shall have the possession of it, all adverse power being overturned.

28. Their reproach - Wherewith they reproached Israel in the day of Israel's afflictions.

29. While - While thy astrologers, and soothsayers, deceive thee with fair, but false divinations. To bring thee - To bring thee under the sword of the Chaldeans, and destroy thee as the Jews; to make thee stumble and fall on their necks, as men that fall among a multitude of slain.

30. Shall I cause it - God will by no means suffer the sword to be sheathed. Judge thee - Condemn, and execute.

31. I will blow - As those who melt down metals blow upon the metal in the fire, that the fire may burn the fiercer.

## XXII

A catalogue of the sins of Jerusalem, ver. 1-12. Punishment threatened, ver. 13-16. They are condemned as dross to the fire, ver. 17-22. All orders of men having contributed to the national guilt, must share in the punishment of it, ver. 23-31.

2. Judge - The question is doubled, to awaken the prophet more fully, and to quicken him to his work.

3. Her time - The time of ripeness in her sins, and of execution of judgments on her. To defile - For this does more defile them, and provoke God to wrath against them.

4. Thy days - The days of thy sorrows, and punishment. Art come - Thou art grown up to the eldest years in sin, beyond which thou art not to go.

5. Much vexed - Afflicted, impoverished, and ruined.

6. Every one - Not one to be found of a more merciful temper. To their power - According to their ability.

7. In thee - In Jerusalem.

8. Thou - O Jerusalem. Mine holy things - All mine institutions, temple, sacrifices, feasts.

9. Carry tales - Informers, or persons that for money, give in false witness against the innocent. They eat - Offer sacrifice on the mountains and feast there, in honour of their idols.

10. Discovered - Defiled their fathers bed.

13. Smitten mine hand - In testimony of my abhorrence.

14. Endure - Withstand the evils that are coming, or bear them when come.

16. In thyself - Whereas I was thine inheritance so long as thou wert a holy, obedient people; now be an inheritance to thyself, if thou canst.

18. Dross - Utterly degenerate, and base metal. The furnace - The afflictions I have laid upon them have not bettered them. The dross - While they loved mercy, did justly, walked humbly with their God, they were as silver; now they are but dross.

19. Gather you - From all parts. I will, by a secret over-ruling providence, bring you into Jerusalem, as into a furnace, where you may be consumed.

23. Her - The land of Israel. Not cleansed - Though God's judgments have been as violent floods; and as hottest fires. Nor rained upon - Yet neither thy filth hath been carried away, nor thy dross melted out of thee. Therefore thou shalt be deprived of the rain, that should cool thy thirsty land.

25. A conspiracy - A contrivance, to speak all alike, smooth words, and give out promises of peace and safety. Thereof - Of the land. The treasure - As a reward of their lies. Made her - By persuading Zedekiah to hold out the war, which filled Jerusalem with dead husbands, and forlorn widows.

26. My holy things - Sacrifices, and oblations. Put no difference - Neither have they in their practice, differenced holy and profane, nor in their teaching acquainted the people with the difference, nor in the exercise of their authority, separated the profane from the holy, either persons, or things. Hid their eyes - Despised, and would not see the holiness of the sabbaths. Profaned - Contemned, dishonoured, disobeyed.

27. Destroy souls - Ruin families; cutting off the fathers, and impoverishing the widow, and fatherless.

28. Daubed them - Flattered them, in their ways of sin. Untempered mortar - With promises that like ill-tempered mortar, will deceive them, though all seems at present smooth and safe.

30. I sought - God speaks after the manner of men. A man - Any one, among princes, prophets, priests, or people, to repair the breach. And stand - Interpose between a sinful people, and their offended God, and intreat for mercy. But - All were corrupted.

## XXIII

The apostacy of Israel and Samaria from God, ver. 1-8. Their ruin, ver. 9, 10. The apostacy of Judah and Jerusalem from God, ver. 11-21. Their ruin, ver. 22-35. The joint wickedness of them both, ver. 36- 44. And their joint ruin, ver. 45-49.

2. Two women - Judah, and Israel, two kingdoms.

3. Whoredoms - Idolatry.

4. Aholah - That is, his own tabernacle; for Israel falling off from the house of David, fell off from the tabernacle, or temple of God; so that all the temple they had was of their own making. The elder - Greater for number of tribes, and for power, wealth, and for multitudes of people. Aholibah - That is, my tabernacle in her: the two tribes had the temple of God with them. Mine - By solemn marriage-covenant. Bare sons - Were fruitful and brought forth children to me; they increased in numbers of people; and among these, some there were that were children of God by faith, love, and obedience.

5. Played the harlot - United in idolatry, with the Assyrians. Mine - When under my government, and protection.

6. Horsemen - Skillful in riding, and well furnished with choice horses.

7. With all - Other nations, with whom she had commerce.

10. Discovered - Stript her naked, and exposed her to shame. Took her sons - Captives. Slew her - The kingdom of Israel, under Hoshea, was by Salmanesar utterly destroyed. They - The Assyrians, had executed God's just displeasure upon her.

15. Girded - With soldiers belts, which includes the rest of the habit of soldiers. In dyed attire - Both rich, comely, large, and of divers colours. Princes - Of princely aspect and majesty.

17. Alienated - She grew weary of the Chaldeans.

18. Discovered - Made it appear to all, far and near.

19. By - Remembering her idolatries in Egypt, her alliance with it in days past, which she now resolved to act over again.

20. Paramours - The nations, that were confederate with the Egyptians.

23. Pekod - Pekod is the province between Tigris, and Lycus; in this was old Nineveh. Shoa - Either Sia in Armenia, or the Sohia, among which were the Adiabeni, and this contained the middle part of the kingdom of Babylon. Koa - This bordered upon Media, the inhabitants were called Kohai, and dwelt about Arbela. And all - All subjects of the Assyrian monarchy.

24. And wheels - Lest in their march the carriage wheels should break, a store of these were provided. An assembly - A mighty confluence of people. I will set - Give them a power in right of conquest over their rebels, as well as mine, and I will give them a spirit of judgment to discern the greatness of this people's sins. Judge - Condemn, and execute sentence upon thee. According - To their will, power, wrath, and custom, against rebels; for these are their rules of judgment.

25. I will set my jealousy - As a jealous provoked husband, I will be as much against thee as they are. Thy residue - Either the people, who hid themselves in vaults and cellars, or what the Chaldeans cannot carry away, all this shall be devoured by fire.

29. Take away - Deprive thee of the comfortable use of all thy labour, which they will exact of thee in captivity.

32. It - Is large, and contains what will last many years, even 'till the seventy years be expired.

34. Thou - Shalt stagger with sorrows, that shall intoxicate, and astonish. Suck it out - The dregs shalt thou drink, and multiply thine own sorrows. Break the sheards - To suck out what remains. And pluck - Revenging thyself upon thyself.

35. Bear thou - The guilt, I will impute it, the punishment, I will not pardon it.

38. In the same day - When they had newly polluted themselves with idolatry and murder, they thrust into the temple.

39. My house - Nay, these things have been in my house.

40. Wash thyself - After the manner of harlots.

41. Sattest - Prepared to feast them. A stately bed - A magnificent bed, on which women sat to feast, when men leaned on their sides. Incense - Offered to their idols.

42. A voice - A shout for joy, that there was a treaty of peace between the Jews, and the Chaldeans.

45. Righteous men - Men that keep the law of their God.

46. Upon them - Against the Jews, the children of this Aholibah.

47. The company - The Babylonian army.

48. Lewdness - Idolatry. And indeed we do not read of any after their return out of this captivity.

49. They - The Babylonians. The sins - The guilt of worshipping idols; and you shall bear the punishment of idolaters.

## XXIV

By the sign of flesh boiling in a pot are shewed, the miseries of Jerusalem during the siege, ver. 1-14. By the sign of Ezekiel's not mourning for his wife is shewed, that the approaching calamities would be to great to be lamented, ver. 15- 27.

1. In the ninth year - Of Zedekiah's reign. Came unto me - The prophet was now in Babylon.

2. Set himself - Sat down to besiege.

4. Every good piece - All the chief of the inhabitants of the land, the wealthiest, who will fly from their country-houses to live in safety in Jerusalem: the most war-like, who will betake themselves to Jerusalem for its defense. Fill it - With those pieces that are biggest, fullest of marrow, and which are divided according to the bones; these are the principal members of the state, the king, princes, priests, magistrates, and the most wealthy citizens.

5. The bones - Not of the pieces to be boiled, but of the many innocents murdered in Jerusalem; for their blood crieth for vengeance, and their bones scattered on the face of the earth, will both make and maintain this fire.

6. The bloody city - Jerusalem. Whose scum - Her wickedness is still within her. Piece by piece - One piece after another 'till all be consumed. No lot - Lots are for saving some, but here shall be no sparing any.

7. The blood - Innocent blood which she hath shed. The top of a rock - Where it might be long seen. To cover it - These butchers of innocent ones leave their blood uncovered.

8. I have set - I will openly punish, and in such a manner as shall not be soon forgotten.

10. And spice it well - To express this justice, that is acceptable to God and men. The bones - The greatest, strongest, and firmest of the Jews shall perish in this fiery indignation.

11. The filthiness - A type of the unreformed sinfulness of the city. Molten - That their wickedness may be taken away with their persons, and city.

12. She - Jerusalem. With lies - Her allies, their promises, their forces, and their idols, all prove a lie to the house of Judah. Her scum - Her unrepented sins shall be punished in the fire that burns their city.

13. Lewdness - Or obstinacy and boldness. Purged thee - Used all means to purge thee.

16. With a stroke - A sudden stroke, by my own immediate hand. We know not how soon the desire of our eyes may be removed from us. Death is a stroke, which the most pious, the most useful, the most amiable are not exempted from.

17. Bind the tire - Adorn thy head, as thou wast used to do; go not bare-headed as a mourner. Thy shoes - ln great mournings the Jews went bare-footed. Cover not thy lips - It was a custom among them to cover the upper lip. Eat not - Of thy neighbours and friends, who were wont to visit their mourning friends, and send in choice provision to their houses.

18. I spake - Told them what I expected would be.

21. Profane - Cast off, and put into the hands of Heathens. The excellency of your strength - So it was while God's presence was there. The desire - As much your desire, as my wife was mine; most dear to you.

22. Ye shall do - When you are in captivity, where you may not use your own customs.

23. Pine away - You shall languish with secret sorrow, when you shall not dare to shew it openly.

25. Their strength - Their walls and fortifications. The joy - All their public and private joys and hopes shall be destroyed in the destruction of the kingdom, and their children.

26. To hear it - To give thee a narrative of all he had seen.

27. No more dumb - From this prophecy for eighteen months during the siege, he does not prophesy of Israel, but of other nations. Thou shalt be a sign - Until the event shall convince the Jews, thou shalt by sign, signify to them, what is coming.

## XXV

A prophesy against the Ammonites, ver. 1-7. The Moabites, ver. 8-11. The Edomites, ver. 12-14. And the Philistines, ver. 15- 17.

3. Aha - When thou shouldest have pitied, thou didst proudly insult over my people.

4. The men of the east - The Arabians, associates of Nebuchadnezzar, who recompensed their service, with giving them this country when it was conquered, as it was five years after the desolation of Jerusalem.

5. Rabbah - The royal city, called since Philadelphia from the king of Egypt who built it. The Ammonites - The land they dwelt in.

7. Know - Thus God will bring those that were strangers to him into an acquaintance with him, and it will be a blessed effect of their calamities. How much better is it, to be poor and know God, than to be rich, and ignorant of him?

8. Seir - The seed of Esau, the Edomites. Seir was the mountain where they first planted themselves. Is like - Are no more a select people than others.

9. The side - That part of his country which was best fortified. Bethjeshimoth - An ancient city; it was a fortress toward the desert, which watched lest any should make an inroad on the country.

10. With the Ammonites - As I have given Ammon, so I will with them give Moab to the Chaldeans, who will give it to the Arabians.

13. Teman - A country in the southern coast of Edom. Dedan - Adjoining to Edom.

15. It - Israel.

16. The Cherethim - The bowmen, the strength of Philistia. The remnant - Who had escaped the sword of Samuel, David, Hezekiah, and of Psammetichus king of Egypt.

## XXVI

The sin of Tyre, ver. 1, 2. The utter destruction of it, ver. 3- 14. The astonishment of the neighbouring nations, ver. 15-21.

1. In the eleventh year - Of Jechoniah's captivity, the year wherein Jerusalem was taken. The month - That month which followed the taking of Jerusalem.

2. Because - Probably God revealed this to the prophet as soon as these insulting Tyrians spoke it. The gates - The great mart of nations, people from all parts. She is turned - The trading interest will turn to me.

4. Scrape - I will leave thee nothing; thou shalt be scraped, and swept, that not so much as dust shall remain in thee. Like - As bare as was the rock on which thy city is built.

6. Her daughters - The lesser cities. In the field - On the firm land.

11. Garrisons - Bastions, or forts, or triumphal arches.

12. Shall lay - It had been a quicker way, to have burnt all; but the greedy soldier might dream of treasures hid in walls, or under the timber, and therefore take the pains to pull all down, and throw it into the sea.

14. No more - Tho' there was a city of that name built, yet it was built on the continent; and in propriety of speech, was another city.

15. The isles - Isles which are places freest from danger of invasions, will shake with fear, when they learn that Tyre is fallen.

16. The princes - Who were lords of the islands of that sea. Come down - In token of condolence. Trembling - They shall be afraid of their own concerns, and astonished in the midst of their fears.

18. In the sea - At a great distance, and farther from land. Departure - Leaving thy ancient dwelling, to go into captivity.

19. The deep - Nebuchadnezzar's army. Great waters - Great afflictions.

20. Bring thee down - When I shall slay thee, and throw thee into the grave. With the people - Who are long since dead, and gone to eternity. The low parts - Another description of the grave, from the situation and solitude of it. Set glory - Then I will restore the beauty, strength, and wealth of Israel, and bring them back to Jerusalem. In the land - In the land of Judea, called, land of the living, because a land, where God will bless, and give life by his word, ordinances, and spirit: thus different shall Tyre's captivity and Jerusalem's be.

21. A terror - To all that hear of thee.

## XXVII

A large account of the wealth, splendour and trade of Tyre, ver. 1-25. Its utter ruin, and the consternation of its neighbours, ver. 26-36.

2. A lamentation - We ought to mourn for the miseries of other nations, as well as of our own, out of an affection for mankind in general; yea, tho' they have brought them upon themselves.

3. At the entry - Hebrew. Entrances. She was about four furlongs, or half an English mile from the continent, as it were in the very door of the sea.

5. They - The shipwrights. Shipboards - The planks and benches, or transoms for their ships. Fir-trees - Of the best and finest fir- trees. Lebanon - Whose cedars excelled others.

6. With box - From the isles, and parts about the Ionian, Aegean, and other seas of the Mediterranean, where box-tree is a native, and of great growth and firmness, fit to saw into boards for benches; they were conveyed to Tyre, where their artists inlaid these box boards with ivory, and made them beautiful seats in their ships.

7. The isles of Elishah - Probably the sea-coast of Aeolis in the lesser Asia, the inhabitants whereof were excellent in the skill of dying wool. Which covered - He speaks of the coverings they used in their ships or galleys: their tilts, as our boat-men call them.

8. Zidon - An ancient town and haven of Phoenicia, not far from Tyre. Arvad - Or Aradus, an island belonging to Phoenicia, twenty furlongs from the continent. Mariners - Rowers in thy galleys;

the rich Tyrians would not employ their own in such servile works, they hired strangers. Wise men - Thy learned men: for navigation was the great study of the Tyrians.

9. The ancients - Old experienced workmen. Gebal - A town of Phoenicia near the sea. The wise men - Skilful in their trades. Were in thee - Who dwelt in Tyre for gain. All the ships - Ships from all parts of the sea, full of mariners, not only to manage the ships at sea, but to offer their service to the Tyrians for bringing in, or carrying out their wares.

10. Lud - Lydians, not those Cresus was king over, but those that dwelt in Egypt about the lake Maraeolis. Phut - Lybians, a people of Africa; these were their hired soldiers. Hanged the shield - In time of peace. They set forth - These stout, expert, well armed guards, were an honour to thee.

11. With - Mixed with other hired soldiers. The Gammadim - Probably men of Gammade, a town of Phoenicia.

13. Javan - The Grecians, particularly the Ionians. Tubal - The Asiatic Iberians, and the Albanians toward the Caspian sea. Meshech - The Cappadocians. They traded - Brought men to sell for slaves.

14. Of the house - Of the country. Togarmah - Armenia the lesser, Phrygia, Galatia, or Cappadocia. Horsemen - It is likely they might sell grooms, as best able to manage, and keep those horses.

15. Isles - In the Indian seas, and in the Red-sea traded with thee. Horns - Elk's horns, or wild goats. Ebony - Is a very solid, heavy, shining, black wood, fit for many choice works.

16. The multitude - The abundance of the Tyrian manufactures.

17. Minnith - The name of an excellent wheat country. Pannag - Some obscure place, which now is forgotten.

19. Javan - In the isle of Meroe, in Egypt.

20. Dedan - The posterity of Abraham by Keturah, who dwelt in Arabia, and were sheep-masters. Clothes - With which they lined their chariots.

22. Sheba - A country in Arabia Felix. Raamah - Another people of the same Arabia.

23. Haran - In Mesopotamia, where Abraham dwelt. Canneh - This is supposed to be the same with Calneh, Gen. x, 10, afterwards Ctesiphon, a pleasant city on Tigris. Ashur - Assyria. Chilmad - A country between Assyria and Parthia.

25. The ships - The ships from all parts of the sea. Did sing - Had their songs to commend thy state.

26. Thy rowers - Thy governors and counsellors. Great waters - Dangers and difficulties. The east wind - The king of Babylon with his army. Hath broken - As surely will, as if he had already done it. In the midst - Where thou thoughtest thyself impregnable.

27. All thy company - All that are men fit for war, in the multitudes of people that are in thee. Shall fall - These all shall fall together.

28. The suburbs - The suburbs, which are nearest the sea, shall first hear the out-cries of pilots, and mariners.

29. Shall come down - ln the allegory of a miserable shipwreck, the prophet sets forth the fall of Tyre; and in this verse he represents them all shifting out of the sinking ship, in great confusion.

30. Wallow themselves in ashes - As men use to do in their greatest mournings.

32. In the sea - Alas! what was once her safeguard, is now her grave.

33. Went forth - Were landed. Thou filledst - There was enough to supply to the full.

34. By the seas - The Babylonians, that like seas shall swell, roar, and break in upon thee.

35. Troubled - They shall not be able to conceal the discomposure of their mind, but will shew it in their countenance.

36. Shall hiss - Will mock at thy fall.

## XXVIII

A prediction of the ruin of the king of Tyre, ver. 1-10. A lamentation for him, ver. 11-19. A prediction of the destruction of Zidon, ver. 20-23. The restoration of Israel, ver. 24-26.

2. Hast said - In thy heart. In the seat of God - Safe and impregnable as heaven itself. A man - Subject to casualties, sorrows, and distresses. Set thine heart - Thou hast entertained thoughts, which become none but God.

3. Wiser - In thy own thoughts. Daniel - Who was then famous for his wisdom.

7. The beauty - Those beautiful things, in which thy wisdom appeared.

10. The deaths - Temporal and eternal. Of the uncircumcised - Of the wicked, an accursed death.

12. Thou sealest up - Thou fanciest that fulness of wisdom, and perfection of beauty are in thee.

13. In Eden - In the midst of all delights. The workmanship - Now the prophet notes their joys, musick, and songs, both to loud, and to softer musick, as the lute, and tabret in the day of their kings coronation, and all this on instruments of most exquisite make, and of their own artists work; in this they exceeded as in the other. Created - King: in the day of thy coronation.

14. Cherub - For thy wisdom, power, and excellency, like a cherub, or angel; for the sacredness of thy person, and office, as the anointed of God; for the exercise of thy power, as a shield, as a protector of the weak. And I - I, whom thou forgetest have made thee so. Thou wast - Thou wast advanced to kingly dignity, (which David calls a mountain, Psalm xxx, 7,) a sacred office, and of divine institution. In the midst - Surrounded with stones, that sparkle like fire.

15. Thou wast perfect - Is not this an irony?

16. I will cast - Out thy kingly dignity.

17. Corrupted - Depraved, or lost thy wisdom. Behold thee - That thou mayst be a spectacle, and warning to them.

18. I will bring thee - Thou shalt be burnt to ashes, and trampled under feet.

19. All - All that have formerly known thy riches, power, allies, and wisdom.

22. Zidon - A city, northwest from Canaan, a king's seat of old, and from which Tyre descended. I will be glorified - When my judgments make my justice, power and truth appear, both you, and others shall confess my glory. Sanctified - Owned as holy, reverenced as just, obeyed as sovereign.

23. And blood - Bloody war by an enemy, that shall bring the war to the gates, nay into the streets of Zidon. Judged - Be punished in the midst of the city. The sword - By the sword of her enemies.

24. A pricking briar - By these two metaphors the prophet points out the troublesome neighbours of the Jews, such as Moab, Ammon, Edom, Tyre, and Zidon. This never had a full accomplishment yet. But it will, for the scripture cannot be broken.

25. Sanctified - I was dishonoured by the Jews in the sight of the heathen, and I will be honoured by the Jews in their sight.

## XXIX

A prediction of the destruction of Pharaoh, for his treacherous dealing with Israel, ver. 1-7. A prediction of the desolation of Egypt, ver. 8-12. A promise of the restoration thereof in part, ver. 13-16. A prediction of Nebuchadrezzar's passing it, ver. 17-20. A promise of mercy to Israel, ver. 21.

1. The tenth year - Of Jeconiah's captivity.

3. The great dragon - The crocodile; our prophet, as well as Isaiah, compares the Egyptian king to that devouring serpent, or dragon. That lieth - Not only at rest, but waiting for prey. My river - My kingdom, power, riches, and forces, all the strength and glory of Egypt.

4. Put hooks - The Allegory is continued. The fish - The people of Egypt. To stick - To adhere to their king.

5. Leave thee - When thus brought out, I will leave thee. The wilderness - The deserts of Libya and Syene. All the fish - The whole army of the Egyptians. The open fields - There was this king and his army ruined. Gathered - These were not buried, but left in the wilderness, a prey to wild beasts, and birds.

7. Rent - Didst them much mischief instead of benefiting them, as thou hast promised, Jer. xxxvii, 7.

10. Syene - Boundary between Ethiopia and Egypt; that is, all Egypt from northeast to southwest.

11. Forty years - These forty years began about the thirtieth year of Jeconiah's captivity, and end with the seventieth year of the captivity, which was the first of Cyrus.

14. Pathros - The southern part of Egypt, in which was the famous city Thebae, known for its hundred gates. Their habitation - The ancient habitation of their fathers. A base - A low, tributary, dependent kingdom.

15. No more rule - Though in the times of the Ptolemeys, it was considerable, yet then, even then it did not rule the nations about her.

16. Which - Which sinful reliance on the arm of flesh provoked God to call to mind their other iniquities. When - When they forgot God, and respected Egypt. They - The house of Israel.

17. In the seven and twentieth year - Of Jeconiah's captivity, the year after the conquest of Tyre.

18. Caused - The army, and commanders were weary of the siege, but the immovable resolution of the king kept them on. A great service - It was service to the justice of God. It was great service both for hardness of work, heaviness of burdens, and length of the siege, thirteen years together. Made bald - Through age, or sicknesses, or continued wearing of helmets. Peeled - Galled with carrying burdens. No wages - For though Tyre was very rich, when first besieged, much wealth was carried away during the siege, much spent and wasted in the siege, and what was left, preserved by articles of surrender.

19. Her multitude - Common people, who shall be made captives, and servants or slaves. Her prey - What she had before taken from others. The wages - God will be behind-hand with none, who do any service for him; one way or other he will recompence them. None shall kindle a fire at his altar for nought.

20. They - The Babylonians. For me - God's work was doing by them, tho' they thought nothing less.

21. The horn - Jehoiakim, who was then advanced by Evil- Merodach. The opening of the mouth - Thou shalt have liberty, to open thy mouth in comforting the good among them, and to give praise to God.

## XXX

The steps by which Nebuchadrezzar would destroy Egypt, ver. 1-19. A repetition of a former prophecy against it, ver. 20-26.

2. Ye - Inhabitants of Egypt.

3. A cloudy day - So times of trouble are called. Of the heathen - The time when God will reckon with the Heathens.

4. Ethiopia - The neighbour and ally to Egypt. Take away - Into miserable captivity. Her foundations - Their government, laws, and strong holds.

5. Lydia - Not the Asiatic, but the Africans placed between some part of Cyrene and Egypt. The mingled people - The hired soldiers from all parts, a confused mixture of nations. And Chub - The inhabitants of the inmost Libya; perhaps they may be the Nubians at this day. The men - All the allies of Egypt. With them - With the Egyptians.

6. Upheld - Those that favour and help her. The pride - The glory of all her strength.

7. They - All those before mentioned.

8. Destroyed - The fire that consumes nations is of God's kindling: and when he sets fire to a kingdom, all they that go about to quench the fire, shall be consumed by it.

9. Messengers - Such as having escaped the sword, shall tell the news. From me - By my permission and providence. In ship's - Messengers by ships might carry the news to both the Ethiopian, Asian, and African, by the Red-sea. As in the day - During the mighty havock made by the Chaldeans. It - A like storm.

11. His people - His own subjects, not hired soldiers.

12. The rivers dry - Probably the Chaldeans diverted them, and so their fortified towns wanted one great defense. Sell - Give it up entirely.

13. Noph - Memphis, now Grand Cairo, the chief city of the country. A prince - Either an Egyptian born, or independent, and over all Egypt. A fear - Consternation and cowardice.

14. In Zoan - Zoan shall be burnt down to ashes. In No - A great and populous city situate on one of the mouths of the Nile.

15. Sin - Pelusium, which was the key of Egypt, and therefore always well fortified, and strongly garrisoned.

16. Shall be rent - Her walls, and towers, and fortresses broken through by the violence of engines, and by the assaults of the soldiers.

17. Young men - 'Tis probable these might be a body of valiant youths, collected out of these ten cities. Aven - Bethshemesh, or Heliopolis, an idolatrous city, in which was a stately temple of the sun: an hundred and fifty furlongs, that is six miles and three quarters in compass. Phibeseth - Bubastus, sometimes called Hoephestus, not far from Aven.

18. Tehaphnehes - A great and goodly city of Egypt; Tachapanes, Tachpanes, Tahapanes, Tahpanes, Chanes, and Hanes, are names given it, and this from a queen of Egypt of that name in Solomon's time. It stood not far from Sin, or Pelusium. Darkened - A night shall come upon it. Break - I shall break the kingdom of Egypt, that it no more oppress with yokes, that is, burdens. Her daughters - Her towns and villages.

20. The eleventh year - Of Jeconiah's captivity, three months and two days before Jerusalem was taken, about the time that the Egyptians attempted to raise the siege of Jerusalem.

21. Have broken - Partly by the victory of the Chaldeans over Pharaoh-necho, partly by the victory of the Cyreneans over Pharaoh-hophra. The sword - None can heal the wounds that God gives but himself. They whom he disables, cannot again hold the sword.

22. His arms - Both his arms. The strong - That part of his kingdom which remains entire. Broken - That which was shattered before.

25. Will strengthen - As Judges on the bench like Pilate, so generals in the field, like Nebuchadrezzar, have no power but what is given them from above.

## XXXI

The greatness and power of the king of Assyria, ver. 1-9. His security and destruction, ver. 10-17. This applied to Pharaoh, ver. 18.

2. His multitude - His numerous subjects.

3. A cedar - Like the most goodly cedar for strength and beauty.

4. The waters - Cedars grow great by the water-courses. The deep - The sea sent out her waters, which gave being to the rivers, that watered him. His plants - The provinces of this mighty kingdom, that were like plants about a great tree. All the trees - To all his subjects.

5. All the fowls - All kind of men, nobles, merchants, husbandmen. Made their nests - Settled their habitations. In his boughs - In his kingdom, in the cities and towns of it. All great nations - No nation that was great at that time, but, sought the friendship of this kingdom.

8. The cedars - The greatest kings. Garden of God - In the most fruitful gardens. Hide - Could not ever top, and shade him. The fir-trees - Lesser kings, and kingdoms, were not equal to his boughs. Nor any tree - All summed up, none like him in all the kingdoms of the world.

11. Him - The proud king of Assyria, Sardanapalus. The mighty one - Arbaces, who first struck at the root of this Cedar, might well be styled the mighty one of the heathen, since he could bring together four hundred thousand of Medes, Persians, Babylonians, and Arabians.

12. Strangers - Foreigners.

14. To the end - All this is designed to be a warning to mortals. All the trees - The emperors, kings, or flourishing states. By the waters - Planted most commodiously, and furnished most abundantly with power and wealth. The children of men - As common men, of no quality or distinction.

15. He - The king of Assyria. A mourning - There was much lamentation. Fainted - Probably there were portentous signs in the sea, and great waters, and the rivers, and among the trees.

16. Shake - All that heard the noise of his fall, trembled at it. Cast him down - Brought the king and kingdom, as a dead man to the grave among them, that before were dead and buried. All the trees - All kings, and particularly the greatest. All that drink water - Enjoyed great power, riches, and glory. Comforted - He speaks to the dead with allusion to the manner of the living, who rejoice to see the proud brought low.

17. They also - His neighbouring kings. Hell - Perished with him, and went to those whom God had slain for their pride and wickedness. They that were his arm - His loyal and faithful subjects and friends, on whom he relied, and by whom he acted.

18. Yet - Thou shalt be like them in thy fall. Thou shalt lie - As unclean, despised, loathsome and under a curse. This is - This will be their end.

## XXXII

The destruction of Egypt is represented under the similitude of killing a lion and a crocodile, ver. 1-16. Under that of the funeral of a great general, ver. 17-30.

1. Twelfth year - Of the captivity of Jeconiah.

2. Like a young lion - Spoiling all thou canst. Crocodile - The crocodiles lay in the rivers, though sometimes they went down the river to the sea. With thy rivers - Raisedst mighty armies, and didst lead them out against thy neighbours. The waters - The people, and kings near thee. Thy feet - With thy soldiers. Fouledst - Didst spoil all the conveniences of thy neighbours.

3. With a company - In the countries, where these creatures were hunted, they went in mighty companies.

4. Leave thee - This was literally fulfilled in the deserts of Lybia, where the slain of Hophra's army, were left to be devoured by fowls and beasts.

5. With thy height - With the carcasses of thy princes.

6. Even to the mountains - Blood shall be poured forth, as if it were to rise to the very mountains. Full of thee - O thy blood, and of thy carcasses cast into them.

7. Put thee out - As a torch is extinguished. Cover the sun - Probably some unusual darkness was seen in the heavens, and on the earth, about that time.

9. Thy destruction - The fame of it. Not known - Such as were strangers to Egypt, shall be troubled with apprehension of what mischief may come upon the world from so mighty a conqueror.

10. Shall tremble - Be greatly afraid, lest Nebuchadnezzar, who is God's sword, should smite them. Every man - Every one of the kings, whose kingdoms are near to Egypt.

13. All the beasts - The sheep, and oxen devoured, or driven away: the horses taken up to mount the horsemen, whose own horses were tired, or spoiled. Great waters - The pasture lying along the river side. Trouble them - There shall be so few men left in Egypt, that they shall not as formerly, disturb the waters by digging, swimming, or rowing on them. Nor the hoofs - So few horses or cows, that they shall not at watering-times, or in the heat of the day, foul the waters.

14. Like oil - A figurative expression, signifying, there shall be such an universal sadness and heaviness upon the whole nation, that the very rivers which used to flow briskly, shall grow deep, and slow, and heavy.

15. Of that - Men and women, cattle, wealth, and peace.

16. This is the lamentation - This mournful account, which the prophet has given of Egypt.

18. Wail - Prepare the funeral ceremonies at the burial of Egypt. The daughters - And celebrate the funerals of other cities and kingdoms that lie buried in their own ruins. The nether parts of the earth - A well known description of the state of the dead. The pit - The Egyptians affected to be buried in the Pyramids, and their kings, and great ones, would be laid by themselves; but Ezekiel provides them their grave among common people, being buried just where they fall.

19. Whom - Art thou better than others that thou shouldest not die, and be laid in the dust, as well as they. Go - Go down like others. With the uncircumcised - Among profane and loathed carcasses, such the uncircumcised were in the opinion of the circumcised, as were the Egyptians.

20. They - The Egyptians. She - The whole Egyptian kingdom. Draw - And throw them together into the pit.

21. Him - The king of Egypt. The grave - Where they lie without strength, as dead mortals, tho' while they lived, they bore themselves, as gods. That help - His helpers, dead before him, shall speak to him. Gone down - To the grave. They lie - Neglected, and forgotten.

22. Ashur - The famous, warlike, king of Assyria. Is there - In the state of the dead, in the land of darkness and oblivion. Her company - Princes, soldiers, subjects, and confederates. Are about him - They are about him, who were slain with him.

23. Whose graves - Here is supposed a spacious vault, in the midst whereof the king of Ashur lies, and round the vault, his familiar captains and commanders. Her company - The common subjects of the Assyrian empire, all buried undistinguished about her. Her grave - The ruins of an empire are its grave. In the land - While they were in the land of the living.

24. Elam - The Persians, and their famous kings, who lived in former days. Their shame - God, and man poured contempt upon them, and turned their glory into shame.

25. A bed - The Persians had their coffins, in which with balms and spices, the dead were kept, in the midst of places provided for them; in such is the king of Elam here placed with his slaughtered captains about him. All the honour he can now pretend to, is to be buried in the chief sepulchre.

26. Her multitude - With the Cappadocians and Albanians, the Scythians may be included, many of whom were next neighbours to them.

27. They - The leaders of these Scythians were not buried with a pomp like that of Ashur, or Elan, but surprised by Halyattes and Cyaxares, were cut off with all their multitude, and tumbled into pits with the rabble. With their weapons - A ceremony observed in pompous funerals of great captains, to have their weapons, and their armour carried before the hearse. Laid their swords - In their graves, as if they could sleep the sweeter there, when they laid their heads on such a pillow: These barbarous Scythians were not so buried. Their iniquity - The exemplary punishment of their iniquity shall be seen upon their bones unburied.

28. Thou - Chief of Mesech, and Tubal. Shalt be broken - Shalt be killed with the rest of thy wicked followers. Shalt lie - Without regard, hurled into the pit with common soldiers.

29. With the uncircumcised - The Edomites retained circumcision, being of the seed of Abraham. But that shall stand them in no stead: they shall lie with the uncircumcised.

30. Of the north - Tyrians, Assyrians, and Syrians, who lay northward from Judea, now swallowed up by the Babylonian. Of their might - When it appeared too weak to resist the enemy. Uncircumcised - Scorned, and cast out as profane and loathsome.

31. Comforted - Poor comfort! Yet all that he will find!

32. My terror - These tyrants were a terror to the world by their cruelty; and God hath made them a terror by his just punishments; and so, saith God, will I do with Pharaoh. Come and see the calamitous state of human life! See what a dying world this is! The strong die, the mighty die; Pharaoh and all his multitude! But here is likewise an allusion to the final and everlasting death of impenitent sinners. Those that are uncircumcised in heart, are slain by the sword of Divine Justice. Their iniquity is upon them, and they bear their shame for ever.

## XXXIII

The duty of a spiritual watchman, ver. 1-9. A declaration of the safety of penitents, and the destruction of apostates, ver. 10- 20. A message to those who flattered themselves with hopes of safety, tho' they repented not, ver. 21-29. A reproof of those who approved the word of God, but did not practice it, ver. 30-33.

6. Is taken away - Punished by the Lord for his sin.

10. Our sins - The unpardoned guilt, and the unsupportable punishment of our sins, in the wasting of our country, burning our city, abolishing the publick worship of God; we shall pine away, 'tis too late to hope. How - How can it be better with us?

21. Smitten - Taken and plundered.

22. Opened my mouth - Not that the prophet was utterly dumb before, for he had prophesied against many nations, only he was forbidden to say anything of the Jews, But now the spirit moved him to speak, and continued his motion, 'till the messenger came, and ever after.

24. They - Who were left behind, now come out of their holes, or returned from neighbouring countries, or permitted by the conqueror to stay and plant vineyards. Wastes - Places once fruitful and abounding with people, but now, made a desolate wilderness. He inherited - Our father had a right to all this land, when but one; we his children though diminished, are many, and the divine goodness will surely continue to us both right and possession. Is given - It was given by promise to us, the seed, as well as to our progenitor; nay more, 'tis given us in possession, whereas Abraham had not one foot of it.

26. Ye stand - You trust to your sword; you do all with violence. Abominations - Idolatry.

30. The children - Captives in Babylon.

31. They come - As if they were really the people of God. They sit - So we find the elders of Judah, chap. viii, 1, so the disciples of the rabbis sat at their feet.

## XXXIV

A charge against the shepherds of Israel, ver. 1-6. Their dismission from their trust, ver. 7-10. A promise, that God would take care of his flock, ver. 11-16. Another charge against the strong of the flock, for their injuring the weak, ver. 17-22. A promise of the Messiah, the great and good shepherd, ver. 23-31.

2. The shepherds - The rulers of the people kings, magistrates, and princes; as also priests, and prophets. Of Israel - The two tribes, and the few out of the ten that adhere to the house of David. That feed - Contrive their own ease, advantage, and honour.

3. Ye kill - You contrive methods, to take first the life, and next the estate of the well-fed, the rich and wealthy. But - You take care to lead, protect, provide for, and watch over them.

4. The diseased - The weak and languishing. Bound up - Oppressors in the state, or church, broke many then, but these shepherds bound them not up.

5. No shepherd - No vigilant, faithful shepherd. Became meat - Were made a prey of, and devoured by all their neighbours.

12. In the cloudy and dark day - In the time of general distress.

16. The fat - The powerful and rich. I will feed - I will judge and punish them.

17. I judge - Between men and men, between the smaller and weaker, and the greater and stronger, as their different state requires I will do. The rams - Rulers, who also shalt be dealt with according to their behaviour.

18. But ye must tread down - You great ones, eat the fat, and sweet; and what you cannot eat, you waste and spoil. The deep waters - Which are sufficient for all.

20. I will judge - I will vindicate the poor. The fat cattle - The rich. The lean - The poor.

23. One shepherd - Christ, the great good, chief, only shepherd, that laid down his life for his sheep. My servant David - The seed of David, the beloved one, who was typified by David, and is in other places called by his name, as Jer. xxx, 9 chap. xxxvii, 24 Isaiah xxxvii, 35 Hosea iii, 5. He shall feed - Do all the office of a good and faithful shepherd, and that for ever.

24. My servant - Christ was in this great work his fathers servant, Isaiah xlii, 1.

25. A covenant - A covenant of promises, which contain, and shall bring peace, that is all good.

26. Them - My returned captives, The places - All the country. My hill - Jerusalem.

29. A plant - The Messiah. The shame - The reproach.

30. Their God - By covenant, from their forefathers. Am with them - Present with them, and reconciled to them.

## XXXV

A prophecy against Edom for their hatred to Israel, ver. 1- 13. Their ruin shall be perpetual, ver. 14, 15.

2. Mount Seir - The Edomites, who inhabited it.

5. Their iniquity - When their iniquity was punished on them, which brought them to final ruin.

6. And blood - Thy guilt, and my just revenge of innocent blood. Hast not hated - Thou hast loved, rather than hated, blood-shed; therefore vengeance for it follows thee.

7. That passeth out - All travelers that go to or from Edom.

9. Return - To their former glory.

10. Though - Though God was with Israel.

11. Judged - Punished thee.

14. The whole earth - The inhabitants of all the countries round about thee. Rejoiceth - Is in peace and plenty.

## XXXVI

A promise of the restoration of Israel, from their present deplorable condition, ver. 1-15. They are reminded of their former sins, and God's judgments, ver. 16-20. A promise of pardon, ver, 21-24. And sanctification, 25-38

1. The mountains - The inhabitants being in captivity, speak to the mountains, that is, the land of Judah, and Israel, which was a country full of mountains.

2. Because the enemy - Many were the enemies of God's people; but they so conspired in one design, that the prophet speaks of them as one, and particularly of Edom.

3. Swallowed - Devoured you, as hungry beasts devour their prey. Ye are taken up - You are the subject of all their discourse. An infamy - Ever branding you as infamous.

7. Lifted up mine hand - Sworn in my wrath. The heathen - The Moabites, Ammonites, and Idumeans.

8. At hand - The time is near, when my people shall come out of Babylon to settle in their own land.

12. And thou - O land of Canaan. Bereave - Consume thine inhabitants.

13. They - The heathen round about.

14. Therefore - I will so bless thee, O land, that thou shalt bring forth and breed up many sons and daughters, and this reproach shall cease for ever. 17. By their doings - By their carriage, and whole conversation. As the uncleanness - Or as one cut off from the congregation, because of some great sin.

20. Entered - When they were come into Babylon. Profaned - They sinned. They - Their heathen neighbours. Them - The profane Jews. These - These profane slaves, call themselves the people of the Lord and say, he gave them the land out of which they are driven.

21. But I had pity - For these sins I had just cause to cut them off; but I had pity, for the glory of my name: had I destroyed them, the heathen would have concluded against my omnipotence, and my truth.

23. I will sanctify my great name - They gave the heathen occasion to think meanly of me, but I will shew I am as great as good. When God performs what he hath sworn by his holiness, then he sanctifies his name.

25. Sprinkle - "This signifies both the blood of Christ sprinkled upon their conscience, to take away their guilt, as the water of purification was sprinkled, to take away their ceremonial uncleanness and the grace of the spirit sprinkled on the whole soul, to purify it from all corrupt inclinations and dispositions."

26. A new heart - A new frame of soul, a mind changed, from sinful to holy, from carnal to spiritual. A heart in which the law of God is written, Jer. xxxi, 33. A sanctified heart, in which the almighty grace of God is victorious, and turns it from all sin to God. A new spirit - A new, holy frame in the spirit of man; which is given to him, not wrought by his own power. The stony - The senseless unfeeling. Out of your flesh - Out of you. Of flesh - That is, quite of another temper, hearkening to God's law, trembling at his threats, molded into a compliance with his whole will; to forbear, do, be, or suffer what God will, receiving the impress of God, as soft wax receives the impress of the seal.

27. My spirit - The Holy Spirit of God, which is given to, and dwelleth in all true believers. And cause you - Sweetly, powerfully, yet without compulsion; for our spirits, framed by God's spirit to a disposition suitable to his holiness, readily concurs. Ye shall keep - Be willing; and able to keep the judgments, and to walk in the statutes of God, which is, to live in all holiness.

28. Ye shall dwell - Observe: then, and not before, are these promises to be fulfilled to the house of Israel. And I will be your God - This is the foundation of the top-stone of a believer's happiness.

29. I will also save you - I will continue to save you. From all your uncleannesses - Salvation from all uncleannessess, includes justification, entire sanctification, and meetness for glory. The corn - All necessaries comprised in one.

35. And they - Strangers, or foreigners.

37. Inquired of - Though I have repeated so often my promise to do this, yet it is their duty to intreat it, to wait on me, and then I will do it.

38. As the holy flock - Flocks designed to holy uses. In her solemn feasts - These flocks were for quality, the best of all; and for numbers, very great, on the solemn feasts. Thus shall men multiply, and fill the cities of replanted Judea. And the increase of the numbers of men is then honourable, when they are all dedicated to God as a holy flock, to be presented to him for living sacrifices. Crowds are a lovely sight in God's temple.

## XXXVII

The vision of the resurrection of the dry bones, ver. 1- 10. The explication of it, ver. 11-14 A type of the happy coalition which would be between Israel and Judah, ver. 15-22. A prediction of the kingdom of Christ, and of the glories and graces of that kingdom, ver. 23-28.

1. And set me down - So it seemed to me in the vision. Which is a lively representation of a threefold resurrection:

1. Of the resurrection of souls, from the death of sin, to the life of righteousness:
2. The resurrection of the church from an afflicted state, to liberty and peace:
3. The resurrection of the body at the great day, especially the bodies of believers to life eternal.

3. And he - The Lord.

7. Prophesied - Declared these promises. As I prophesied - While I was prophesying. A noise - A rattling of the bones in their motion. A shaking - A trembling or commotion among the bones, enough to manifest a divine presence, working among them. Came together - Glided nearer and nearer, 'till each bone met the bone to which it was to be joined. Of all the bones of all those numerous slain, not one was missing, not one missed its way, not one missed its place, but each knew and found its fellow. Thus in the resurrection of the dead, the scattered atoms shall be arranged in their proper place and order, and every bone come to his bone, by the same wisdom and power by which they were first formed in the womb of her that is with child.

8. Came up - Gradually spreading itself.

9. Prophesy - Declare what my will is. O breath - The soul, whose emblem here is wind; which, as it gently blew upon these lifeless creatures, each was inspired with its own soul or spirit.

10. And the breath - The spirit of life, or the soul, Gen. ii, 7.

11. The whole house - The emblem of the house of Israel. Are dried - Our state is as hopeless, as far from recovery, as dried bones are from life.

12. I will open - Though your captivity be as death, your persons close as the grave, yet I will open those graves.

16. One stick - A writing tablet or a tally, such as is fit to be written upon. His companions - Benjamin and part of Levi, who kept with the tribe of Judah. Ephraim - Ephraim was the most considerable tribe in the kingdom of Israel, when divided from the other two. The house of Israel - The other nine tribes, who continued with Ephraim.

19. In mine hand - Under my government, care, and blessing. God will make the two kingdoms one in his hand, as I make these two sticks one in my hand.

22. One nation - They were one in David's time, who was a type of the Messiah, and continued so to the end of Solomon's time, whose name includes peace. So when the Beloved, the Peace-maker, the Messiah shall be king, they shall be one again. And one king - The Messiah.

23. I will save - I will bring them safe out of them. And will cleanse - Both justify and sanctify them.

24. David - The son of David. One shepherd - This king shall be their one chief shepherd, others that feed and rule the flock, are so by commission from him.

25. For ever - 'Till Christ's coming to judgment, the Jews converted to Christ, shall inherit Canaan.

26. My sanctuary - I will set up a spiritual glorious temple, and worship among you. For evermore - Never to be altered or abolished on earth, but to be consummated in heaven.

27. My tabernacle - The tabernacle wherein I will shew my presence among them. Their fathers had a tabernacle, but the Messiah shall bring with him a better, a spiritual, and an heavenly. They shall be my people - By my grace I will make them holy, as the people of a holy God; and I will make them happy, as the people of the ever blessed God.

## XXXVIII

The attempt of Gog and Magog on the land of Israel, ver. 1-13. The terror occasioned thereby, ver. 14-20. Their defeat by the immediate hand of God, ver. 21-23.

1. Saying - God now forewarns the Jews, what enemies and troubles would interpose, before he would fully deliver them.

2. Gog - This cannot be one single person, or prince, though perhaps it points out some one, by whom the troubles foretold were begun. Some believe the time is still to come, wherein this prophecy is to be fulfilled. And that it must intend those enemies of God's church who descended from the Scythians, and are now masters of Cappadocia, Iberia, Armenia, or are in confederacy with the Tartars, and those northern heathens. But others think, all the enemies of Israel in all quarters, both open and secret are here intended, and that the Antichristian forces and combination, are what the prophet foretells. Magog - Magog is, at least, part of Scythia, and comprehends Syria, in which was Hierapolis. taken by the Scythians, and called of them Scythopolis. It is that country, which now is in subjection to the Turks, and may be extended thro' Asia minor, the countries of Sarmatia, and many others, under more than one in succession of time. And in the last time under some one active and daring prince, all their power will be stirred up against Christians.

4. Handling swords - That is, very ready, expert and strong in using the sword.

6. Gomer - Inhabitants of Galatia. Togarmah - Paphlagonia, and Cappadocia. The north quarters - The more northern people, the numerous Tartars.

7. Be thou prepared - God and the church deride this mighty preparation.

8. After many days - In the latter days of the Messiah's kingdom among men. In the later years - These must be cotemporary with the many days already mentioned. Thou - Gog with all thy numbers. The land - The land of the Jews, a people recovered from captivity, into which the sword of their enemy had brought them. Always waste - It is already two thousand four hundred years since the ten tribes were carried away by Salmanezer. But it - The land of Canaan, that is, the people of it.

11. Unwalled - Weak, and without any considerable defenses.

13. Sheba - This Sheba was southward, and contains all of that coast which assisted Gog. Dedan - By these are noted, the eastern nations that assisted. Tarshish - The inhabitants of the sea-coast westward, and Magog north. The young lions - Young men thirsty of blood, but more of spoil, resolve to join, if they may rob and spoil for themselves. Art thou come - This repeated enquiry seems to be an agreement to come to his assistance, on condition they might have, possess, and carry away what they seize.

14. Know it - Thou wilt be informed of it.

15. The north parts - From Scythia, from the Euxine and Caspian seas, and countries thereabouts.

16. I will bring - I will permit thee to come. Sanctified - Confessed to be a great God over all, a gracious and faithful God to his people, and a dreadful enemy and avenger against the wicked. Before - ln the sight of all the heathen that are with Gog, and much more in the sight of God's own people.

17. Spoken - All these enterprises I have spoken of, and will as well defeat as I did foretel them.

19. For - For my own people, and for mine own glory. Have I spoken - Against mine enemies Gog, and all his herd. A great shaking - A great disturbance and tumult, like an earthquake.

21. Sword - Israel. Throughout - From all parts of the land, which was full of mountains. Every man's sword - As it was in Jehoshaphat's time; and these swords may be meant by the sword God will call for through all, for they ranged all over his mountains.

23. Magnify - Undeniably prove that I am the mighty, just, faithful, wise, holy, and merciful God. Sanctify - Declare I am holy, and true to my word.

## XXXIX

A prediction of the utter destruction of Gog and Magog, ver. 1-7. An illustration of the vastness of that destruction, ver. 8- 22. God's mercy to his people, ver. 23-29.

2. The sixth part - I will leave in thy country but one in six.

3. Thy bow - What is said of the bow rendered useless, is to be understood of all other weapons of war; this is one kind, the bow, being most in use with the Scythians, is mentioned for all the rest.

8. It is come - As sure as if already come. The day - That notable day of recompences against the last great enemies of the church.

9. The weapons - The warlike provision, instruments, engines, carriages and wagons. Shall burn - It may be wondered why they burn these weapons, which might be of use to them for defense; but it was done in testimony that God was their defense, on whom only they relied. With fire - In such a country where the need of fire is much less than with us, it will not seem incredible, that the warlike utensils of so numerous an army might be enough to furnish them with fuel for many years.

11. Gog - And to many of those with him; but many were given to the birds and beasts to be devoured. Graves - Gog came to take possession; and so he shall, but not as he purposed and hoped. He shall possess his house of darkness in that land which he invaded. The valley of the passengers - So called from the frequent travels of passengers through it from Egypt and Arabia Felix, into the more northern parts, and from these again into Egypt and Arabia. The sea - The Dead Sea. Hamon Gog - That is, the multitude of Gog.

13. Glorified - The day of my being glorified shall be a renown to Israel.

14. They - The rulers of Israel. Sever - Chuse out men who shall make it their work. Passing - To go up and down over the whole land; for many of Gog's wounded, flying soldiers, died in thickets, and corners into which they crept. The passengers - Whose assistance they would desire of courtesy. Remain - Unburied by the public labour of the house of Israel during the seven months.

16. The city - That is, the multitude: the city which is next to this common tomb of Gog.

17. I do sacrifice - The punishment of these God calls a sacrifice, which he offers to his own justice. Upon the mountains - Where more thousands are offered at once, than ever were at any time offered; 'tis a sacrifice so great, that none ever was, or will be like it.

18. Ye shall eat - In these two and the following verses, God takes on him the person of one that makes a feast, invites his guests, and promises to satisfy them. Of the two former, the first is an Enigmatical invitation, or an invitation in a riddle; the latter is the key to this character. The

mighty - Who had great authority, great courage and strength, the giant-like ones, commanders of great note in the army. Princes - Many princes came with their country men and subjects to assist in this war. Rams - These are compared to rams which lead the flock. Lambs - Lambs are the more ordinary in the army. Goats - Goats signify the more lascivious, and impetuous among them. Bullocks - Bullocks, such as though more slow, were of great strength. Fatlings - Well fed. Bashan - A mountain of most rich, and sweet soil.

20. At my table - In the field where Gog, his princes, and army, are slain, compared to a table. Horses - Horsemen, not common foot soldiers. Chariots - The men that ride in them.

21. All the heathen - In the countries to which the news shall come.

26. Their shame - Reproach for their sins.

## XL

In this and the following chapter, under the type of a temple and altar, priests and sacrifices, is fore shewed, the spiritual worship which should be performed in Gospel times, and that perfected at last in the kingdom of glory: yea probably, in an happy and glorious state of the church on this side heaven: in this chapter we have, a general account of the temple and city, ver. 1- 4. A particular account of the east-gate, north-gate and south-gate, ver. 5-31. Of the inner court, ver. 32-38. Of the tables, ver. 39-43. Of the lodgings for the singers and the priests, ver. 44-47. Of the porch, ver. 48, 49.

1. Of our captivity - Of those that were carried away into captivity with Jeconiah eleven years before Jerusalem was burnt. And this falls in with the three thousand three hundred and seventy fourth year of the world, about five hundred and seventy four years before Christ's incarnation. The beginning - In the month Nisan. The tenth day - The day that the paschal lamb was to be taken up in order to the feast on the tenth day. Brought me - To Jerusalem, the place where it did stand.

2. In the visions of God - By this it appears it was not a corporeal transportation of the prophet. The frame - The portrait of a city. On the south - On the south of the mountain, where the prophet was set.

3. A man - The same no doubt that appeared to the prophet, chap. i, 26, whose name is the branch, and who builds the temple, Zech vi, 12, 13, whose colour was like burnished brass; Rev. i, 15, which speaks glory and strength. A line - A plumb-line, a mason's line to discover the rectitude of the building, or its defects. In the gate - In the north gate, next toward the east.

5. A wall - This was that outmost wall, that compassed the whole mount Sion, upon whose top the temple stood. The man's hand - Christ, hath, and keeps the reed in his own hand, as the only fit person to take the measures of all. A measuring reed - Or cane, for this measuring rod was of those canes growing in that country, long, and light, which architects made use of. Six cubits long - Each cubit consisting of eighteen inches in our common account. An hand breadth - Added to each six cubits. The breadth - The thickness of the walls, which were one reed, and one hand's breadth, or three yards, and three inches thick. Height - And the height equal, taking the measure from the floor on the inside of the wall.

6. The east - Either of one of the inner walls, or of the temple itself. Went up - 'Till he was got up, he could not measure the threshold, which was at the top of the stairs, and these were ten, if the measurer be supposed in the gate of the house; or eight, if in the gate of the court of the priests; or seven, if in the court of Israel; and each stair was half a cubit in height, too high for him to take the measure of the threshold, if he did not go up the stairs. The threshold - It is probable he measured the lower threshold first, as next at hand. The other threshold - The upper threshold, or lintel of the gate, which was of equal dimensions with the lower, three yards and three inches broad, or thick.

7. Chamber - Along the wall of the porch were chambers, three on one side, and three on the other, each one reed square. Five cubits - A space of two yards and one half between each chamber, either filled with some neat posts or pillars, or it may be quite void. Within - The inward and outward threshold, were of the same measures, and curiously arched over head from side to side, and end to end, which was from east to west.

8. The porch - The posts which were joined together at the top by an arch, and so made the portico.

9. The porch - Probably another porch, or another gate distinct from that, ver. 6. The posts - These were half columns, that from the floor to the height of the wall jetted out, as if one half of the column were in the wall, and the other without, and the protuberance of this half column, was one cubit.

10. Chambers - These chambers were for the priests and Levites to lodge in during their ministration.

11. Of the entry - It is meant of the whole length of the entry, or walk through the porch, to which they ascended by stairs of a semicircular form.

12. The space - The rails, which were set up at a cubit distance from the front of these little chambers, on the outside for convenient placing of benches for the priests to sit on. The space - Between the rails, and the chambers.

13. From the roof - From the extremity of one little chamber on the north side of the gate, to the extremity of the opposite chamber on the south side, and so one cubit and half for the back wall of one chamber, and as much for the back wall of the other chamber, with the length of the chambers, six cubits each, and ten for the breadth of the gate, amounts to twenty five cubits. Door against door - It seems the doors of the chambers were two in each chamber in the east and west parts, and so exactly set, that the doors being all open you had a clear prospect through all the chambers to the temple.

14. He made - Measured, and thereby shewed what kind of posts they should be. Threescore cubits - Probably this refers to the height of this gate built up two stories above the arch, and the posts in their height are only mentioned, but imply all the rest of the building over the east gate. Unto the post - These high columns, on the inner front of this gate were so disposed, that the last on each side was very near the first post, or pillar of the court on either side of the gate, and so the posts and buildings laid on those posts joined on each side of this gate.

15. And - This verse seems to sum up all the dimensions; this gate, its porch, and thickness of its walls, and so sum the cubits, six in the thickness of the outer wall, eighteen in the three chambers, twenty in the spaces between the chambers, and six cubits in the thickness in the inner wall of the porch.

16. Narrow windows - Windows narrowed inward to the middle. Their posts - The upper lintel of each door over which was a window. To the arches - Windows under the arches between post

and post, to give light to the five cubits space between chamber and chamber. Round about - These were on both sides of the porch within the gate, exactly alike.

17. The outward court - So called in regard of the more inward court, between that where he was, and the temple itself; this court, was the second about the temple. Chambers - Not only lodging rooms for the priests, but also store-houses for tithes and offerings. A pavement - A beautiful floor laid with checker works. The whole floor of this court was thus paved. Thirty chambers - That is, fifteen on the south side of the gate, and fifteen on the north side, built over the pavement.

18. The pavement - That mentioned, ver. 17. By the side - That part which lay on each side of the gate, and from thence spread itself toward the chambers, leaving a space of pavement of equal breadth with the porch, or gate in the middle. The length - The length was measured fifty cubits. The inner pavement - The side pavement was laid somewhat lower than this middle pavement, not only for state, but for the more convenient, keeping it clean; so the middle pavement rose with a little convex surface.

19. The breadth - Of the whole ground between the inner front of one gate and porch, to the outer front of the next gate more inward to the temple. The lower gate - Called so in respect to the next gate, which was on the higher ground. The forefront - To the outside front of the gate of the priests court, which was next to this gate now measured, that is from the west front of the lower to the east front of the upper gate. The inner court - This court from the west front of the lower gate, was one hundred cubits in length to the east front of the gate of the inner court. East-ward and north-ward - And so was the space from the south front of the court to the north front. So the court was exactly square. Divers courts are here spoken of, which may put us in mind, of the diversity of gifts, graces and offices in the church: as also of the several degrees of glory in the courts and mansions of heaven.

22. Before them - Within the steps or gate.

23. Toward the east - The east gate of the inner court was directly over against the east gate of the outer court, and equally distant from each other.

26. To it - The floor, or square court.

28. Brought me - From the south-gate of the outer court through the porch, and over the hundred cubit pavement, to the south-gate of the inner court.

32. The inner court - The court of the priests, which was next to the temple.

43. Within - Within the porch, where these tables stood. Hooks - Hooks on which the slaughtered sacrifice might be hanged, while they prepared it farther. Fastened - To walls no doubt, near these tables.

45. The keepers - While, according to their courses, they had the charge of the house of God, and attended on the service of it.

46. The keepers - To preserve the fire perpetually on the altar.

48. The breadth - The whole breadth was eleven cubits, but the breadth of each leaf of this folding-gate was three cubits, and they met, or shut on an upright post, set in the middle of the gate space, and this was one cubit broad. And each leaf hung on posts two cubits thick, which amount to eleven cubits.

## XLI

The dimensions of the house and various parts of it, ver. 1- 13. An account of another building, ver. 14, 15. The manner of the building of the house, ver. 16, 17. The ornaments of the house, ver. 18-20. The altar of incense and the table, ver. 21, 22. The doors between the temple and the oracle, ver. 23-26.

1. The breadth - These walls in their thickness took up as much space as the whole breadth of Moses's tabernacle, Exod. xxvi, 16, 22.

3. Went he - From the porch thro' the body of the temple, to the partition between the body of the temple and the holy of holies. Measured - Either the thickness of that partition wall, or of the pilasters, which stood one on the one side, and the other on the other side of the door. Of the door - Or entrance out of the temple into the oracle. And the door - This door was six cubits broad, and an upright bar or post on which the leaves met, and which was of one cubit's breadth, make out seven cubits.

4. Thereof - Of the holy of holies, which was an exact square. Before - Parallel with the breadth of the temple.

5. After - Having left the holy of holies, now he is come to take the measures of the outer wall. The house - The temple. Six cubits - Three yards thick was this wall from the ground to the first story of the side-chambers. Side-chamber - Of the lowest floor; for there were three stories of these, and they differed in their breadth, as the wall of the temple, on which they rested, abated of its thickness; for the middle chambers were broader than the lowest by a cubit, and the highest as much broader than the middle. Round about - On the north, south, and west parts, on each side of every one of these three gates.

6. They might - That the beams of the chambers might have good and firm resting-hold. Had not hold - The ends of the beams were not thrust into the main body of the wall of the temple.

7. An enlarging - Of the side chambers, so much of breadth added to the chamber, as was taken from the thickness of the wall; that is, two cubits in the uppermost, and one cubit in the middle-most, more than in the lowest chambers. A winding about - Winding stairs, which enlarged as the rooms did, and these run up between each two chambers from the bottom to the top; so there were two doors at the head of each pair of stairs, one door opening into one chamber, and the other into the opposite chamber. For the winding about - These stairs, as they rose in height, enlarged themselves too. Round about - On all sides of the house where these chambers were. The breadth - Of each chamber. Increased - Grew broader by one cubit in every upper chamber. From five in the lowest to six in the middle, and to seven in the highest chamber.

8. The foundations - The lowest chamber had properly a foundation laid on the earth, but the floor of the middle, and highest story must be accounted here a foundation; so from the ground to the ceiling of the first room, was six great cubits; from the first to the second, six great cubits; and from the third floor to the roof of the chamber, a like number; to which add we one cubit for thickness of each of the three floors, you have twenty-one cubits for height, ten yards and a half high.

9. The place - The walk and wall.

11. The doors - The doors of the lowest row opened into this void paved space.

12. The building - This is a new building not yet mentioned, but now measured by itself.

13. The house - The whole temple, oracle, sanctuary and porch, with the walls. The building - On both the north and south-side of the temple.

14. The breadth - The whole front of the house eastward.

18. Cherubim - Generally taken for the portrait of angels, or young men with wings: yet is the description of them very different in different places; in Ezekiel's vision, chap. i, 5-14; x, 14, Isaiah's vision, Isaiah vi, 2, John's vision, Rev. iv, 6-8, and in Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi, 23-26.

19. Through all the house - And thus it was through the whole house round about.

21. The face - The door or gate of the temple was square, not arched. As the appearance - As was the form of the gate of the temple in its larger, so was the form of the gate of the oracle in its lesser dimensions.

22. The altar - Of incense. The corners - The horns framed out of the four posts at each angle on the top of the altar. The walls - The sides. Before the Lord - In the temple, not in the holy of holies.

23. Two doors - Each had one.

25. Them - The doors of both temple and oracle. The temple - Including the holy of holies also.

## XLII

A description of the chambers that were about the courts, ver. 1-12. The uses of them, ver. 13-14. The whole compass of ground, which was taken up by the house and courts, ver. 15-20.

2. The length - The temple of one hundred cubits long, and of fifty broad, was on the south prospect of these chambers.

3. Against gallery - That is, a gallery on the south part toward the inner court, and a gallery toward the pavement north-ward, and between the backs of these galleries were chambers.

4. A way - Before the galleries probably, was a ledge of one cubit broad, running the whole length from east to west, called here a way, though not designed for any to walk on it.

5. Shorter - At first view it should seem to refer to the length, but indeed it refers to the height of the chambers, of which the lowest chamber was highest, the second lower pitched than the first, yet of greater height than the uppermost between the floor and ceiling.

6. As the pillars - So thick and strong as those were.

7. The wall - A wall at a distance from them, perhaps some wall that might keep up a terrace-walk.

11. The way - The walk. Was like - Exactly uniform with the fabrick on the north-side. All their goings - Every window and door. Were - Framed in the same manner. In all things exactly alike.

13. Shall they lay - In some of these chambers the holy things that might be eat, were laid up as in a store-house; and those which were not for present use, were reserved, 'till they were to be used.

14. Which are - Which common people may meddle with.

20. Five hundred broad - Each reed was above three yards and an half, so that it was about eight miles round. Thus large were the suburbs of this mystical temple, signifying the great extent of the church in gospel times. It is in part fulfilled already, by the accession of the Gentiles to the church: and will be throughly accomplished, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved. A separation - To distinguish, and accordingly to exclude, or admit persons, for all might not go in.

## XLIII

In this chapter and the next, the temple-service is described, but under the type of the Old Testament service. The glory of God first fills the temple, ver. 1-6. A promise of God's continuing with his people, if they obey him, ver. 7-12. A description of the altar of burnt offerings, ver. 13-17. Directions for the consecration of that altar, ver. 18-27.

2. Came - When the glory departed, it went eastward, and now it returns, it comes from the east. And his voice - Though by the voice of God, thunder is sometimes meant, yet here it was an articulate voice.

3. And it - This glory of the God of Israel. To destroy - To declare, that their sins would ruin their city, chap. ix, 3, 4. I fell - Overwhelmed, and as it were swallowed up.

4. Came - The sins of Israel caused the glory of the Lord to go out of his house, now the repentance of Israel is blest with the return of this glory.

6. The man - Christ. Stood - To encourage, and strengthen him.

7. He - The glorious God of Israel. My throne - The throne of his grace is in his temple; in the dispensations of grace, God manifests himself a king. My feet - Speaking after the manner of men, and expressing his abode and rest, in his temple, as the type, in his church, as the antitype. In their high places - Perhaps some kings were buried in the temples of their idols, near the idols they worshipped.

8. Their threshold - The kings of Judah and Israel, built temples and altars for their idols, and these are called their thresholds. They erected these in the courts, or near the courts of the temple. Abominations - Idolatries, and wickednesses not to be named.

9. Far from me - From my temple.

10. Son of man - Ezekiel, who is called thus above eighty times in this book. Shew - Describe it to them in all the parts. To the house - To the rulers, prophets, and priests especially, not excluding others. Their iniquities - When they shall blush to see what glory their iniquities had ruined.

12. The law - This is the first comprehensive rule: holiness becomes God's house; and this relative holiness referred to personal and real holiness. The top - The whole circuit of this mountain shall be holy, but the top of it on which the temple stands, shall be most holy.

13. The altar - Of burnt-offerings. And an hand-breath - The sacred cubit, three inches longer than the common cubit. The bottom - The ledge or settle, fastened to the altar on all sides at the bottom, shall be a cubit in height. The breadth - From the edge of this bench on the outside to the edge where it joined the body of the altar, a cubit, and this the breadth, twenty one inches, broad

enough for the priests to walk on. Border - A ledge going round on all the squares. The edge - On the outer edge of this settle a span high. The back - As the back bears burdens, so this was to bear the weight of the whole altar.

14. From the bottom - From the first ledge, which was a cubit broad, and a cubit high from the ground. To the lower - To the top of that square settle, which is called lower, because another settle is raised upon it. Two cubits - In height. The lesser - From the highest edge of the uppermost settle, down to the cubit broad ledge about the lower settle. The greater - So called, because it exceeded the upper settle a cubit in breadth. Four cubits - ln height.

15. Four cubits - In height. From the altar - From the top of the altar.

17. Stairs - Or steps, for such they needed, (probably each stair about one fourth of a cubit,) to carry them, up to the first and second settles.

19. Give - Direct, or command that it be given.

20. Shalt take - Appoint it to be taken.

21. He - The priest. In the appointed place - That is, in the court of the house, and on the altar appointed; this is the first day's sacrifice.

22. They - The priests in attendance.

23. Shalt offer - On the third day, and so on, through seven days.

24. Shalt offer - Direct them to offer. Salt - It may allude to the perpetuity of the covenant thus made by sacrifice.

26. They - The priests in course.

27. I will accept you - Those that give themselves to God, shall be accepted of God, their persons first, and then their performances, through the mediator.

## XLIV

The appropriating the east-gate of the temple to the prince, ver. 1-3. A reproof to Israel for their former profanations of the sanctuary, and a caution, ver. 4-9. The degrading of one part of the Levites, and establishing of the family of Zadock in the priesthood, ver. 10-16. Laws and ordinances concerning the priesthood, ver. 17-31.

2. Shall not be opened - Shall not ordinarily stand open. No man - None of the common people. The Lord - That glory which was the visible sign of his presence.

3. He - The king might sit before the Lord, others might not. Bread - That part of the sacrifice, which was allowed to the offerer.

4. He - Christ in the appearance of a man.

5. The entering - The persons who may, and who may not enter. The sanctuary - Taken here for the courts, rather than the house itself.

6. Let it suffice - Let the time you have spent on your sins suffice.

7. Bread - Either the meal-offering or first-fruits of corn and dough, and the shew-bread. They - The whole nation of the Jews.

8. Have not kept - You have not observed the laws I gave you for the keeping of my holy things, house, sacrifices, and worship. Have set - You have substituted others in your rooms.

10. Are gone away - By their idolatry.

11. Ministers - Servants employed in the lowest work. Sanctuary - Not the temple itself, but about the courts of it. Having charge - They shall be porters to open and shut, and sweep, and go on errands. To minister - To wait on the priests.

12. Iniquity - The punishment of it.

13. Shall bear their shame - They shall be dealt with according to their abominations, and bear the punishment thereof.

15. That kept the charge - Were constant, zealous, and faithful in their priestly office.

16. Into my sanctuary - Both to the altar, to the temple, and the high-priest into the holy of holies. Come near - To set the shew- bread on, and to take it off. To minister - To offer sacrifice at the altar, and incense in the house. God will put marks of honour upon those who are faithful to him in trying times, and will, employ those in his service, who have kept close to it, when others drew back.

17. And within - In the temple.

19. Shall not sanctify - By the law, common things, touching holy things, became consecrated, and no more fit for common use.

20. To grow long - Priding themselves in it, as Absalom. Shall only poll - When the hair is grown, they shall cut the ends of their hair, and keep it in moderate size.

21. Drink wine - Or any other strong liquor, when they go either to trim the lamps or set the shew-bread in order, or to offer incense in the temple, or when they go to the altar to offer a sacrifice, which stood in the inner court.

24. Shall judge - Shall determine the controversy. Assemblies - Publick congregations.

26. Cleansed - After for seven days he hath kept from the dead. They - The priests, who are about the house of God, shall appoint seven days more to this defiled person for his cleansing before he is admitted into the sanctuary.

28. It - The sin-offering: but under this one, all other offerings are couched. For an inheritance - Instead of lands and cities.

30. And the first - So soon as the first-fruits are ripe in the field, your vineyards, and olive yards. Every oblation - Whether free- will offering, or prescribed. The first of your dough - 'Tis conceived this was of every mass of dough they made, and of the first of the dough, which every year they first made of the new corn, as by the custom of the Jews at this day appears. That he - The priest may bless, and pray for thee.

## XLV

The division of the holy land, ver. 1-8. The ordinances that were given both to the prince and to the people, ver. 9-12. The oblations to be offered, and the princes part therein, ver. 13-17. Particularly, in the beginning of the year, ver. 18-20. And in the passover, and feast of tabernacles, ver. 21-25.

2. Of this - Whole portion of twenty five thousand cubits long, or twelve miles and half, and ten thousand broad, or five miles and a little more. For the sanctuary - For a platform for the sanctuary, both house and court.

3. And in it - In the center of this.

6. The possession - Land to be a possession to the citizens of Jerusalem, and to be the content of the city. Broad - About two miles and half broad, and twelve miles and half long. Long - This must run along parallel in length with the holy portion, though but half its breadth. For the whole house - As the capital city, to which the tribe's resort, it must be large enough to entertain them.

7. The prince - The king. Our side - One half of the prince's portion lay on the west side of those three already set out. The other side - The other half lay on the east-side thereof, so the portion of the city, Levites and priests, lay in the middle. The holy portion - Of priests, and Levites, and sanctuary. Before - It lay parallel as broad as these three were broad, and so run on both sides in its breadth from north to south, and had its length as the other, from east to west. Over against - What is called now over- against, or by the side, is called before three times together. So now you have an exact square of twenty-five thousand cubits laid out for God, the Levites and city, which appears thus in the breadth. 10000 For the priests. 10000 For the Levites. 5000 For the city. And the length of each, twenty-five thousand, that is twelve miles and half square.

9. Let it suffice - Be content, aim not at more.

11. Of one measure - One shall contain as much as the other, the ephah shall contain as many gallons of dry, as the bath of liquid things. An homer - Thirty bushels. So the ephah will be three bushels in dry things, and the bath eight gallons in liquid things.

12. Twenty gerahs - A gerah was one penny half-penny, the shekel then was two shillings and six-pence, twenty shekels was two pounds ten shillings, fifteen shekels was one pound seventeen shillings and six-pence, and twenty five was three pound two shillings and six-pence. Maneh - It seems there was the small, the middle, and the great Maneh.

13. Offer - In the daily service, the morning and evening sacrifice.

14. Bath - Which contained about twenty-four gallons. The cor - Or homer; these were two names of the same measure.

16. With the prince - By a common purse of prince and people.

18. Thou shalt take - Procure, this the prince must do.

20. For every one that erreth - For all the errors of all the house of Israel, through ignorance. For him that is simple - That is half- witted, or a fool. Reconcile - Cleanse, as ver. 18, which legally was defiled by those errors done in the city, or courts of the house, whither these persons might come.

21. In the first month - Nisan, which is part of March, and part of April with us.

22. Upon that day - Upon the fourteenth day, on which the passover was slain.

24. An hin - This was about one gallon and three quarters of a pint.

25. In the seventh month - According to their ecclesiastical account, which is Tisri, and answers to part of our August and September. In the fifteenth day - On that day the feast of tabernacles began, and continued seven days. He - The prince. In the feast of the seven days - Hence we also may learn the necessity of frequently repeating the same religious exercises. Indeed the sacrifice of atonement was offered once for all. But the sacrifice of acknowledgement, that of a broken heart, that of a thankful heart, must be offered every day. And these spiritual sacrifices are always acceptable to God through Christ Jesus.

## XLVI

Farther rules for the worship of the priests and the people, ver. 1-15. A rule, for the prince's disposal of his inheritance, ver. 16-18. A description of the places for the boiling and baking the offerings, ver. 19-24.

3. In the sabbaths - Both weekly and other holy days, which are called sabbaths.

9. Go forth over against it - Perhaps, only to prevent all jostling and confusion.

17. His inheritance - Whatever lands of the prince are given to servants, shall at the year of Jubilee revert to the sons of the prince. For them - And to theirs after them.

20. The outer court - Where the people were.

21. A court - A smaller court made up on the outer sides with the walls of the greater square, and on the inside made with two walls, the one forty cubits long, the other thirty cubits broad.

23. A row of building - A range of building on the inside of the walls of the lesser courts. Four - Four courts in the four corners.

## XLVII

The vision of the holy waters, ver. 1-12. The borders of the land of Canaan, ver. 13-23.

1. Eastward - The fountain lay to the west, the conduit pipes were laid to bring the water to the temple, and so must run eastward, and perhaps one main pipe might be laid under the east-gate of the temple. The right side - On the south-side of the temple.

2. Out - Of the inmost court. The outer gate - The outmost north- gate in the wall that compassed the whole mountain of the Lord's house.

3. He measured - By the line in his hand. He brought me - Went before, and the prophet followed; all this was in vision.

8. The sea - The Dead-sea, or lake of Sodom. Shall be healed - The waters of the sea shall be healed, made wholesome. So where the grace of God from his temple and altar flows, it heals the corrupt nature of man, and renders barren terrible deserts, as a land of waters and gardens.

9. Shall live - Be preserved alive, and thrive, whereas no fish can live in the Dead-sea. For they - The poisonous waters of the Dead- sea shall be made wholesome for fish. Shall live - Thrive, and multiply in the virtue of the healing streams. Thus is the fruitfulness of the grace of God in the church set forth.

10. En-gedi - Which lay on the southwest of the lake of Sodom. En-eglaim - A city on the northeast of the Dead-sea. To spread forth nets - All along on the west-side of this sea to dry them.

12. Consumed - Never be consumed, never decay, there shall always be fruit, and enough. Their waters - Those that watered them. Issued out - And so carried a blessing with them.

13. The border - The utmost bounds of the whole land. Shall inherit - That is, shall divide for inheritance to the tribes of Israel. Joseph - That is, the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh.

15. The great sea - The Mediterranean, which was the greatest sea the Jews knew.

18. The east sea - The Dead-sea, which lay on the east of Jerusalem. Thus a line drawn from Damascus through Auranitis, Gilead, the land of Israel beyond Jordan to the east-sea, made the eastern frontier.

19. The river - Called the river of Egypt, lay directly in the way to Egypt from Jerusalem. The great sea - To the southwest part of the Mediterranean sea near Gaza.

22. Children - Who from their birth should be invested with this right of inheriting.

23. His inheritance - This certainly looks at gospel times, when the partition-wall between Jew and Gentile was taken down, and both put on a level before God, both made one in Christ Jesus.

## XLVIII

The portion of seven tribes, ver. 1-7. The allotment of land for the sanctuary, priests and Levites, ver. 8-14. For the city and prince, ver. 15-22. For the other five tribes, ver. 23-29. A plan of the city, its gates, and new name, ver. 30-35.

15. A profane place - A common, not consecrated place.

16. The measures thereof - The extent and proportions of the city, a square of four thousand five hundred shall be taken out of the middle of the twenty five thousand or the ground-plat of the city. So it shall be an equilateral square, every side exactly the same, north, south, east, and west, four thousand five hundred apiece, by which measures the whole content is visible eighteen thousand cubits not reeds.

18. For food - For the maintenance of the city-officers.

20. The possession - The land assigned for the city.

28. To the river - The river of Egypt.

35. Eighteen thousand cubits - About five miles in compass. From that day - From the day of the Lord's restoring this people, and rebuilding their city, and their thankful, holy, and pure worshipping of God there, from that day it shall be said of Jerusalem. The Lord is there - The Lord who as his name alone is Jehovah, so is the only true God, faithful to his promise, rich in mercy, glorious in majesty, righteous in his judgments, wise and holy in his government, whose presence makes us happy, whose withdrawing from us leaves us to misery. This God will by his favour and presence, bring the confluence of all good to persons, families, and cities; this God will be there to dwell, govern, defend, prosper, and crown. Such is to be the case of earthly Jerusalem, such shall be for ever the case of the heavenly Jerusalem. Such is the case of every true believer, who may, wherever he is, in his way of duty, still write Jehovah-Shammah, My God is here. And 'tis best to be where he is 'till he bring us within the gates of the glorious city, where inconceivable light and love from the immediate presence of God, give every one an eternal demonstration that God is here: to him be glory for ever.

# NOTES ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Daniel was of the tribe of Judah, and it is thought, of the royal family. Ezekiel, his cotemporary, but much his senior, speaks of him as wise to a proverb, when he upbraids the king of Tyre with his self-conceit, Thou art wiser than Daniel. He likewise names Noah, Daniel, and Job, as having the greatest interest in heaven of any. He lived a long and active life in the courts and councils of some of the greatest monarchs the world ever had. Yet none was more intimately acquainted with the mind of God than he that was a courtier, a statesman, and a man of business. It is generally supposed he lived to be very old, and died at Shushan in Persia. The first chapter of this book, and the three first verses of the second are in Hebrew: and so are the four last chapters. The rest of the book is in the Chaldee: Daniel continues the holy story, from the first taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldean Babel, 'till the last destruction of it by Rome, the mystical Babel.

## I

Jehoiakim's first captivity, ver. 1, 2. The choice made of Daniel and some other young men, to be brought up for Nebuchadnezzar's service, ver. 3-7. Their preferring pulse before the king's meat, ver. 8-16. Their wonderful improvement, ver. 17- 21.

2. With part of the vessels - In this expedition Nebuchadnezzar carried away some captives, among whom were Daniel and his friends. His God - Baal, or Bell, and Nebo, which words they put into the names of their kings and favourites.

3. Of the eunuchs - These were chief among the king's servants; and they are called eunuchs, because many of them were such. And of the princes - Here was fulfilled what the prophet Isaiah had foretold, Isaiah xxxix, 7.

4. The learning and the tongue - The Chaldeans were skilled above any other nation, in natural philosophy. Their tongue differed from the Hebrew in dialect and in pronunciation, which they learned that they might be the more acceptable to the king, and court.

5. The king's meat - Such as he had at his own table.

6. And Azariah - Probably all of the royal lineage of Judah.

7. Gave names - That is, other names, relating to the idol-gods. Belteshazzar - So Daniel had the name of Belteshazzar, from the great Babylonian idol Baal or Bell. This was by the king's command, and herein he put forth an act: of his sovereignty.

8. But Daniel purposed - There may be several weighty reasons assigned why Daniel did this.

1. Because many of those meats provided for the king's table, were forbidden by the Jewish law.

2. Daniel knew these delicates would too much gratify the flesh.

3. He did not dare to eat and drink things consecrated to idols.

4. He was sensible, how unsuitable delicate fare would be to the afflicted state of God's people. Therefore he was herein a rare pattern of avoiding all the occasions of evil.

15. Fairer and fatter - The blessing of God upon homely fare, affords often more health and strength, than more costly fare to them that eat the fat, and drink the sweet.

19. Before - Both in the presence chamber, and in the council chamber, to try their proficiency; this shews the king's ability and judgment, how else could he discern their fitness, and their excellency above others.

20. The king inquired - This is a farther confirmation of the king's noble endowments, and of his great care whom he chose to be in offices of trust, namely persons excellently qualified to serve him in the great affairs of the kingdom. And thus did God pour contempt upon the pride of the Chaldeans, and put honour on the low estate of his people.

21. Continued - in the court of Babylon until Cyrus, and then he was in the Persian court, and he lived in honour and high employment all that time, yea, after Cyrus began to reign. For chap. x, 1, he had visions and Revelations in the third year of Cyrus.

## II

In this chapter we have, The perplexity of Nebuchadnezzar thro' his dream which he had forgotten, and which the magicians could not tell him, ver. 1-11. Orders given to destroy all the wise men of Babylon, ver. 12-15. The dream discovered to Daniel, and his thanksgiving, ver. 16-23. His discovery of the dream and the meaning of it to the king, ver. 24-45. The honour put upon Daniel and his companions, ver. 46-49.

1. In the second year - This was properly in the fifth year of that king's reign, but in the second year after Daniel had been brought before the king. Dreams - It was one dream, but of many parts.

2. The astrologers - Who pretended great skill in natural, and supernatural things. The sorcerers - Or necromancers, who used diabolical arts. Chaldeans - This name the magicians assumed as being national, and most noble.

3. To know - He remembered the fact in general, but could not repeat it perfectly. Yet it had left such an impression on him, as put him in great perplexity. The Lord hath ways to affright the greatest men in the world, in the midst of their security.

4. In Syriack - That is in the Chaldee tongue, for Syria or Aram is sometimes taken in a large sense, containing, Assyria, Babylon, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Palestine, 2 Kings xviii, 26. From hence all is written in the Chaldee language, to the eighth chapter.

9. But one decree - I will not retract my sentence.

13. Daniel and his fellows - Daniel and his fellows were not called, because of their youth, which the Chaldeans despised. Here it is observable:

1. The magicians confessed, that knowledge and Revelation must come from God, and therefore what Daniel did, was not of any human strength.
2. That the Lord held the governor's hands, so that he did not slay Daniel presently with the first.
3. That Daniel by his prudence and piety, saved all the magicians lives.

21. He changeth - God can make the sun go back or stand still, as in Ahaz and Joshua's time, it is the great part of God's power and prerogative to change times. Daniel here attributes that to God, which Heathens attributed to nature, or chance. God only, that made all by his power, doth rule, and over-rule all by his providence.

26. Belteshazzar - By this name of Belteshazzar he had given Daniel, he took courage as if he might expect some great thing from him: for the word signifies the keeper of secret treasure.

28. What shall be - Observe the prophet's wisdom, he does not fall abruptly upon the dream, but first prepares this lofty king for it, and by degrees labours to win him to the knowledge of the true God.

30. But - But that the interpretation may be manifest to the king, and that thou mayest be better instructed and satisfied in thy mind.

36. And we - By this word we appears Daniel's piety and modesty, or he declares by it, that he and his companions had begged this skill from God, and therefore he did not arrogate it to himself.

38. Made thee ruler - He hath given thee absolute dominion of all creatures, men and beasts within the bounds of thy vast kingdom. Thou - He was first in order, as the head is before the other parts, and the vision began in him, and descended downwards to the other three monarchies. He was the head of gold, because of the vast riches wherein this monarchy abounded, and because it stood longest, five hundred years, and was fortunate and flourishing to the last.

39. Another kingdom - This was that of the Medes and Persians, inferior in time for it lasted not half so long as the Assyrian in prosperity and tranquillity; yet, was this wonderful, rich and large for a time. Third kingdom - This was the Grecian monarchy under Alexander the great, called brass, because coarser than the other. Over all the earth - Alexander marched even to the Indies, and was said to conquer the world.

40. Fourth kingdom - This is the kingdom of the Romans, and was to last not only to Christ's first coming, but under antichrist, to his second coming. This did break in pieces all other kingdoms, being too strong for them, and brought all into subjection to it, 'till the stone fell upon it.

41. Divided - Partly strong, and partly weak; the Roman kingdom was divided, partly by their civil wars, partly when conquered provinces and kingdoms cast off the Roman yoke, and set up king's of their own, and so the empire was divided into ten kingdoms or toes.

42. Broken - This was plain in the civil wars of the Romans, and the falling off of some countries, especially towards the end of it.

43. Mingle themselves - By marriage, but they shall never knit well together, because ambition is stronger than affinity.

44. In the days of these kings - While the iron kingdom stood, for Christ was born in the reign of Augustus Caesar. And this kingdom is not bounded by any limits, as worldly empires are, but is truly universal. And it shall be for ever, never destroyed or given to others, as the rest were.

45. And the gold - This denotes the small beginning of Christ's visible kingdom, and the different rise of Christ from all other; his conception by the Holy Ghost, without father and mother, respectively as to his two natures. This stone, falling from the mountain, brake the image in pieces; for Christ is a stone that grinds to powder those it falls on: and he is a growing stone even to a mountain, and therefore will fill the earth.

46. That they should offer - This was strange, that so great a monarch should thus worship his vassal, which he did in consternation and admiration. But doubtless Daniel put a stop to it: though

he could not hinder the king in his prostration, and in his word of command. And the king being instructed of Daniel, gives God all the glory in the next words.

47. God of gods - The supreme God of all the world, above Baal and all other gods. Lord of kings - The word in the Syriack signifies, high Lord, seeing he is the highest king of all the earth.

49. And he set - He substituted them as lieutenants for the king's service under Daniel, but Daniel sat in the king's gate to be ready for the king's chief business.

## III

Nebuchadnezzar erects a golden image, and requires all his subjects to worship it, ver. 1-7. He is informed that the Jewish princes refuse to worship it, ver. 8-12. They resolutely persist in their refusal, ver. 13-18. They are cast into the fiery furnace, ver. 19-23. Their preservation and the conviction of the king, ver. 24- 27. The honour which he gave to God, and the favour he shewed to his servants, ver. 28-30.

1. Made an image - Perhaps he did this, that he might seem no ways inclined to the Jews, or their religion, whereof the Chaldeans might be jealous, seeing he had owned their God to be greatest, and had preferred Daniel and his friends to great honours.

4. Nations and languages - Proclamation was made therefore in several languages.

16. We are not careful - Hebrew. We care not: there is no need of any answer in this case for it is in vain for us to debate the matter; the king is resolved to have his will of us, and we are resolved on the contrary.

18. But if not - It was therefore all one to them, which way God would honour himself; they were resolved to suffer rather than sin, and leave the cause to God. Indeed if God be for us, we need not fear what man can do unto us. Let him do his worst. God will deliver us either from death, or in death.

20. To bind - What did he think these three men would have refused? Or that their God would defend them from his power, or that if he had, his mighty men could have prevailed? None of all this was the case; for God purposed to shew his power when the king did his worst, and in the thing wherein he dealt proudly, to be above him.

23. Fell down - All this is exprest with emphasis, to make the power of God more glorious in their preservation; for that shame that slew the executioners, might much more easily have killed them, even before they fell down.

25. No hurt - See how the God of nature can when he pleases control the powers of nature! The Son of God - Probably he had heard David speak of him. Jesus Christ, the Angel of the covenant, did sometimes appear before his incarnation. Those who suffer for Christ, have his gracious presence with them in their sufferings, even in the fiery furnace, even in the valley of the shadow of death, and therefore need fear no evil.

26. And spake - With a milder tone than before, God having abated the fire of his fury. Now he could at once acknowledge the true God to be the most high above all gods, and the three worthies to be his faithful servants.

## IV

The writer of this chapter is Nebuchadnezzar himself. The story of him is given in his own words. Here is the preface, ver. 1- 3. His dream, which puzzled the magicians, ver. 4-18. The interpretation of it by Daniel, ver. 19-27. The accomplishment of it, ver. 28-33. Nebuchadnezzar's recovery and adoration of God, ver. 34-37.

1. Nebuchadnezzar the king - Daniel here sets down another strange relation in the words of the king's own proclamation, sent to all his vast kingdoms, and questionless put into the king's archives, and court-rolls. Peace be multiplied - All health and happiness; this was always the form of salutation among the eastern nations.

3. How great are his signs - Nothing less than a real change of heart could cause such a confession as this! Nebuchadnezzar was now old, had reigned above forty years, and seen as much of the world as most men ever did. And yet never 'till now, did he admire surprizing events, as the signs and wonders of the high God!

4. Was at rest - When my wars were over, I sat down quiet, enjoying the spoils of my enemies.

13. A watcher - A holy angel, the instrument of God, to execute God's judgments which the angels watch constantly to perform.

17. Of the holy ones - The decree was God's, and the demand was of the holy angels; if God enact it, the angels had the dispensation of it put into their hands, and they all consent to it as a just judgment of God to be executed by them according to the will of God. The most high ruleth - Nebuchadnezzar and his flatterers conceded he was a God in earth unaccountable to any. But the great God will make all men know he rules all in earth too, and sets up at his pleasure whom he will, and plucks them down again.

19. Troubled him - Because he fore-saw such troubles coming upon the king for whom he had a high reverence. Let not the dream trouble thee - Speak out, let the event be what it will. Belteshazzar said - What address and how excellent a spirit is shewn in this short preface.

22. Reacheth unto heaven - Thou art high and mighty in the in majesty which God hath given thee. To the end of the earth - To the Caspian sea north, to the Euxine and Aegean sea west, to the Mediterranean south.

25. They shall drive thee - This was such a thundering peal, that it was wonderful the king could endure to hear it without fury boiling in his heart, yet the Lord with-held him. Seven times - Seven years. 'Till thou know - How hard is it for lofty princes to learn this lesson.

26. The heavens do rule - That God, who sits in heaven rules over all.

27. If it may be - Daniel was not certain of pardon for him, nor did he altogether despair of it. With what wisdom and tenderness does he speak: and yet with what plainness?

28. King Nebuchadnezzar - With how admirable propriety is the person changed here! These six verses speaking in the third person. But in the thirty fourth, Nebuchadnezzar having recovered his reason, speaks in the first person again.

33. Was driven from men - Being bereft of his understanding, as a man distracted he fled, and betook himself to the woods.

34. Mine understanding returned - God shined upon his soul, and gave him understanding to consider his sad state, and the causes of it. And honoured him - By prayer and praise, adoring the justice and mercy of God, giving God the glory of his sovereignty and unchangeableness.

35. As nothing - A due consideration of God's infinite greatness, makes the creature appear as nothing; creatures are nothing to help, nothing to hurt, nothing in duration, nothing solid and substantial, nothing without dependence, and influence, and support from God. His will - Being the Lord of hosts, and the only absolute and universal monarch of the world.

36. Brightness - I had again the majesty of a king in my countenance. I was established - In wonted power and place, owned and obeyed, by all. Majesty was added - He was the most august and magnificient prince on earth, much more so than before.

37. Now I praise - Thus can the Lord make the stoutest hearts to stoop, and do him homage. This doxology proceeds from his heart. Are truth - God is truth essentially: he is the rule and standard of truth, his words are truth, his ways are truth, and they are judgment: he is wise, and hath dealt justly with me for my pride, and in very faithfulness hath afflicted me, and in very tenderness hath restored me; I do, and ever shall adore him for it. Able to abase - As he hath declared upon me, in stupendous changes, which I proclaim to all the world. He had a just controversy with me, and I have no ground to quarrel with him, but to give him glory by this confession. What authority had any one to say, That this man "was no convert?" We can no more doubt of his salvation than of Solomon's.

## V

Belshazzar's profane feast, ver. 1-4. The hand writing on the wall, ver. 5-9. Interpreted and applied by Daniel, ver. 10-29. The accomplishment of it, ver. 30, 31.

1. Belshazzar - The grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. Made a great feast - After the manner of the eastern kings who shewed their magnificence this way. But this is prodigious that he should carouse when the city was besieged, and ready to be taken by Darius the Mede.

2. To bring the vessels - Triumphing thereby over God and his people.

4. And praised the gods of gold - At the same time insulting the great God of heaven and earth.

5. Came forth fingers - The likeness of a man's hand.

6. His knees smote - So soon can the terrors of God make the loftiest cedars, the tyrants of the earth.

10. The queen came - The women in those courts had an apartment by themselves, and this being the queen-mother, and aged, did not mingle herself with the king's wives and concubines, yet she broke the rule in coming in now, upon this solemn occasion.

24. From him - From that God whom thou hast despised.

26. MENE - MENE MENE, it is numbered, it is numbered; the words are doubled for the greater confirmation. It relates to the number of the seventy years for the overthrow of the Babylonish empire.

27. Art found wanting - There is no weight nor worth in thee; thou hast made light of God, and the Lord makes light of thee.

28. PERES - Separated, divided, broken. Phars signifies two things, broken off, and Persian; noting that, first, this kingdom was broken down from Belshazzar. Secondly, that it was given to the Persians.

31. Darius the Mede - This was he that with Cyrus besieged and took Babylon.

## VI

Daniel's preferment, ver. 1-3. Envy against him, ver. 4-5. The decree against prayer, ver. 6-9. Daniel's continuance in prayer notwithstanding, ver. 10. He is informed against and cast into the den of lions, ver. 11-17. His preservation and deliverance, ver. 18- 23. The death of his accusers, ver. 24. The decree of Darius, and prosperity of Daniel, ver. 25-28.

2. Daniel was first - Belshazzar's promise to Daniel was, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom, chap. v, 7, 16, 29. The first was general of the army, the second president of the palace, the third of the land and provinces.

4. Concerning the kingdom - And so to have made him guilty of treason, or other high misdemeanors, in the king's business.

10. Toward Jerusalem - The temple was the place where the Lord placed his name, and promised to appear, and accept his people, all being a type of Christ, through whom only sinners are accepted. As he did aforetime - He did not abate his prayers for the king's command, nor did he break the law purposely, because he did no more than he was wont to do in serving his God.

14. Displeased with himself - For having made that foolish decree. To deliver him - To find out some way of delivering him.

20. Able to deliver - What he doubted of, we are sure of, that the servants of the living God, have a master who is able to deliver them and bear them out in his service.

22. His angel - The same that was with the three children in the fiery furnace, whose presence made even the lion's den a strong- hold, his palace, his paradise. See the power of God over the fiercest creatures! See the care God takes of his faithful servants, especially when they are called to suffer for him! See how ready the angels are to minister to the heirs of salvation!

25. In all the earth - In all that great empire. It is usual with the Turk, Tartar, Chinese, to arrogate the same universality.

## VII

We come now to the prophetical part of Daniel, in which are many things hard to be understood. In this chapter we have, The vision of the four beasts, ver. 1-8. The vision of God's throne of government and judgment, ver. 9-14. The interpretation of those visions, ver. 15-28.

1. In the first year of Belshazzar - This prophecy is written in Chaldee, to be a monument to him, of the reverence his father and grandfather shewed towards God, who had done such mighty works for them. Then he wrote - These visions were recorded for the benefit of the church, to rectify their mistake: for they thought all things would succeed prosperously after they returned out of their captivity.

2. The four winds - Probably by the four winds of the great sea is signified commotions of contrary nations, striving together by wars, and producing these four beasts successively.

3. Four great beasts - That is, four great monarchies, great, in comparison of particular kingdoms; beasts for their tyrannical oppressions.

4. The first - This was the Chaldean, or Assyrian; whose seat was first at Babylon, afterwards at Nineveh, and then at Babylon again. Eagle's wings - They were swift, over-running many countries, and brought their monarchy to a prodigious height in a short time. The wings were plucked - Which was first done in stopping the career of their victories, and afterwards in casting them out of their kingdom. A man's heart - They lost their lion- like courage, and became faint and cowardly like other men.

5. Another beast - The Mede's and Persians, a fierce, ravenous creature. On one side - The north side; for the Mede first arose and sent to Cyrus the Persian to come and assist him against the Assyrian. Three ribs - Several of the Babylonian subjects revolted, and all these made the three ribs.

6. Like a leopard - This leopard was the Grecian monarchy; a leopard is less than a lion, so was this monarchy at first, but yet durst fight with a lion; so did Alexander encounter Darius with an inferior force. A leopard also for his swiftness; therefore described with four wings on his back. Four heads - He was succeeded by four of his chief commanders, who divided that empire into four parts.

7. A fourth beast - The Roman empire.

8. Another little horn - Probably either the Turk or the Romish antichrist.

9. The thrones - The kingdoms of this world were destroyed by God the king, and judge of all, called the Ancient of days, because of his eternal deity.

11. Destroyed - This cannot but be meant of the ruin and judgment of antichrist.

13. A son of man - That is, the Messiah, he came with the clouds of heaven, gloriously, swiftly and terribly. And came - This relates to his ascension, at which time, he received his royal investiture, for the protection of his church, and curbing of their enemies.

16. Unto one - That is, to an angel, that ministered. The truth - The true meaning of this vision.

18. But the saints - Jesus Christ being their king, they shall reign with him, and possess the kingdom for ever. 24. And another - This seems to mean the Romish antichrist.

25. Until a time and times - The numbers of Daniel and John seem to agree. Daniel was certainly prophetical in these things, and his prophecy reacheth to the end of times, even of antichrist's reign.

28. Of the matter - Of the vision, and the angel's interpretation.

## VIII

This and the following chapters are not writ in Chaldee, but in Hebrew, for the benefit of the Jews. Here is the vision of the ram, and the he-goat, and the little horn, ver. 1-14. The interpretation of it, ver. 15-27

1. After that - In the other vision he speaks o [ all the four monarchies; here only of the three first; this vision being a comment upon the first.

2. The river of Ulai - Which ran round the city.

3. Two horns - The kingdom of Media and Persia. And the higher - The kingdom of Persia which rose last, in Cyrus, became more eminent than that of the Medes.

4. West-ward - Toward Babylon, Syria, Cappadocia, Asia the less, and Greece, all westward from Media and Persia. North-ward - Against the Armenians, Iberians, Lydians, Colchi Caspians. South-ward - Against Ethiopia, Arabia, Egypt.

5. An he-goat - The Grecian empire. The whole earth - The whole Persian empire. Touched not the ground - Went with incredible swiftness. A horn - This was Alexander the great.

6. The ram - The king of Media and Persia.

8. Was broken - When Alexander was greatest, then was he broken, and that to pieces, for he, his mother, son, brother, and all his kindred were destroyed. The four winds -

1. Antipater got Greece.

2. Asia was possessed by Antigonus.

3. Ptolemy got Egypt.

4. Seleucus had Babylon and Syria. All these were variously situated; to the east, Babylon and Syria; to the south, Egypt; to the north, Asia the less; to the west, Greece.

9. A little horn - This little horn was Antiochus Epiphanes. The south - Egypt where he besieged and took many places. The east - In Syria, Babylon, Armenia. The pleasant land - Judea, so called because of the temple and people of God in it, and the fruitfulness of it.

10. The host of heaven - The church of God militant, who worship the God of heaven, who are citizens of heaven, whose names are written in heaven; and among these the priests, and champions, who were as stars shining above the rest; these he profaned and slew cruelly.

11. The prince - Not only against the high-priest, but against God himself. Was cast down - He took away the use of the temple as to the holy service and sacrifices.

12. By reason of transgression - Both the transgression of the priests, and of the people.

13. One saint - That is, one holy angel. How long - How long shall Antiochus continue his vexations against the people and prevent the worship of God? This is, the treading down of the sanctuary, and the host.

14. He - That angel. Then - Just so long it was, from the defection of the people, procured by Menelaus, the high-priest, to the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the re-establishment of religion among them.

15. The meaning - A more clear discovery of those things. The appearance of a man - Probably Gabriel.

16. A man's voice - Of him before mentioned, namely, Christ.

17. He came near - That he might speak more familiarly to him, yet Daniel could not bear the glory of it. How much less can we bear the glory of God, and how graciously hath the Lord dealt

with us, to teach us by men, and not by angels? O son of man - He calls him son of man, to make him mind his frailty, and not to be lifted up with this great condescension of heaven. At the time - In God's appointed time, in the latter day, but not now in thy life- time.

18. Toward the ground - Being terrified with the splendour and grandeur both of the messenger and message. Set me upright - By one touch only. The power of spirits is incomparably greater than that of the strongest of men.

19. The indignation - God will raise up Antiochus to execute his wrath against the Jews for their sins, yet there shall be an end of that indignation.

23. In the latter time - When they were come to the height, and beginning to decline. When the transgressors - When the Jews were grown to an excess of wickedness, then God suffered Antiochus to persecute them. Dark sentences - Full of subtilty: such all histories declare Antiochus to be.

24. Not by his own power - Not by any heroick deeds, but by making use of the Jewish factions, through the divine commission to punish a backsliding nation; and by means of Eumenes and Attalus, by whose help he got up to this height. Shall destroy - He shall by force, craft, and cruelty, destroy many of God's people.

25. By peace - Under colour of kindness. Against the prince of princes - He fought against God, affronting God's laws, profaning God's worship, and temple, and setting up the image and worship of Jupiter there. Without hand - By a disease whereof he died, 1Macc vi, 8.

26. Shut thou up - Lay it up in thy heart. For many days - Three hundred years after this; long after Daniel's days.

27. Was sick - Being overwhelmed by a sense of the calamity that should befall the people of God. Did the king's business - Having recovered strength, he minded his place, duty and trust, and concealed the whole, that they might not see it by his countenance.

## IX

Daniel's prayer for the restoration of Israel, ver. 1-23. The answer sent him by an angel, ver. 24-27. This is the clearest prophecy of the Messiah in all the Old Testament.

1. In the first year of Darius - That is, immediately after the overthrow of the kingdom of Babylon, which was the year of the Jews deliverance from captivity. Of the Medes - This Darius was not Darius the Persian, under whom the temple was built, as some have asserted, to invalidate the credibility of this book; but Darius the Mede, who lived in the time of Daniel.

2. By books - By the sacred books.

12. Judged us - Whose duty it was to govern the people, and to judge their causes; wherein if there was a failure, it was a sin, and judgment upon the people, and upon the rulers and Judges themselves also. Upon Jerusalem - A place privileged many ways above all others, and punished above all others.

14. The Lord watched - God's watching denotes the fit ways that he always takes to punish sinners.

17. For the Lord's sake - For the sake of the Messiah: to whom the title Lord is frequently given in the Old Testament.

21. About the time - The time of the evening sacrifice was a solemn and set time of devotion. Tho' the altar was in ruins, and there was no oblation offered upon it, yet the pious Jews were daily thoughtful of the time when it should have been offered, and hoped that their prayer would be set forth before God as incense, and the lifting up of their hands, as the evening sacrifice. This was peculiarly a type of that great sacrifice, which Christ was to offer: and it was in virtue of that sacrifice, that Daniel's prayer was accepted, when he prayed for the Lord's sake.

24. Seventy weeks - These weeks are weeks of days, and these days are so many years. To finish the transgression - The angel discovers first the disease in three several words, which contain all sorts of sin, which the Messiah should free us from by his full redemption. He shews the cure of this disease in three words.

1. To finish transgression.
2. To make an end of sin.
3. To make reconciliation: all which words are very expressive in the original, and signify to pardon, to blot out, to destroy. To bring in everlasting righteousness - To bring in justification by the free grace of God in Christ, and sanctification by his spirit: called everlasting, because Christ is eternal, and so are the acceptance and holiness purchased for us. Christ brings this in,
   1. By his merit.
   2. By his gospel declaring it.
   3. By faith applying, and sealing it by the Holy Ghost. To seal up - To abrogate the former dispensation of the law, and to ratify the gospel covenant. To anoint - This alludes to his name Messiah and Christ, both which signify anointed. Christ was anointed at his first conception, and personal union, Luke i, 35. In his baptism, Matt. iii, 17, to his three offices by the holy Ghost,
      1. King, Matt. ii, 2.
      2. Prophet, Isaiah lxi, 1.
      3. Priest, Psalm cx, 4.

25. From the going forth - From the publication of the edict, whether of Cyrus or Darius, to restore and to build it.

26. And after - After the seven and the sixty two that followed them. Not for himself - But for our sakes, and for our salvation. And the people - The Roman under the conduct of Titus. Determined - God hath decreed to destroy that place and people, by the miseries and desolations of war.

27. He shall confirm - Christ confirmed the new covenant,

1. By the testimony of angels, of John baptist, of the wise men, of the saints then living, of Moses and Elias.
2. By his preaching.
3. By signs and wonders.
4. By his holy life.
5. By his resurrection and ascension.
6. By his death and blood shedding. Shall cause the sacrifice to cease - All the Jewish rites, and Levitical worship. By his death he abrogated, and put an end to this labourious service, for ever. And that determined - That spirit of slumber, which

God has determined to pour on the desolate nation, 'till the time draws near, when all Israel shall be saved.

## X

This chapter and the two next make one entire vision and prophecy, given Daniel about two years after the former. This chapter is introductory: the next has the prophecy itself, and the twelfth chapter, the conclusion of it. In this we have Daniel's solemn humiliation, ver. 1-3. A glorious appearance of the Son of God, ver. 4-9. The encouragement given him to expect a full discovery of future events, ver. 10-25.

2. Was mourning - Because he foresaw the many calamities that would befall the Jews for their sins, especially for destroying the Messiah, and rejecting his gospel.

4. The first month - Nisan, which is March. Hiddekel - Or Tigris.

5. A certain man - Very probably Christ, who appeared to Daniel in royal and priestly robes, and in so great brightness and majesty.

12. He - Not Christ, but Gabriel.

13. Withstood me - God suffered the wicked counsels of Cambyses to take place awhile; but Daniel by his prayers, and the angel by his power, overcame him at last: and this very thing laid a foundation of the ruin of the Persian monarchies. Michael - Michael here is commonly supposed to mean Christ. I remained - To counter-work their designs against the people of God.

15. I set my face - I prostrated myself upon the earth. And I became dumb - Thro' astonishment.

16. One like the sons of men - This likewise seems to have been Gabriel. I have retained no strength - Tho' he appeared to him, and spake to him as a man, yet Daniel could not bear his presence, without some dread.

20. To fight - To oppose his mischievous designs.

21. Michael - Christ alone is the protector of his church, when all the princes of the earth desert or oppose it.

## XI

A prediction of the setting up of the Grecian monarchy, ver. 1- 4. Of the affairs of Egypt and Syria, ver. 5-20. The rise and success of Antiochus Epiphanes, ver. 21-29. The mischief he would do to the Jews, ver. 30-43. His fall, ver. 44, 45.

2. He - Xerxes was more potent than all the other three, because his father Darius had gathered an incredible mass for him, which he himself increased for six years together, before he made his

expedition against Greece. There were more kings of Persia besides those four, but they had no concern with the people of God.

3. A mighty king - Alexander the great.

4. When he shall stand up - When he is come to his highest point. Nor according to his dominion - They did not reign as kings at first, but only as captains; and as to the extent of their dominion, it was far less than Alexander's, yea, all four fell short of his. Even for others - Some lesser commanders shared several parts of the empire.

5. The king of the south - This king was Ptolemy, the first king of Egypt after Alexander who is brought in, because he took Jerusalem by treachery; for the angel minds only those persons and things which related to the Jews. One of his princes - Seleucus Nicanor, who overcame Demetrius, and added Asia to his empire.

6. They - The successors of those first kings of Egypt and Syria. Make an agreement - Bernice shall come from Egypt and marry with Antiochus Theus, who was the son of Antiochus Soter, and nephew to Seleucus Nicanor; for her father brought her to Pelusium with an infinite sum of gold and silver for her dowry. She shall not retain - She continued not in favour and authority. Nor his arm - His power.

7. Shall one stand up - Of Bernice shall come Ptolemaeus Euergetes, who shall revenge the wrong done to his sister. Shall enter into the fortress - For he invaded Syria, and took many strong-holds.

8. He shall continue more years - He continued forty-six years.

9. Return - So he did with a booty of forty thousand talents of silver. 10. But his sons - He means the sons of the king of the north, shall be incensed with the deeds of Ptolemaeus Euergetes, and his son Ptolemaeus Philopator. One shall come - Antiochus the great, shall pass through Syria and recover what the king of Egypt took from his father. Even to his fortress - To Raphia, which was a strong fortress at the entrance of Egypt.

11. His hand - Into the hand of Ptolemy.

12. His heart shall be lifted up - He might have recovered all, but he grew proud of his victory, and returned again to his luxury.

16. But he - Antiochus, that comes against Ptolemy. The glorious land - Judea. Antiochus held all Judea, and with the provision and product of it, maintained his army.

17. He shall also set his face - He shall use all the force he can to master Egypt, and engross it to himself. Upright ones - Many of the religious Jews joined with him: the rest of his army was a profane rabble of rude Heathens. He shall give - Antiochus shall give Cleopatra his daughter to young Ptolemy, called the daughter of women, for her beauty. Corrupting her - Persuading her to betray her husband: but she stuck to her husband's interest, and not her father's.

18. The isles - The isles and sea-coasts of the Mediterranean and Aegean sea. But a prince - The Roman ambassador Scipio beat Antiochus at his own weapons of power and policy, and turned the reproach upon his own head.

19. Then - Then he turned his face home-ward, yet was he not in safety, but was quickly after killed.

20. A raiser of taxes - Seleucus Philopator, who peeled his subjects, and spared not to rob the temple. Within few days - For he lived not out the third part of his father's reign. Not in battle - Not by open force, but by poison.

21. A vile person - Antiochus, called Epiphanes by his flatterers, but the people of God accounted him infamous, base, and treacherous. They - Neither peers nor people, nor was he the heir, but his nephew; but he crept in by flatteries.

22. Overflown - The Egyptian force near Pelusium, where they fell by the power of Antiochus, with a great slaughter, near the river Nile. The prince - The high-priest with his place and honour, for he put out Onias, and set up in his stead, Jason his brother.

23. After the league - For he made a league with Egypt, and came with a few, (but chosen men) and took the passes, and put all in subjection to him.

24. He shall enter peaceably - He shall come in upon the Egyptians under pretense of peace, in a plentiful and delicious country, and among a mass of treasures which the kings successively had heaped up; the greatest part of which Antiochus distributed among his confidants, whereby he obliged them the faster to him. He did herein what his fathers had not done; the kings of Syria before him, could never attain to this success over Egypt. Against the strong-holds - Having succeeded thus far, he shall proceed to the places of greatest strength in that kingdom. For a time - That is 'till God put a stop to his career, for the Egyptians found means to deliver themselves from his yoke.

25. But he shall not stand - He might have prospered, if he had not been betrayed by Eulaius, Benaeus, and the rest of his nobles, corrupted by Antiochus.

26. Yea - His most familiar friends and confidants; for he shall be overthrown with a great slaughter, as when the Nile overflows the country.

27. At one table - They shall meet under pretense of peace. But it shall not prosper - For neither shall Antiochus gain Egypt by all his artifice, nor Ptolemy, Syria. At the time appointed - By the Lord, whose purpose and counsel shall stand.

28. Then shall he return - Antiochus shall depart with his booty gotten in Egypt. Against the holy covenant - Against the law of God, with the people that worshipped God according to his will.

29. Toward the south - Egypt, to fight against Ptolemy. But - This shall not be so prosperous as the two former expeditions, but shall fail both of his victory and booty.

30. The ships of Chittim - The Roman out of Italy, and the Archipelago. This made his heart boil with rancor, which he spit out against the Jews; especially being solicited to it by Jason first, and Menelaus after, who were apostates, and betrayers of their brethren.

31. And arms - Not only of his own army, but many Jews. The sanctuary - Even the holy of holies. The abomination - The statue of Jupiter placed in the temple.

36. The king - Antiochus was an eminent type of antichrist; to whom many things that follow may be applied by way of accommodation: altho' they principally refer to Antiochus, and had their primary accomplishment in him. For that that is determined - That which God hath decreed to be done by him shall be done; and that which God hath purposed to be done upon him.

38. But in his estate - In the room of his father's God. The God of forces - This seems to be Jupiter Olympius, never introduced among the Syrians, 'till Antiochus did it.

39. With a strange God - Using all art and authority to propagate his worship.

41. The children of Ammon - He will not hurt them; because they helped him against the Jews.

43. At his steps - He had them at his foot, at his beck.

45. None shall help him - God shall cut him off in the midst of his days. And when he destroys, who can help?

**XII**

A promise of deliverance, and of a joyful resurrection, ver. 1- 4. A conference concerning the time of these events, ver. 5-7. An answer to Daniel's enquiry, ver. 8-13.

1. For the children - The meaning seems to be, as after the death of Antiochus the Jews had some deliverance, so there will be yet a greater deliverance to the people of God, when Michael your prince, the Messiah shall appear for your salvation. A time of trouble - A the siege of Jerusalem, before the final judgment. The phrase at that time, probably includes all the time of Christ, from his first, to his last coming.

4. Seal the book - The book was command to be sealed, because it would be long before the words would be fulfilled, whereas those that were shortly to be fulfilled, were forbidden to be sealed. Shall run - Shall diligently search these prophecies; and they shall know the signs of the times, and wait upon God in the way of his judgments: he means chiefly in gospel-times.

5. Other two - Two angels waiting on Christ.

6. To the man - To Christ, who seemed to stand in the air above the waters, or upon them.

7. He held up his right hand - He held up both hands to heaven, for the more sure and solemn confirmation of it; and to denote the unchangeableness of God's decrees both for good to the church, and for evil to her enemies. By him - By God the father, and by himself that liveth for ever, to shew the eternal God only knew that decreed it, and would bring it to pass. And an half - That is, a year, two years and half a year. We meet with this in the Revelation, under the title, some times of three days and an half, put for three years and an half, sometimes, forty two months, sometimes, twelve hundred and sixty days. Shall be finished - Which reaches to the calling of the Jews upon the destruction of antichrist.

8. What shall be the end - What is the meaning of all this?

9. And sealed - They shall not be clearly understood, 'till the event make them good.

10. And tried - The afflictions of the church are to prepare them, by taking away their filth, for the bridegroom, as gold and silver are tried and refined.

13. But go thou - I have revealed to thee these things, that thou and thy people, might be prepared for sufferings, and yet not without hope of a glorious deliverance. For thou shalt rest - In which hope thou shalt die, and rest from trouble, 'till the resurrection of the just. It ought to be the great concern of every one of us, to secure a happy lot in the end of the days, and then we may well be content with our present lot, welcoming the will of God.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF HOSEA

HOSEA was the first of all the writing prophets, somewhat before Isaiah. And he is the most obscure of all, which arises from his concise and sententious style, peculiar to himself. He continued very long a prophet; the Jews say, he prophesied near fourscore and ten years. So that he foretold the destruction of the ten tribes, when it was at a great distance; and lived himself to see and lament

it. The scope of his prophecy is, to reprove sin, and denounce judgments against a people that would not be reformed. Many passages in the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, seem to be borrowed from it.

**I**

The general title of the book, ver. 1. He is to convince them of their whoreing against God, by marrying a wife of whoredoms, ver. 2, 3. He is to foretell their ruin, by the names of his sons, ver. 4-9. He intimates, that God still had mercy in store for them, ver. 10, 11.

2. Go take - This was, probably, done in vision, and was to be told to the people, as other visions were: it was parabolically proposed to them, and might have been sufficient to convince the Jews, would they have considered it, as David considered Nathan's parable. A wife of whoredoms and children - Receive and maintain the children she had before.

4. The blood - The slaughters made by Jehu's hand or by his order, in Jezreel. The house of Jehu - Which had now possessed the throne, through the reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam; but the usurper, and his successors adhering to the idolatry of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and adding other sins to it, had now provoked God to declare a sudden extirpation of the family: all this came to pass when Shallum conspiring against Zechariah, slew him, 2 Kings xv, 8-10. The kingdom - After one and forty years tottering it fell to utter ruin and hath so continued to this day.

5. At that day - When my vengeance hath overtaken the house of Jehu. Break - Weaken and by degrees quite break. The bow - All their warlike provision, power and skill. Jezreel - In this valley it is probable the bloodiest battles in the civil wars were fought; the reason whereof might be, because whoever carried the victory in this place, were soon masters of Samaria and Jezreel, and consequently of the kingdom.

6. Lo-ruhamah - Not pitied. Israel's name had been through many ages Ruhamah, that is, pitied. God had pitied them, and saved them from their enemies. But now Israel should be no more pitied, God would throw them up to the rage of usurpers, and conspirators.

7. Save them - I will preserve them, that violence do not swallow them up, nor length of captivity wear them out; and this preserved remnant shall return and be planted in their own land, and there kept in safety. By the Lord - Particularly in that extraordinary deliverance of Hezekiah and Jerusalem, from Sennacherib.

9. Loammi - That is, not my people. Tho' once you were a peculiar people, you are so no more; you are cast off as you deserved. I will not be your God - I will be a God to you, no more than to any of the Heathen nations. This God executed when he gave them up into the hands of Salmaneser, who sent them where none now can find them.

10. The children of Israel - Not Israel after the flesh, not those very families that are carried captive. In the place - In those places, were a people dwelt who were not his people, there shall be a people of God. The living God - Who is the fountain of life to all his children, and who enables them to offer living sacrifices to the living God.

11. Then - This verse has both an historical and a spiritual sense; the one referring to the return out of Babylon, the other to a more glorious deliverance from a more miserable captivity. Judah - The two tribes, who adhered to the house of David. Israel - Some of the ten tribes who were incorporated with the kingdom of Judah, and so carried captive with them. But this is spiritually to be understood of the whole Israel of God. One head - Zerubbabel, who was appointed by Cyrus, yet with full approbation of the people. And so Christ is appointed by the Father, head of his church, whom believers heartily accept. Come up - Literally out of Babylon, spiritually out of captivity to sin and to Satan. Great - Good, joyous and comfortable. Of Jezreel - Israel is here called Jezreel, the seed of God. This seed is now sown in the earth, and buried under the clods; but great shall be its day, when the harvest comes. Great was the day of the church, when there were daily added to it such as should be saved.

## II

The prophet charges the people with their idolatry, and threatens them with the judgments of God, ver. 1-13. Promises of mercy, ver. 14-23.

1. Ye - Who of no people are made a people, who were once unpitied, but now have obtained mercy. Your brethren - To those of the ten tribes, who are your brethren. Ammi - Let them know that yet they are the people of God, they are still within the covenant of their father Abraham, if they will as their father, walk with God, all shall be well.

2. Your mother - The whole body of the people Israel, which were typified in Gomer. Plead - Ye that are sons and daughters of God amidst this idolatrous nation. Not my wife - For by her adulteries she hath dissolved the marriage-covenant.

3. Strip her - As was usually done by incensed husbands, divorcing impudent adulteresses. As a wilderness - Barren and desolate.

5. That give me - Whereas every mercy she enjoyed was God's gift, a fruit of his covenant, love and faithfulness towards her; yet she denies all his kindness, and ascribes to her idols, the bread she ate, the water she drank, and the clothes she wore.

6. Hedge up - I will compass thee in with wars, and calamities, that tho' thou love thy sinful courses, thou shalt have little pleasure in them. Make a wall - Yea, I will make the calamities of this people as a strong wall, which they cannot break. Her paths - Wherein thou didst go when thou wentest to Egypt, or Syria for help; but by my judgments, and thine enemies power, thou shalt be so guarded, thou shalt not find how to send to them for relief.

7. Her lovers - Idols and idolaters. Overtake them - But shall never overtake their desired help. To my first husband - God who had married Israel to himself.

8. Did not know - Did not consider. They - The body of the Jews. Prepared - Dedicated to the service of the idol.

9. Take away - I will resume all I gave. In the time thereof - When they should gather it in, as being ripe.

10. Her lewdness - Folly and wickedness.

11. Her feast days - Though apostate, Israel was fallen to idolatry, yet they retained many of the Mosaic rites and ceremonies. Her solemn feasts - The three annual feasts of tabernacles, weeks, and passover, all which ceased when they were carried captive, by Salmaneser.

12. My rewards - They gave the praise of all their abundance to idols. Them - Their vine-yards and olive-yards, and the places where they planted their fig-trees, and other fruit-trees.

13. Visit - Punish. The days - The sins of those days. Of Baalim - Baal was the great idol of the ten tribes; here it is plural Baalim, to denote the multitude of idols which they worshipped, all called by this one name. Decked herself - To put the greater honour on the idol.

14. I will allure - I will incline her mind to consider what I propose. Into the wilderness - Deep distress.

15. Her vineyards - Many blessings. From thence - From the time of their repentance. Valley of Achor - Which was a large, fruitful and pleasant valley near Jericho, on the very entrance into the land of Canaan. A door of hope - That valley was a door of hope to Israel of old. And such a door will God give to repenting Israel. As in the days of her youth - When I espoused her.

16. Thou shalt call - Both by words, affections, and obedience, shall own me as thy husband, and delight to call me so. Baali - That is, my Lord.

17. For - I will abolish the memory of Baalim. Baalim - This great idol for all others. And they - These false gods. By their name - Their names perishing with them.

18. For them - The Israel of God. With the beasts - With all the creatures that might either serve or hurt them. It is a full and gracious promise of abundance of peace, safety, and love, through the creation. Safely - This was in some measure made good to the Jews returning out of captivity. But the full accomplishment will be to the church of Christ.

21. In that day - In the day of gospel-grace. I will hear - God the first and universal cause will influence the heavens, he will command their dew, and showers. When the earth is dry, it does as it were, cry to the heavens for refreshing showers, when the seed sown, the vines and olives planted, are at a stand, they cry to the earth for its kindly influences, that they may spring up, and yield fruit for Jezreel, which may call, and cry, but never will be satisfied if God does not hear them, and command his blessing which he promises to his people on renewing covenant with them. Now their repentance shall be blest with plenty, and God will set the frame of heaven and earth in due order to effect this; there shall be an harmony, between all subordinate causes moved by God the first great cause, whence expected events and fruits shall be produced for their good and comfort.

23. I will sow - I will bless them with a wonderful increase of people, exprest with allusion to seed sown in the earth. So the Jews multiplied after the Babylonish captivity, but much more are the numbers increased since the preaching of the gospel.

## III

Another type of the spiritual whoredom of Israel, ver. 1-3. The punishment of it, ver. 4. Their reformation, ver. 5.

1. Of her friend - Her husband. An adulteress - Either already tainted, or that certainly will be tainted with that vice. According to the love - Let this be the emblem of my love to the children of Israel. And love - Love the feasts of their idols, where they drink wine to excess.

2. Fifteen pieces of silver - It was half the value of a slave, Exod. xxi, 32. An homer of barley - About fourteen bushels. Of barley - The meanest kind of provision; and suited to a low condition, all this is, to set forth Israel's indigence and ingratitude, and God's bounty to Israel.

3. Abide for me - Thou shalt wait unmarried, until I espouse thee.

4. For - Now the parable is unfolded, it shall be with Israel as with such a woman, they and she were guilty of adultery, both punished long, both made slaves, kept hardly, and valued meanly, yet in mercy at last pardoned, and re-accepted tho' after a long time of probation. Without a king - None of their own royal line shall sit on the throne. A prince - Strangers shall be princes and governors over them. Without a sacrifice - Offered according to the law. An image - They could carry none of their images with them, and the Assyrians would not let them make new ones. Ephod - No priest as well as no ephod. And without teraphim - Idolatrous images kept in their private houses, like the Roman household gods; in one word, such should be the state of their captives; they should have nothing of their own either in religious or civil affairs, but be wholly under the power of their conquering enemies.

5. Return - Repent. And David - The Messiah who is the son of David. And his goodness - God and his goodness; that is, the good and gracious God. God in Christ and with Christ shall be worshipped. The latter days - In the days of the Messiah, in gospel-times.

## IV

The prophet shews their numerous sins, and the judgments consequent upon them, ver. 1-19.

2. Break out - As waters that swell above all banks. Toucheth blood - Slaughters are multiplied; so that the end of one is the beginning of another.

3. Shall languish - Shall pine away. With the beasts of the field - God punishes man in cutting off what was made for man's benefit; and 'tis probable the tamer cattle were starved for want of grass or fodder, all being consumed by the wasting armies. The tamer either were killed by enemies, or offended with stench, forsook the country, or were devoured by birds of prey. Taken away - Whether by drying up the waters, or by corrupting them with blood and carcasses.

4. Let no man strive - They are so hardened, it is to no purpose to warn them any more. As they that strive - There is no modesty, or fear of God or man left among them, they will contend with their teachers, reprovers, and counsellors.

5. Therefore - The prophet turns his speech to the people, thou O Israel; he speaks to them as to one person. Fall - Stumble, and fall, and be broken. This day - Very suddenly; your fall shall be no longer delayed. The prophet - Prophesied lies. In the night - In the darkest calamities. Thy mother - Both the state, or kingdom; and the synagogues, or churches: the publick is as a mother to private persons, so all shall be destroyed.

6. Destroyed - Many were already cut off by Pul king of Assyria, and many destroyed by the bloody tyranny of Menahem. Of knowledge - Of God, his law, his providence, his holy nature, his hatred of sin and power to punish it. Because thou - The prophet now turns from the people to the priests, to whom he speaks as to one person. Rejected knowledge - Art and wilt be ignorant. Seeing thou - O Israel, and you O priests, you have broken all the precepts of it. Thy children - The people of Israel, the whole kingdom of the ten tribes.

7. As they - Kings, priests, and people. Were increased - In number, in riches, and honour. So they sinned - Sin grew with their wealth and honour. Their glory - They turned all that in which they might glory above others, into sin. I will turn it into their dishonour.

8. They - The priests who minister to the idols. The sin - Probably by sin is meant sin-offering, in which the priest had his share. And they - Covetous, luxurious, idolatrous priests.

10. Not have enough - They shall not be nourished, nor satisfied with what they eat. Shall not increase - They shall not hereby increase the number of their children, either the women shall not bear, or the children shall not live.

11. Take away the heart - Deprive men of their understanding and judgment.

12. Stocks - Wooden statues. The spirit of whoredom - A heart ensnared with whoredoms, spiritual and corporal. Caused them to err - Hath blinded, and deceived them.

13. Good - Convenient for the sacrificers. Shall commit whoredom - Shall dishonour themselves, and their families, with fornicators.

14. Nor your spouses - I will give them up to their own hearts. For themselves - The husband and fathers are examples to their wives and daughters. Therefore the people - The sottish ignorant people, that know not God. Shall fall - Be utterly ruined.

15. Offend - Commit like sins. Gilgal - Gilgal was chosen by Jeroboam, or by succeeding idolaters for the solemn worship of their idols. Beth-aven - Beth-el, where Jacob lodged, who called it Beth-el, the house of God; but when Jeroboam made it the place for his calf-worship, it became Beth-aven, the house of vanity or iniquity. Nor swear - This is a part put for the whole worship of God, which the prophet warns them not to blend with their idolatries.

16. Israel - The ten tribes. As a back-sliding heifer - Which when grown lusty, and wanton, will neither endure the yoke nor be confined in her allowed pastures. In a large place - In a large place or wilderness, where is no rest, safety or provision; such shall be the condition of the ten tribes.

17. Ephraim - The children of Ephraim were numerous and potent, and here put for the whole ten tribes. Let him alone - He is obstinate, as such, throw him up.

18. Their drink - Their wine is corrupt and hurtful. Continually - Without ceasing from Jeroboam's time to this day. Give ye - Beside there is shameful oppression and bribery among them.

19. The wind - The whirlwind of wrath from God hath seized this old adulteress, and carried some of her children away already. They shall be ashamed - What they made their confidence, shall be their shame.

## V

The scope of this chapter likewise, is to discover the sins of Israel and Judah, and to denounce the judgments of God against them, ver. 1-15.

1. For judgment - God's controversy is with you all. A snare - You, O priests and princes, have ensnared the people by your examples. Mizpah - By idolatries acted at Mizpah, a part of Libanus. On Tabor - Here, as in Mizpah, idolatry catched men as birds are taken in a net.

2. The revolters - All those that have cast off the law of God. Profound - Dig deep to hide their counsels, and to slay the innocent. Though I - Hosea.

5. Doth testify - Is an evident witness against him.

6. To seek the Lord - The Jewish doctors tell us, that under Hosea, Israel had liberty of bringing their sacrifices to Jerusalem. Shall not find him - God will not be found of them. Hath withdrawn himself - For their impenitency.

7. Have begotten - They have trained up their children in the same idolatry. A month - Possibly it may refer to Shallum's short time of usurpation, which lasted but a month; the Assyrians shall make a speedy conquest over you. With their portions - With all their substance.

8. Blow ye - Ye watchmen, sound the alarm, the enemy cometh. After thee, O Benjamin - After thy cries. After thee, O Beth-aven, let Benjamin also cry aloud: for they shall also fall for their sin.

9. Ephraim - The whole kingdom of the ten tribes. Rebuke - When Salmaneser shall besiege, sack and captivate all thy cities, rebuked for their sins. Of Israel - To the house of Israel openly. Made known - By my prophets.

10. The bound - The ancient bounds which limited every one, and prevented the encroaching of covetous men. Like water - Like an overflowing flood.

11. Ephraim - The ten tribes are by seditions, civil wars, unjust sentences, and bloody conspiracies eaten up already. After the commandment - To forbear going to the temple, and to worship the calves at Daniel and Bethel, as Jeroboam the son of Nebat commanded.

12. A moth - Moths leisurely eat up our clothes; so God was then, and had been, from Jeroboam's death, weakening the ten tribes. As rottenness - Secretly consuming them.

13. His sickness - Weakness, like a consumption, threatening death. Then went - Made application. The Assyrian - Particularly to Israel or Pul.

14. Will tear - Divine vengeance by the Assyrians, shall be as a lion tearing his prey.

## VI

Their resolution to return to God, ver. 1-3. The instability of many of them, ver. 4, 5. God's covenant with them, and their violation of it, ver. 6-11.

1. Come - The prophet here brings them in, exhorting one another. He hath torn - We now see his hand in all we suffer.

2. After two days - After some short time of suffering, God will shew us his favour, and revive our dead state. Revive us - Though we were as dead men, buried in our miseries, yet our merciful God will quicken us. Live - Flourish in peace, wealth, and joy; in righteousness and safety. In his sight - The eye of our God being upon us for good.

3. Know - What worship he requires. And the knowledge of God shall be to us a spring of all holy, righteous, sober conversation. Follow on - By a diligent attendance to the word, and works

of God, we shall know experimentally, how holy, how good, how faithful God is. His going forth - Before his people; his gracious, faithful, holy, just, and wise providence, for his peoples good and comfort. As the morning - As sure, beautiful, grateful, and as clear as the morning; which dispels the darkness, and proclaims its own approach. As the rain - Which revives, makes it fruitful, beautifies it, and gives a new face to all.

4. What shall I do - What shall I do more to save you from ruin, and save my own honour, truth, and justice?

5. Therefore - Because I would do for you whatever might be done. Hewed them - I have severely, and unweariedly reproved, and threatened them. By thy words - As I did by word foretel, so I did effect in due time. Thy judgments - The punishments threatened, which fell upon this people, did so fully answer the prediction that every one might see them clear as the light, and as constantly executed as the morning.

6. For - I so hewed and slew them, because they did not what I most of all required; they were full of sacrifices, but either to idols, or else in formality and pride. Mercy - Compassion and charity towards men, this one principal duty of the second table put for all. In this I delight, I have found little of this among you. Not sacrifice - Rather than sacrifice. The knowledge of God - The affectionate knowledge of God, which fills the mind with reverence of his majesty, fear of his goodness, love of his holiness, trust in his promise, and submission to his will.

7. The covenant - The law of their God. There - In that very place, the good land which by covenant I gave them: they have broken my covenant.

8. A city - A city full of notorious transgressors, the inhabitants though Levites and priests, work all manner of wickedness. With blood - Murders committed there.

9. The company of priests - The priests by companies lay wait, and rob, and murder.

10. The whoredom - Idolatry. Of Ephraim - Which was brought in by an Ephraimite, by Jeroboam, two hundred years ago, and is there still. Israel is defiled - It hath overspread all Israel.

11. He - But God hath appointed an harvest for thee; thou shalt not as Israel be cut off; a seed of thee shall be sowed, and thou shalt reap the harvest with joy.

## VII

Various accusations with threats annext, ver. 1-16.

1. Of Ephraim - Of Ephraim the chief tribe of this revolting kingdom.

2. Own doings - The guilt and punishment of the works they have done; their own doings, not their fathers, as the incorrigible are ready to complain. Beset them - As an enemy invests a town on every side. Before my face - All their ways were under mine eye.

3. They - The courtiers in particular make it their work to invent pleasing wickedness, and to acquaint the king with it. With their lies - With false accusations against the innocent.

4. As an oven - This vice is grown raging hot among them, as the fire in an oven, when the baker having called up those that make the bread, to prepare all things ready, doth by continued supply of fuel, heat the oven, 'till the heat need be raised no higher.

5. In the day of our king - Probably the anniversary of his birth or coronation. Stretched out his hand - In these drunken feasts it seems the king forgat himself, and stretched out his hand, with those who deride religion, and with confusion to the professors of it.

6. They - Those luxurious and drinking princes. Like an oven - Hot with ambition, revenge, or covetousness. Lie in wait - Against the life or estate of some of their subjects. As the baker, having kindled a fire in his oven, goes to bed and sleeps all night, and in the morning finds his oven well heated and ready for his purpose; so these when they have laid some wicked plot, tho' they may seem to sleep for a while, yet the fire is glowing within, and flames out as soon as ever there is opportunity for it.

7. Devoured - As a fire destroys, so have these conspirators, destroyed their rulers. Their kings - All that have been since Jeroboam the second's reign, to the delivery of this prophecy, namely, Zechariah, Shallum, Pekahiah, Pekah, fell by the conspiracy of such hot princes. That telleth - Not one of all these either feared, trusted, or worshipped God.

8. Ephraim - The kingdom of Israel. Mixed himself - With the Heathens by leagues and commerce and by imitation of their manners. Not turned - Burnt on one side, and dough on the other, and so good for nothing on either: always in one extreme or the other.

9. Knoweth it not - He is not aware of the loss he hath sustained. Gray hairs - Of old age and declining strength are upon their kingdom.

11. Like a silly dove - Ephraim is now become like the dove in weakness and fear, as well as in imprudence and liableness to be deceived. Without heart - Without either discretion or courage. To Assyria - Instead of going to God, who alone can help.

12. Go - To seek aid of Egypt or Assyria. Bring them down - Though they attempt to fly, yet as fowls in the net they shall certainly fall. Hath heard - From the prophets whom I have sent unto them.

13. Spoken lies - They belied his corrections as if not deserved; they belied the good done, as if too little, or not done by God, but by their idol.

14. They assembled - In the houses of their idols.

15. Bound - As a surgeon binds up a weak member, or a broken one; so did God for Ephraim, when the Syrians and other enemies had broken their arms. Imagine mischief - They devise mischief against my prophets, and let loose the reins to all impieties.

16. Not to the most high - What shew soever of repentance was among them, yet they never throughly repented. A deceitful bow - Tho' they seemed bent for, and aiming at the mark, yet like a weak bow they carried not the arrow home, and like a false bow they never carried it strait toward the mark. The rage of their tongue - Against God, his prophets and providence. Their derision - They shall be upbraided with this.

## VIII

Almost every verse of this chapter speaks both the sins and punishment of Israel, ver. 1-14.

1. Set the trumpet - The Lord here commands the prophet to publish, as by sound of trumpet, that which God will bring upon apostate Israel. He - The king of Assyria. As an eagle - Swift, hungry, surmounting all difficulties. House of the Lord - The family of Israel, the Israelites church.

2. Shall cry - But not sincerely.

4. They - Israel. Kings - Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hosea. Not by me - Not by my direction. Knew it not - Did not approve of it.

5. Thy calf - The chief idol set up in Samaria. Cast thee off - Hath provoked God to cast thee off. Against them - Idols, and idol worshippers. How long - How long will it be, ere they repent and reform?

6. From Israel - By their invention. It - Both the idol and the worshippers of it.

7. Sown the wind - A proverbial speech to denote lost labour. Whirlwind - A tempest, which destroyeth all that is in its way; an emblem of the wrath of God. No stalk - All your dependance on idols, and foreign assistance, will be as seed that bear neither stalk nor bud. No meal - Or suppose it produced stalk and bud, yet the bud shall be blasted, and never yield meal.

9. Gone up - Israel is like a wild ass. A wild ass - Stubborn, wild, untamed. Alone - Solitary, where is no path or tract; so they were in their captivity.

10. Gather them - I will assemble them together, that they may be taken and destroyed together. A little - For a while before their final captivity. The burden - The tribute laid on them by the king.

11. Altars - Those which they shall find in Assyria. To sin - Shall be the occasion of his greater guilt and punishment.

12. Written - By Moses first, by other prophets afterwards. But they were counted - Israel looks on them, as nothing to them.

13. They shall return - Many shall fly from the Assyrian into Egypt.

14. Temples - Idol temples. Devour the palaces - This was fulfilled when all the cities of Judah and Israel were laid in ashes by the king of Assyria.

## IX

God threatens to deprive Israel of all their worldly enjoyments, ver. 1-5. He dooms them to utter ruin, ver. 6-8. Upbraids them with the wickedness of their fathers, ver. 9, 10. And threatens to root out their posterity, ver. 11-17.

1. As other people - With feastings, triumphs, and sacrifices of thanksgiving. A reward - Such as is given by adulterers to lewd women; thou hast loved to see thy floor full, and hast said thy idols gave thee this plenty.

2. The floor - The corn which is gathered into the floor. The wine- press - The wine that is prest out in it. Shall not feed - Shall not nourish and strengthen the idolaters. Shall fail - Samaria and all Israel expect a full vintage, but they expect it from their idols, and therefore shall be disappointed.

3. Ephraim - Many of Ephraim shall fly into Egypt. And they - The residue shall be carried captive into Assyria.

4. Wine-offerings - These were appointed to be offered with the morning and evening sacrifice, the sacrifice representing Christ, and pardon by him; the wine-offering, the spirit of grace: the sacrifice repeated, daily continued their peace and pardon. All this shall be withheld from these captives. Pleasing - If any should venture to offer. As the bread of mourners - It shall as much pollute them and displease God as if one mourning for the dead, and forbidden to sacrifice, should venture to do it. Their bread - Their bread which they were bound to offer with their sacrifices, they will now have no opportunity of bringing to the Lord's house.

5. What will ye do - You will not then be suffered to observe any of them.

6. They are gone - Some are already withdrawn from the desolation that cometh. Egypt - In Egypt they hope to be quiet and survive these desolations, but they shall die in Egypt. The pleasant places - Their beautiful houses built for keeping their wealth in. Nettles - Shall be ruined, and lie in rubbish, 'till nettles grow in them.

7. The prophet - The false prophet. The spiritual man - That pretends to be full of the spirit of prophecy. For thine iniquity - God began his punishments in giving them over to believe their false prophets. The great hatred - Which God had against your sins.

8. The watchman - The old true prophets indeed were with God. My God - The God of Hosea. The prophet - The false prophets have, as well as the people, left God. Is a snare - Their pretended predictions are but a snare, such as fowlers lay. And hatred - Such prophets are full of hatred and malice: yea, they are hatred itself.

10. I found Israel - The Lord speaks of himself in the person of a traveler, who unexpectedly in the wilderness finds a vine loaded with grapes; such love did God bear to Israel. Your fathers - Whom I brought out of Egypt. As the first-ripe - As the earliest ripe fruit of the fig-tree, which is most valued and desired. Separated themselves - Consecrated themselves to that shameful idol. Their abominations - Their idols, and way of worshipping them. As they loved - As they fancied.

11. Their glory - Their children or posterity, which was the glory of Israel. Shall fly - It is proverbial, and speaks a sudden loss of children. From the birth - As soon as born. From the womb - Their mothers shall not bring their fruit alive into the world. The conception - Their wives shall not conceive.

12. Not a man left - There shall be a total extirpation of them. When I depart - To compleat their misery, I will depart from them. It is sad to lose our children, but sadder to lose our God.

13. To the murderer - He will send them forth in mighty armies; but it will be sending them out to the slaughter.

14. Give then - It is an abrupt but pathetic speech of one that shews his trouble for a sinking, undone nation. A miscarrying womb - It is less misery to have none, than to have all our children murdered.

15. All their wickedness - The chief or beginning. There I hated them - As there they began to sin so notoriously, there I began to shew that I hated them.

## X

God charges Israel with many sins, and threatens them with punishment, ver. 1-11. Exhorts them to repent, ver. 12-15.

1. An empty vine - That hath lost its strength to bring forth fruit. Unto himself - Whatever fruit was brought forth by its remaining strength, was not brought forth to God. His fruit - When the land yielded more plentiful increase, this plenty was employed on multiplying idols. The altars - Of his idols. The goodness - Imagining that the goodness of their land was a blessing from their idols.

2. Is divided - From God and his worship. Faulty - As this was their sin, so the effects hereof should manifestly prove them faulty. He - God.

3. Say - See and feel. No king - Either no king at all, or no such king as we expected. What then - For kings are not able to save without the God of kings.

4. Words - Vain words. Swearing falsely - By perjury deceiving those they treated with. A covenant - With the Assyrian king. Judgment - Divine vengeance. As hemlock - A proverbial speech, expressing the greatness of this evil.

5. Because of the calves - Because they had sinned by these calves, therefore did this fear seize them. The people - They who dwelt at Beth-aven. That rejoiced on it - These priests formerly were fed, clothed, and enriched by this idol, this made them right glad. The glory thereof - All its credit is vanished. Is departed - The Assyrians have either broken it, or carried it in derision into Assyria.

6. It - The golden calf.

7. Is cut off - Shortly will be cut off: this prophecy probably was delivered when Samaria was besieged.

8. The high places - The temples and altars of Baal. Of Aven - Or Beth-aven. They shall say - When this shall be brought to pass, the idolatrous Israelites shall be in such perplexity, that they shall wish the mountains and hills might fall on them.

9. They - Probably the six hundred men who fled to the rock Rimmon. Overtake them - That fatal battle did not reach them; but now Israel shall be more severely punished.

10. The people - The Assyrians. For their two transgressions - Perhaps, their revolt from David's house, and their idolatry.

11. Taught - Used to, and so skilled in. Passed over - I laid some lighter yoke upon her, brought some gentle afflictions upon that people to tame them, but this hath not prevailed. Ride - I will ride on Ephraim and tame him. Shall plow - Judah tho' less sinful hath been used to harder labour; hath plowed when Ephraim hath reaped. Break his clods - The same in another proverbial speech, their work at present is harder, but there is an harvest follows. Tho' they sow in tears when going to Babylon, they shall reap in joy at their return.

12. Reap - And ye shall reap in mercy. Fallow ground - Your hearts are as ground over-run with weeds, which need to be plowed and broken up, that good seed may be sowed in them. And rain - Plentifully pour out the fruits of his goodness and mercy.

13. Ye have plowed - You, O Israelites. Ye have reaped - Ye have lived in wickedness, and propagated it, and ye have met with a recompense worthy of your labour. Eaten - Fed yourselves with vain hopes. In thy way - Their way was their idolatry. Mighty men - The next lie on which they lived was the wisdom and valour of their great men.

14. As Shalman - Probably Salmaneser. Beth-arbel - It was a city of Assyria, and gave name to a country or region in part of Assyria.

15. Beth-el - The idolatry committed there. Do - Procure all this evil against you. In a morning - Possibly the Assyrians might assault the city towards morning and master it.

## XI

Upbraidings, threatenings and promises mingled, ver. 1-11. A commendation of Judah, ver. 12.

1. Was a child - In the infancy of Israel. I loved him - Manifested my tender and paternal affection to him. Called my son - Adopted him to be my son, and as my son, provided for him, and brought him out of servitude. Out of Egypt - But Israel, the first adopted son was a type of Christ the first-born. And the history of Israel's coming out was a type of Christ's future coming out of Egypt.

2. They - Moses and Aaron, and other prophets. Called - Persuaded, intreated, and urged by exhortations, the whole house of Israel. From them - From the prophets counsel and commands. Baalim - In the desert they began this apostacy, and held on with obstinacy in it.

3. I taught - As a mother or nurse helps the child. Taking them - Supporting and bearing them up. They knew not - They would not see nor acknowledge me in it.

4. Cords of man - With such kindness as best fits and most prevails with a man. I was to them - As a careful husband-man in due season takes the yoke from his labouring oxen, and takes off the muzzle with which they were kept from eating, when at work. I laid meat unto them - Brought them provision in their wants.

5. He - Ephraim. Shall be king - Shall rule them with rigor and cruelty. They refused - The reason of all is, their obstinacy in idolatry.

6. His branches - The lesser towns and villages. Their own counsels - Which they have followed in opposition to all the good counsels the prophets gave them from time to time.

7. They - The prophets. None at all - Scarce any one would hearken and obey.

8. Give thee up - To utter destruction. Admah and Zeboim were two of the four cities which were destroyed with fire from heaven. My repentings - Not that God is ever fluctuating or unresolved; but these are expressions after the manner of men, to shew what severity Israel had deserved, and yet how divine grace would be glorified in sparing them.

9. Return - Conquerors that plunder the conquered city, carry away the wealth of it, and after some time return to burn it; God will not do so. Not man - Therefore my compassions fail not. The holy One - A holy God, and in covenant, though not with all, yet with many among you. Enter into the city - Utterly to destroy thee, as I did Sodom.

10. They - The remnant shall hear and obey the Lord. Like a lion - The word of the Lord, so saith the Chaldee, shall roar as a lion. Christ is called, The lion of the tribe of Judah: and when he cried with a loud voice, it was as when a lion roared. The voice of the gospel was heard far, as the roaring of a lion; and it was a mighty voice. Tremble - The spirit by its power awakening them to a sight of sin, shall make them fear and tremble. From the west - From the ends of the earth.

11. They shall tremble - At their return into their own land, some shall hasten, yet with solicitude, out of Egypt, whither they fled for shelter; others like doves shall hasten out of Assyria, but with fear and trembling. I will place them - A seasonable and comfortable promise.

12. Ephraim - Most of the people of Israel. With lies - Play the hypocrite with me still. Judah - The two tribes. Yet ruleth - While idolaters are slaves to the devil, the true worshippers of God,

like princes, rule with God. Faithful - Retains purity, at least truth of worship, and comparatively is faithful. Judah adheres to God's holy prophets, priests, and other saints of God.

## XII

A high charge against Israel and Judah for various sins, yet with intimations of mercy, ver. 1-14.

1. Feedeth on wind - It is a proverbial speech; denoting his supporting himself with hopes, as unfit to sustain him as the wind is to feed us. Increaseth lies - By making new leagues, and fortifying himself with them, against the menaces of God by his prophets. Desolation - Which will only hasten and increase his desolation. Oil - Not common oil for trade, but rich and precious oils, to procure friendship there too.

2. Jacob - Ephraim and Judah are of Jacob, both have corrupted themselves, and therefore I will proceed against both.

3. He - Jacob. Took his brother - The design of mentioning this is to mind them of that goodness which God shewed them in their father Jacob. His strength - This strength was not of nature, but of grace. Strength received of God was well employed betimes; in it he wrestled for and obtained the blessing.

4. The angel - Called ver. 3, God; and ver. 5, Jehovah, Lord of hosts. He was no created angel, but the Messiah; eternal God by nature and essence, angel by office, and voluntary undertaking. He wept - He prayed with tears from a sense of his own unworthiness, and with earnestness for the mercy he desired. He - God. Him - Jacob full of weariness, fears, and solicitude on his journey to Laban. He - God. With us - Being then in Jacob's loins.

5. The Lord God of hosts - He that appeared and spake, who promised the blessing and commanded the reformation at Beth-el was Jehovah, the eternal and unchangeable God; who can perform his promise, and execute his threat, who is a most terrible enemy, and most desirable friend. The Lord - Jehovah, repeated for confirmation. His memorial - By this he will be known.

6. Turn - Repent, leave idols and all sins. He worshipped God alone, do you so; he cast idols out of his family, do you so too; be Jacob's children herein. Mercy - Shew kindness to all who need it. Judgment - Wrong none; but with justice in dealings, in judicatures; and public offices, render to every one their due. Wait on thy God - In public worship and private duties serve and trust God alone: let not idols have either sacrifice, prayer, praise, or trust from you; and let your hope and worship, be for ever continued.

7. A merchant - Ephraim is so far from being as Jacob, that you may account him a Canaanite, a subtle merchant.

8. I am rich - Whatever is said, yet I get what I aim at. They shall find - Yet he hugs himself in the apprehension of close carriage of his affairs, so that no great crime can be found in him: none, that is sin, that is any great enormity.

9. From Egypt - From the time I brought thee out of it. In tabernacles - I have given thee all these blessings and comforts, expressed proverbially in allusion to the joy which they had at the feast of tabernacles.

10. Spoken - To warn them of their danger.

11. In Gilead - Tiglah Pileser had formerly took Gilead among other towns, leading the inhabitants captive. By this the prophet minds the Ephraimites what they must expect, and doth it in this pungent question, Is there iniquity in Gilead? Is it there only? Be it, Gilead was all iniquity; Gilgal is no better. They - They that come up to Gilgal to sacrifice, are idolaters. In the furrows - They are for number like heaps of stones, gathered out of plowed land and laid in furrows.

12. Fled - For fear of Esau.

13. A prophet - By Moses. Israel - Your forefathers. Preserved - In the wilderness. The aim of the prophet seems to be this, to prevent their vain pride, and boasting of their ancestors.

14. His blood - He shall bear the punishment of all his blood; his murders of the innocent, and his own guilt too. His reproach - Which Ephraim hath cast upon the prophets, the worshippers of God, and on God; preferring idols before him. His Lord - God who is Lord of all.

## XIII

Israel reproved for idolatry and other sins, ver. 1-8. Ruin foretold, yet with encouragement to hope, ver. 9-16.

1. Ephraim - The ten tribes, of which Ephraim was the chief. Spake trembling - Humbled himself before God. Exalted himself - The kingdom flourished. When he offended - So soon as they sinned, taking Baal to be their God. He died - They lost their power and glory.

2. Of them - Of the idols. Let the man - Let all that bring their offerings to these idols, worship and adore, and shew they do so by kissing the calves.

4. Thou shalt know - I forbad thee to know any other God but me, in gratitude thou shouldest know no other.

5. I did know - Owned, took care of, guided and supplied.

6. Their pasture - When they were come into Canaan, and had abundance of all things, they ran into luxury. Was exalted - They grew proud.

7. Observe them - Watch for them, that I might be sure to take them.

8. Rent - First kill, then tear in pieces, and pull out the very heart.

10. Thy king - I would have been thy king to govern and save thee, but thou refusedst me in both: yet I will be thy king to punish thee. Thy Judges - Where are they now? And princes - Necessary to assist the king.

11. A king - Such as Shallum, Menahem, Pekah.

12. Is bound up - As sins unpardoned; for to loose sins is to forgive, and to bind sins is to charge them upon the sinner, Matt. xvi, 19. Hid - Not from God, but laid up with God against the day of recompense.

13. The sorrows - The punishment of his sins will overtake him suddenly, with great anguish. An unwise son - A foolish son, who endangers himself and his mother. He should not stay - As a child that sticks in the birth, so is Ephraim, one while will, another while will not return to God; and thus dies under the delay.

14. Ransom - By power and purchase, by the blood of the lamb of God, and by the power of his Godhead. Them - That repent and believe. From the grave - He conquered the grave, and will at the great day of the resurrection open those prison-doors, and bring us out in glory. From death - From the curse of the first death, and from the second death, which shall have no power over us. Thy plagues - Thus I will destroy death. I will pull down those prison- walls, and bring out all that are confined therein, the bad of whom I will remove into other prisons, the good I will restore to glorious liberty. Repentance shall be hid - I will never, as a man that repenteths, change my word and purpose, saith the Lord. What a glorious promise is this, which is interposed in the midst of all these judgments!

15. He - Ephraim. His brethren - Either the rest of the tribes, or the nations who by league are become as his brethren. An east- wind - An enemy as pernicious to his estate as the east-wind is to fruits. Of the Lord - A mighty enemy, called here the wind of the Lord, the usual superlative in Hebrew. The wilderness - Which lay southeast from Canaan. The southeast winds in that country were of all, most hot and blasting. He - The Assyrian army. Shall spoil - Shall carry away all desirable vessels and furniture.

## XIV

Directions how to repent, ver. 1-3. Encouragements to repent, ver. 4-9.

1. Fallen - Thy sins have involved thee in endless troubles.

2. Render - This will qualify and encourage us to give the sacrifices which are more pleasing to God than calves or oxen.

3. The fatherless - All that are destitute of strength in themselves, and destitute of help from others; all that being sensible of their own helpless condition, look for it from God, who hath power, mercy, and wisdom to help. Mercy - Both the fountain and streams of goodness too, free grace, and rich bounty.

5. As the dew - I will refresh and comfort, and make fruitful in good works, such as return to me. As Lebanon - As the cedars in Lebanon, so shall the true Israel, converted backsliders, be blessed of God: so flourishing and happy shall the church be under Christ.

6. His branches - His branches which are new sprung out, shall gather strength, and shall multiply in number. The olive-tree - Which retains its verdure all the winter and is rich in fruit; so the true Israel of God shall flourish not in fruitless beauty, but in lovely fruit, even in winter's of affliction and trouble. As Lebanon - The mountain famous for cedars, where also were the trees that afford the frankincense, and many flowers which perfume the air; such shall the spiritual fragrance of the church be to God and man.

7. They that dwell - As many as unite to the church, shall dwell under these spreading trees. Return - Revive and recover strength. As the corn - Which dies ere it lives to bring forth fruit. As the vine - Which in winter seems dead, but yet life, sap, and a fructifying virtue is in it. The scent thereof - The savour of it to God and good men shall be pleasing as the scent of the delicious wines of Lebanon.

8. I have heard him - A gracious promise from God of hearing prayers. A green fir-tree - As a weary traveler finds rest and safety under a thick tree, so there is safety and refreshment under the protection of the Lord. From me - Of God alone.

9. Shall understand - Which the prophet has delivered. The ways - The ways which he would have us walk in towards him, his law, his ordinances, his whole doctrine are all righteous and equal. And the ways wherein God walks towards us, in afflicting or comforting are all righteous and equal. Shall walk in them - Will approve them all, justifying the righteousness of God's displeasure, and confessing he remembereth mercy in the midst of judgment. And justifying the righteousness of his precepts by endeavouring to observe them. The transgressors - Wilful, obstinate sinners, stumble and are offended at his commands, but more at his judgments; they cast off the one, and vainly hope to shift off the other, 'till at last they fall under the weight of their own sins and God's wrath.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF JOEL

JOEL speaks of the same judgments that Amos does: whence it is probable they appeared about the same time, Amos in Israel, and Joel in Judah. Now Amos prophesied in the days of Jeroboam the second. (Amos vii, 10.) In this prophecy,

1. The desolation made by armies of insects is described:
2. The people are called to repentance;
3. Promises are made of mercy to the penitent, and of the pouring out of the spirit in the latter days.
4. The cause of God's people is pleaded against their enemies, and glorious things are spoken of the Gospel-Jerusalem.

### I

The unheard of judgment of caterpillars and locusts, ver. 1-7. All sorts us people are called on to lament it, ver. 8-13. And to humble themselves before God, 14-20.

1. Came to Joel - Probably in the latter end of Jeroboam the second's reign over Israel and in the days of Uzziah, over Judah.

2. Old men - The oldest among you, who can remember things done many years ago.

4. Palmer-worm - Four sorts of insects, are here mentioned, which succeeded each other, and devoured all that might be a support to the Jews, whence ensued a grievous famine.

5. Is cut off - Suddenly cut off even when you are ready to drink it, and totally cut off by these devouring vermin.

6. A nation - An innumerable multitude of locusts and caterpillars, called a nation here, as Solomon calls the conies and the ant, Prov. xxx, 25, 26, and perhaps a prognostick of a very numerous and mighty nation, that ere long will invade Judah. Strong - Mighty in power, and undaunted in courage, if you refer it to the Assyrian or Babylonians; if to those vermin, they are, though each weak by itself, yet in those multitudes, strong and irresistible. A great lion - Such waste as lions make, these the locusts do, and the Assyrians will make.

8. The husband of her youth - Espoused to her, but snatched away by an untimely death.

9. The drink-offering - By the destruction of the vines, all wine (out of which they ought to offer the drink-offering) failed.

10. The corn - The wheat and barley, is eaten up in its greenness. Dried up - The drought was so great, that the vines were withered, and all their hopes of new wine cut off. The oil - The olive-trees. Languisheth - This is a plain account of the reason why the priests were called to mourn, and why the meal-offering and drink- offering were cut off.

11. Be ye ashamed - This is a just cause why you should lament and inquire why God is so displeased with you.

14. Sanctify ye - Ye priests, set apart a day wherein to afflict yourselves, confess your sins, and sue out your pardon. Into the house - The courts of the temple, where the people were wont to pray.

15. The day of the Lord - A day of greater trouble than yet they felt, troubles which God will heap upon them. Shall it come - Unless fasting, prayers and amendment prevent.

16. Cut off - Devoured by locusts, or withered with drought.

17. Laid desolate - Run to ruin because the owners discouraged with the barrenness of the seasons, would not repair them.

19. The fire - The immoderate heats. The wilderness - The world, only means places not ploughed, and less inhabited than others.

20. Cry - They utter their complaints, their sad tones, they have a voice to cry, as well as an eye to look to God.

## II

A farther description of the desolation of the land, ver. 1-11. An earnest call to repentance, ver. 12-17. A promise of all good things to the penitent, ver. 18-27. A prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom, ver. 28-32.

1. Blow ye - The prophet continues his exhortation to the priests, who were appointed to summon the solemn assemblies.

2. A day of darkness - A time of exceeding great troubles and calamities. And this passage may well allude to the day of judgment, and the calamities which precede that day. As the morning -

As the morning spreads itself over all the hemisphere and first upon the high mountains, so shall the approaching calamities overspread this people. A great people - This seems more directly to intend the Babylonians.

3. A fire - The Chaldeans, as a fire shall utterly consume all things. Behind them - What is left behind is as burnt with a flame. As Eden - Fruitful and pleasant.

6. Blackness - Such as is the colour of dead men, or the dark paleness of men frightened into swoons.

7. Their ranks - This skill in ordering and the steadiness in keeping under, exactly like trained soldiers, foretells the terror and strength of both the armies signified by these locusts, and of the locusts themselves.

8. The sword - The sword shall not be a weapon to destroy them; literally verified in the locusts, and verified in the strange preservations in the most desperate adventures made by the Assyrians or Babylonians.

9. Runs to and fro - This seems not proper to these insects, but it well suits with soldiers, that conquer a city and search all places for plunder. Run upon the wall - To clear the wall of all the besieged. The houses - Either forsaken by the inhabitants, or defended by such as are in them. Like a thief - Suddenly, unexpectedly, to spoil if not to kill.

10. The earth - A divine hyperbole. But this also may have a reference to the great day.

11. Utter his voice - Summon them in and encourage them as a general doth his soldiers. His army - Of locusts and insects, and of Chaldeans signified by these.

13. And repenteth him - He turneth from executing the fierceness of his wrath.

14. He will return - God doth not move from one place to another; but when he withholds his blessings, he is said to withdraw himself. And so when he gives out his blessing, he is said to return. And leave a blessing behind him - Cause the locusts to depart before they have eaten up all that is in the land.

16. The children - Though they understand little what is done, yet their cities ascend, and God with pity looks on their tears. These that suck - Their cries and tears may perhaps move the congregation to more earnest supplication to God for mercy. So the Ninevites, Jonah iii, 7, 8. The bridegroom - Let the new married man leave the mirth of the nuptials and afflict himself with the rest.

17. The porch - That stately porch built by Solomon, 1 Kings vi, 3. The altar - The altar of burnt-offering, which stood at some distance from this porch, and here are the priests commanded to stand, fasting and praying, whence they might be heard and seen by the people in the next court, in which the people were wont to pray. To reproach - Famine, though by locusts is a reproach to this thine heritage; it will be greater reproach to be slaves to the nations signified by the locusts, therefore in mercy deliver us from both one and the other.

20. The northern army - That part of the locusts which are toward the north. With his face - The van of this army shall be driven into the dead sea, east of Jerusalem. The hinder part - The rear of this army shall be driven into the west sea. His stink - The stench of these locusts destroying and lying putrified on the face of the earth, or the corpses of the Assyrians slain and unburied.

22. Their strength - Bring forth as much as they are able to stand under.

23. The former rain - The autumn rain which is needful to mellow the earth and fit it to receive the corn. The latter rain - Needful to bring forward and ripen the fruits, accounted the latter rain

because these husbandmen and vine-dressers reckoned from seed time to spring and harvest. The first month - That is, our March.

24. The fats - The vessels into which the liquor ran out of the press.

25. Restore - Make up to you.

26. Wondrously - In one year giving as much as the locusts wasted in the years foregoing. Ashamed - Neither disappointed of your hopes, nor necessitated to seek relief among the heathen.

28. Afterward - After the return out of Babylon, after the various troubles and salvations by which these may know that I am the Lord. I will pour - In extraordinary gifts on the first preachers of the gospel, and in various graces to all believers. Upon all flesh - Before these gifts were confined to one particular nation; but now they shall be enlarged to all nations, and all that believe. Shall prophesy - This was in part fulfilled according to the letter in the first days of the gospel; but the promise means farther, by pouring out of the spirit on your sons and your daughters, they shall have as full a knowledge of the mysteries of God's law, as prophets before time had. Shalt dream dreams - This also was literally fulfilled in the apostles days. But it may mean farther, the knowledge of God and his will, shall abound among all ranks, sexes and ages in the Messiah's days, and not only equal, but surpass all that formerly was by prophesy, dreams, or visions.

29. My spirit - Of adoption and sanctification.

30. Wonders - They who read what historians report of these times, will see this fulfilled in the very letter. Blood - Possibly eruption of blood, as some fountains have been reported to have run with blood, prefiguring the great effusion of blood by the sword, and wars following. Fire - Either breaking out of the earth, or lightning in the air.

31. The sun - Having mentioned the prodigies which were to be wrought on earth, he now specifies what shall be done in heaven. The terrible day - The unholy day of the destruction of Jerusalem; typifying the day of judgment.

32. Whosoever shall call - Who hearing the gospel repents and believes in Christ. Delivered - Either from those outward afflictions, or which is infinitely better from eternal miseries, which will swallow up the unbelieving world; "and it will aggravate the ruin of those who perish, that they might have been saved on such easy terms." Is it then easy for a non-elect to repent and believe? May he not as easily pull the sun out of the firmament? In mount Zion - In the true church typified by Zion. Jerusalem - In mystical Jerusalem, the church and the city of the Messiah. Deliverance - Temporal and eternal. Shall call - To believe in Christ, and by him to wait for eternal life.

## III

This chapter has been partly fulfilled in the several deliverances of the Jews, and will have its full accomplishment at the great day. It contains a prophecy of God reckoning with the enemies of his people, ver. 1-8. Of his openly judging all nations, ver. 9-17. And of the provision he has made for his people, ver. 18-21.

1. In those days - When I shall by Cyrus bring Judah out of Babylon. Of Judah - As the type of the whole remnant that are saved. And Jerusalem - For beside what refers to the two tribes restored

by Cyrus, the bringing back the captivity of the whole Israel of God by Christ is to be considered all along through this chapter.

2. All nations - In the type it is all those nations that have oppressed Judah, in the anti-type, all nations that have been enemies to Christ and the church. Into the valley of Jehoshaphat - I will debate my people's cause, and do them right in the midst of my church, signified by the valley of Jehoshaphat. Parted my land - Such is the injustice of the persecutors of the church now, and so God will judge them in due time.

3. Cast lots - It was customary with conquerors to divide the captives by lot, and so did these enemies of the Jews.

4. Yea - Have I done you any wrong, which you avenge upon my people? Or do you begin to violate the laws of neighbourhood and friendship, and think to escape? Do ye think you have to do with a poor opprest people, my people, and I nothing concerned at it? Palestine - On which were towns of trade, and merchants that bought and sold these captives. A recompence - Have I or my people so dealt with you? And if - If you will deal thus, I will speedily avenge myself and my people of you.

5. Taken - Either as part of the spoil, or as part of your pay. My silver - Silver and gold vessels dedicated to my service.

6. Remove them - That there might be no hope of their return to their country.

7. I will raise them - This was fulfilled when Alexander, and his successors dismissed all the Jews that were slaves in Greece, and gave them leave to return to their own country.

8. And I will sell - Give them up into the hands of the Jews.

9. This - These things which I will do to the enemies of God's people. The Gentiles - The Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Grecians successively. Prepare war - Make ready for wars against the enemies of my people.

10. I am strong - Put on strength and valour; let none be absent from this war.

11. Round about - All round about Judah. Thither - Toward Jerusalem; the church and heritage of God. Thy mighty ones - All those mighty warriors whom thou wilt make use of successively to punish the oppressors of thy church.

12. The heathen - The several nations in their appointed time, perhaps the Assyrians first under Salmaneser, next under Sennacherib, both of whom came up to the valley of Jehoshaphat. For there - In the midst of my people to plead with, condemn and punish the heathen round about Judea.

13. Put ye - Ye executioners of divine vengeance: begin to reap, cut down sinners ripe for judgment; let Tiglath Pilneser and his soldiers cut down Syria and its king, for their violence against my people. Let Cyaxares and his armies cut down Assyria. Let Nebuchadnezzar cut down Moab, Ammon, mount Seir, Egypt, Tyre, Zidon and the Philistines; after this let Cyrus reap down the ripened Babylonians, and Alexander the Medes and Persians. And let the divided Grecian captains cut down one another, 'till the Roman cut them down. And when this is done God will have mighty ones still to cut down his enemies, 'till the final judgment wherein they all shall for ever be destroyed. Get you down - In another metaphor the prophet declares the cutting off the church's enemies. The press - As the grapes in the press are trod, so the enemies of God's people, are to be trodden in the wine-press of God's displeasure. Overflow - The blood of slaughtered men runs as wine prest out, in greater abundance than the vats can hold. Is great - The violence and all manner of sins of these kingdoms is grown exceeding great.

14. In the valley of decision - Where God having gathered them, decided their quarrels, and by the conqueror punish the conquered for their sins against God and his people. The day - The day of vengeance.

16. Shall roar - He will strike the enemy with astonishment as the roaring of the lion astonishes the weaker beasts of the forest.

17. Dwelling - Very graciously present with you, and ever watching over you, and delighting to save you. Then - After her enemies are destroyed and the remnant is saved, and the Messiah is come; for to him and his days these things ultimately refer. Jerusalem - The church of Christ. Strangers - No profane or unclean person shall pass through it, or be found in it any more for ever.

18. The mountains - The vines planted upon the mountains. Shall flow - So fruitful shall the hills be, that milk shall abound every where. A fountain - The prophet alludes to those waters which were conveyed from some spring through conduit pipes towards the altar. This no doubt is a shadow of the purifying blood of Christ, and his sanctifying spirit and word. And in that it is said to come from the house of the Lord, it intimates that this saving grace shall be first preached from Jerusalem, and by the church, which is the house of God, shall be published to others. Shittim - Was a place in the plains of Moab. These spiritual waters shall flow down to the dry and thirsty, the barren and fruitless Gentiles, and make them fruitful.

19. Egypt - By Egypt we may understand all the enemies of the church who carry it toward the church, as Egypt carried it toward Israel. Edom - Edom was an implacable enemy to Judah in his greatest distress. And all who come under Edom's character are here threatened under this name. Judah - The people of God.

20. Judah - The redeemed of the Lord, his church.

21. And I will cleanse - Purge away both by the spirit of sanctification and by free pardon in the blood of the redeemer. Their blood - Their sinfulness, which before I had not taken away.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF AMOS

AMOS was cotemporary with Hosea, Joel and Isaiah, and prophesied a little sooner than Isaiah. His name signifies a burden; in allusion to which we may say, that his word was the burden of the LORD. His style is frequently concise and sententious, which makes it somewhat obscure. He brings many reproofs, allusions and arguments from his country-employment. But they are fitted with admirable skill, and beautified with an inimitable eloquence. He begins with threatenings against the neighbouring nations, chap. 1, 2. Then calls Israel to account, for their idolatry, ingratitude and incorrigibleness, chap. 3, 4. He calls them to repentance, chap. 5. Foretells the tribulations that were coming upon them, chap. 6. Some particular judgments, chap. 7. And after other reproofs and threatenings, chap. 8, 9. concludes with a promise of the Messiah, chap. 10.

### I

The general title and scope of this prophecy, ver. 1, 2. God's controversy with Syria, ver. 3-5. Palestine, ver. 6-8. Tyre, ver. 9, 10. Edom, ver. 11, 12. And Ammon, ver. 13-15.

1. He saw - Received by Revelation. Israel - The kingdom of the ten tribes. Jeroboam - The great grand-son of Jehu. The earth- quake - Of which, only this text, and Zech xiv, 5, make any particular mention.

2. Will roar - Alluding to the roaring of an hungry lion for prey. Jerusalem - The city God had chosen where he dwelt, the seat of God's instituted worship, and the royal seat of the kingdom as God had settled it, from which in both respects the ten tribes had revolted. The habitations - Where the shepherds found pasturage they pitch their tents, and dwelt therein that they might attend their flocks. And this was the delight and wealth of these men; alluding to which Amos expresses the wealth and delight of the kingdom of Israel. Shall wither - Either blasted, or dried up with drought, and turned into barrenness. So the whole kingdom of the ten tribes, though as fruitful as Carmel should be made horrid and desolate as a wilderness.

3. For three - This certain number is put for an uncertain: three, that is, many. Of Damascus - Here Damascus is put for the whole kingdom of Syria. Threshed - Treated it with the utmost cruelty. Gilead - There was a country of this name, and a city, possessed by the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites; Gilead here is put for the inhabitants of this country and city, whom Hazael, king of Syria most barbarously murdered.

4. Ben-hadad - Ben-hadad was to the Syrian kings a common name, as Pharaoh to the Egyptian kings, and Caesar to the Roman emperors.

5. The bar - Literally the bar with which the city gates were shut, and fastened. Of Eden - Some royal seat, of the kings of Syria. Kir - Kir of Media, Isaiah xxii, 6, thither did Tiglath-Pilneser carry the conquered Syrians, 2 Kings xvi, 9, and placed them captives in that barren mountainous country, about fifteen years after it was foretold by Amos.

6. Carried away - All the Jews whom they had taken captive. Edom - Their most inveterate enemies. These Edomites were ever ready to enslave, and tyrannize over the Jews, if by any means they could get them into their hands.

7. A fire - Desolating judgments. Gaza - All the power and strength of Palestine is here included.

8. Ashkelon - Another city of the Philistines, and a very strong one, which shall perish with the king and the inhabitants thereof.

9. The brotherly covenant - Which was between Hiram on the one part, and David and Solomon on the other.

11. Pursue - Watched for, and laid hold on every occasion to oppress Israel. Did tear - As a ravenous and fierce lion tears the prey.

12. Teman - The metropolis of Idumea, so called from Esau's grandson of that name. Bozrah - This was a very strong city, and one of the chief in the whole kingdom, so that in the menace against Bozrah and Teman, the strength and glory of Edom is threatened with an utter overthrow.

13. Enlarge their border - By destroying all that dwelt in it, and hereafter might claim a title to it.

14. With a tempest - With irresistible force, and surprising swiftness.

## II

God's controversy with Moab, ver. 1-3. With Judah, ver. 4, 5. And with Israel, ver. 6-8. The aggravations of their sins, ver. 9-12. God complains of them, and threatens their ruin, ver. 13-16.

1. The bones - Or ashes, reduced them by fire into fine dust, and used these ashes instead of lime to plaister the walls and roofs of his palace, and this in hatred and contempt of the king of Edom.

2. Kirioth - A principal city of this country. Moab - The Moabites. Shall die - Be destroyed. With tumult - Such as soldiers in fight or assaults make, when they carry all by force.

3. The judge - The governor that is, every one of them.

4. Lies - Idols. To err - Their idolatry blinded them, partly from the natural tendency of this sin, and partly from the just judgment of God. After which - Idols. Walked - Successively, one generation after another.

6. Shoes - The smallest bribe, exprest here proverbially.

7. The people - That make a prey even of the poor afflicted ones, who walk with dust on their heads. Turn aside - Maliciously interpret the actions, words, and designs of the humble and meek. Will go in - These corrupt Judges commit also that lewdness which the Heathens abhor.

8. Lay down - The Jews of old did not sit upright at their meals, but leaned on one side. Upon clothes - Of which the law had expressly said, none should detain them all night, Deut. xxiv, 12, 13. Every altar - Of their idols. Drink the wine - They offer their drink-offerings in wine, which they bought with the fines laid on the innocent.

9. The Ammorite - The mightiest nation of all the Canaanites. As the oaks - Another proverbial speech denoting their great strength. His fruit - Their children. His roots - The old standards; that present generation.

11. Nazarites - Persons who bound themselves to a very sober and holy life; either for some certain time, or for their whole life.

12. Ye gave - Importuned them to drink wine, to violate their vow, and contemn God's law.

13. Under you - Under the load of your sins.

14. The swift - For their enemies shall be swifter than they. The strong - Natural strength of body shall not deliver. The mighty - The valiant man, the man of the greatest courage.

## III

Judgments denounced against Israel, ver. 1-8. Which cannot be prevented, unless they repent, ver. 9-15.

2. Know - Chosen, adopted to be my peculiar ones. Therefore - Because you have all these obligations and abused all these mercies.

3. Agreed - Can you have God's presence while you walk so contrary to him?

5. Can a bird fall - So here for your sins, God will cast the net over you. Shall one take up a snare - The fowler will not take up the snare, before the prey be taken in it.

6. Afraid - Affected with the danger. Evil - Such as plague or famine. Done it - Either immediately by his own hand, or by the hands of those he employs. Whoever are the instruments, God is the principal agent. Out of his mouth both good and evil proceed.

7. Will do nothing - Usually the Lord doth no great thing for or against his people, without giving warning of it before it comes.

8. Hath roared - As a lion roareth when near his prey: so God hath terribly threatened what is near to be done. Prophesy - Amos can not but speak what he had heard.

9. Publish - Ye prophets invite strangers to come and observe what cause I have to do what I threaten. Tumults - The seditious counsels, and rebellious conspiracies among them. The oppressed - Multitudes of oppressed ones, as the usurpers took it to be their interest to crush all they feared or suspected. In the midst - Yea, throughout the whole kingdom of Samaria.

10. Store up - As men lay up wealth in their treasures, perverting judgment, first condemning the innocent, next seizing all his substance.

11. Therefore - Because of all the violence and rapine with other crying sins. An adversary - The Assyrian. Round about - Shall beset the whole land as one besieged city.

12. As the shepherd - As the shepherd doth hardly rescue a small part of a sheep or lamb from the lion, so a small part of the children of Israel, shall escape when Samaria is taken. The corner of a bed - Lying in some dark corner. Damascus - The chief city of Syria taken by Tiglath-Pilneser about the time when he wasted Israel. In a couch - Some few of the poor, shall escape, pitied by the enemy, when he finds them sick upon their couch.

13. Hear ye - Prophets. The God of hosts - Who is Lord of all, and hath all power in his hand.

14. Of Israel - The many and great transgressions of the ten tribes.

15. The winter-house - Which probably was in the chief city, whither the great men retired in the winter. The summer-house - The houses of pleasure, where the nobles and rich men spent the summer time. Of ivory - Beautified with ivory.

## IV

Oppressors threatened, ver. 1-3. Idolaters given up, ver. 4, 5. The incorrigibleness of Israel, ver. 6-11. They are still invited to repent, ver. 12, 13.

1. Kine of Bashan - So Amos compares the mighty, wanton, and oppressive rulers of Israel, to those full-fed, strong, and wanton beasts which in the herds did push at, hurt, and disturb the weaker cattle.

2. By his holiness - By himself as he is the holy God. The days - Of famine, desolation and captivity. He - God by the Assyrian army will take you, as fish are taken with the hook. Your posterity - The children of these oppressors.

3. Ye - Kine of Bashan. Go out - Ye shall endeavour to make your escape. The breaches - Which the besieging enemy make in your walls, when Samaria is besieged. Before her - Taking the readiest way. The things - All the riches and ornaments of your palaces.

4. Come to Beth-el - A strong irony, giving them over as incorrigible. At Gilgal - Gilgal was a place where much idolatry was acted. Every morning - In the same irony God reproves their sins tho' they imitated the instituted worship at Jerusalem. Three years - God had Deut. xiv, 28, commanded every third year that all the tithe of that year should be brought, and laid up in a publick store-house.

5. With leaven - As all the rest of your will-worship, so this also is against the express law, Lev. ii, 11. However, do so at your peril, try whether it will end in good. Proclaim - Publickly persuaded your people to voluntary sacrifices.

6. An I - The Lord who gave many blessings to win you to repentance, hath also tried what might be done by judgments. Cleanness of teeth - This is a description of famine.

7. When - At a season when your country most needed it. Upon one city - That you might see my hand in it, I gave rain to one city, and withheld it from the next; nay one part of the same field was watered and flourished: another part, dry and withered.

8. Not satisfied - Either that had not enough for them, or durst not part with it.

9. Increased - When they were most fruitful. Devoured - Eat up all, as is the manner of them.

10. Your horses - The riders being killed. The stink - So great slaughter hath been made in your camp that there were not sufficient to bury the slain.

11. Overthrew - By grievous and desolating judgments. As a fire- brand - Such of you as escaped were yet as fire-brands in the midst of the fire, 'till infinite mercy saved a remnant.

12. Therefore - In a more terrible manner will I now proceed against thee.

13. Declareth - Knows the thoughts of all men. The God of hosts - Whose sovereign power all creatures obey, and acts for or against us as he willeth. Let us humble ourselves before this God, and give all diligence to make him our God. For happy are the people whose God he is, and who have all this power engaged for them.

## V

The deplorable condition of Israel, ver. 1-3. An exhortation to seek God, ver. 4-15. Judgments denounced, ver. 16-20. Notwithstanding their outward services, ver. 21-27.

2. The virgin - So she was, when first espoused to God. Upon her land - Broken to pieces upon her own land, and so left as a broken vessel.

3. By a thousand - That sent out one thousand soldiers. An hundred - Shall lose nine parts of them.

4. Ye shall live - It shall be well with you.

5. Seek not - Consult not, worship not the idol at Bethel, Gilgal, or Beersheba.

6. The house of Joseph - The kingdom of the ten tribes, the chief whereof was Ephraim, the son of Joseph. In Beth-el - If once this fire breaks out, all your idols in Beth-el shall not be able to quench it.

7. Ye - Rulers and Judges. Judgment - The righteous sentence of the law. To wormwood - Proverbially understood; bitterness, injustice and oppression. Leave off - Make to cease in your courts of judicature.

8. The seven stars - A constellation, whose rising about September was usually accompanied with sweet showers. Orion - Which arising about November brings usually cold, rains and frosts intermixt very seasonable for the earth. The shadow of the earth - The greatest adversity into as great prosperity. Dark with might - Changes prosperity into adversity. That calleth - Commands the vapor to ascend, which he turns into rain; and then pours from the clouds to make the earth fruitful.

9. The strong - The mighty, victorious and insolent. Shall come - Shall rally and form a siege against their besiegers.

10. They - The Judges and people. In the gate - Where Judges sat, and where the prophets many times delivered their message.

11. Your treading - You utterly oppress the helpless. Ye take - Ye extort from the poor great quantities of wheat, on which he should live.

12. In the gate - In their courts of justice.

13. Shall keep silence - Be forced to it. Evil - Both for the sinfulness of it, and for the troubles, wars, and captivity now at hand.

14. With you - To bless and save you yet.

15. The evil - All evil among the people, and yourselves. Love - Commend, encourage, defend: let your heart be toward good things, and good men. Remnant - What the invasions of enemies, or the civil wars have spared, and left in Samaria and Israel.

16. Therefore - The prophet foreseeing their obstinacy, proceeds to denounce judgment against them. The husbandman - This sort of men are little used to such ceremonies of mourning, but now such also shall be called upon; leave your toil, betake yourselves to publick mourning.

17. Vineyards - In these places were usually the greatest joy. Pass through - To punish all every where.

18. That desire - Scoffingly, not believing any such day would come. To what end - What do you think to get by it? Is darkness - All adversity, black and doleful. Not light - No joy, or comfort an it.

19. And a bear - You may escape one, but shall fall in another calamity. Into the house - At home you may hope for safety, but there other kind of mischief shall meet you.

21. I hate - Impure and unholy as they are. Will not smell - A savour, of rest or delight, I will not accept and be pleased with.

23. Thy songs - Used in their sacrifices, and solemn feasts; herein they imitated the temple-worship, but all was unpleasing to the Lord. Will not hear - Not with delight and acceptance. Thy viols - This one kind of musical instrument is put for all the rest.

24. Let judgment - Let justice be administered constantly. Righteousness - Equity. Stream - Bearing down all that opposes it.

25. Have ye - Their fathers and they, tho' at so great a distance of time, are one people, and so the prophet considers them. Unto me - Was it to me, or to your idols, that you offered, even in the wilderness?

26. Ye have born - Ye carried along with you in the wilderness; the shrine, or canopy in which the image was placed. Moloch - The great idol of the Ammonites. Chiun - Another idol.

27. Therefore - For all your idolatry and other sins, in which you have obstinately continued.

## VI

The security of Israel and Judah, ver. 1-6. Their punishment, ver. 7-14.

1. At ease - That neither fear nor believe the threatened judgments of God. In Zion - That is put for the kingdom of the two tribes, and principally the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Samaria - Woe to them also who rely upon the strength, wealth, and policy of the kingdom of Samaria or Israel. Which - Which two cities, Zion and Samaria. Named chief - Accounted the chief cities of that part of the world. To whom - To which place all Israel had recourse, the two tribes to Zion, the ten tribes to Samaria.

2. Pass ye - Run over the history of that great and ancient city. Hemath - Head of the Syrian kingdom, lately overthrown by Tiglath-Pilneser, and a fresh instance of God's just indignation against secure sinners. Gath - The chief city of the Philistines, a few years before wasted by the arms of Hazael; by these examples learn to amend your ways, or expect to perish in them. Greater - That is, greater than these kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and their borders, or bounds, greater than these of Israel and Judah.

3. Ye - That flatter yourselves the day of darkness foretold, is far off. The seat - The judgment seat which should relieve the oppressed, is made a seat of violence.

4. That lie - That out of laziness or luxury, lay themselves to rest. And eat - The very best in all their flock.

5. That chant - That in a time of deep mourning entertain themselves with songs, and musical instruments.

6. In bowls - Not in little vessels, but probably bowls: they drank these filled as full as they could hold too, and in design to drink each other down. And anoint - In those hot countries this anointing was much used. Not grieved - Nothing affected with the calamities of their country.

7. The banquet - The feastings of voluptuous ones shall cease.

8. The excellency - All that the seed of Jacob accounts a glory and excellency to them, all their external privileges and worship.

9. Remain - Escaping the enemies sword. Ten men - Many men, a certain number for an uncertain. They shall die - Tho' they escape a while, they shall not finally escape.

10. Uncle - Or near kinsman, instead of those who were wont to do this, and were paid for it; but now none of these remaining, the next to the dead must, as well as he is able, take him up on his shoulders, and carry him. That burneth - Though the Jews mostly buried, yet in some cases they burned the dead bodies, as in this of pestilence. The bones - The flesh being consumed, the bones

are reserved to be buried. Unto him - Any one he sees near the house out of which the bones are carried. Is there yet any - Is any one living in your house. Hold thy tongue - Do not complain, lest thou thyself be killed, lest all be rifled. For - It is too late to seek God, who is executing his immutable decree.

11. For behold - It seems to be the continued speech of him who took care of the dead, ver. 10, God hath sent out war, famine, and pestilence. The great house - The palaces of great men shall have great breaches made in them, and the cottages of poor men shall, by lesser strokes, be ruined.

12. Shall horses - If prophets exhort or advise, it does no more good than if you would run your horses upon the precipices of rocks.

13. Who rejoice - In your victories, alliances, and idols. Have we not - We have raised ourselves to greatness by our wisdom and courage.

14. Hemath - A city of Syria, bordering on Israel, northeast. The wilderness - Which is the southwest parts of Canaan. So all your country shall be destroyed.

## VII

Threatened judgments turned aside by the prayer of Amos, ver. 1-6. Yet at length they are sentenced to utter ruin, ver. 7-9. Amaziah accuses Amos, ver. 10-13. Amos justifies himself and denounces the judgment of God against Amaziah, ver. 14-17.

1. Thus - This is the first of five prophetic representations of what was coming upon this people. The latter growth - The shooting up of the first growth being too luxuriant, they often eat it down with cattle; but if the second growth were eat up, it marred the whole harvest. Mowed - It is supposed the first mowing of the corn in the blade was for the king's use; and after this the second springing grew up to the harvest.

2. It came to pass - In the vision. By whom - How shall any of Jacob escape, if thou dost cast him down?

3. Repented - This is spoken after the manner of men.

4. Shewed - In vision. Called - Commanded fire from heaven. A part - Of the land too.

7. By a plumb-line - Strongly and beautifully built.

8. Set a plumb-line - I will exactly measure the whole ten tribes. Pass by them - I will no more forbear, but will pull down all that is faulty.

9. The high places - The temples on high mountains built to idols. Of Isaac - The seed of Isaac.

10. In the midst - Openly, and publickly, endeavouring to stir up Israel to sedition or rebellion. The land - The people cannot bear all his harsh predictions.

11. Jeroboam shall die - He nowhere said so, but spake of his house distinguished from his person, as ver. 9.

13. The king's court - To which therefore thou oughtest to shew more respect, and not thus to affront the king in his own house.

14. No prophet - Not originally, or by study, or by any human designation. An herdman - By breeding and occupation I was and still am, an herdman. Sycamore fruit - This fruit was good food for man, or cattle.

16. The house of Isaac - The posterity of Isaac.

17. In a polluted land - Among the Heathen. Israel - The ten tribes.

## VIII

The vision of a basket of summer fruit, ver. 1-3. The destruction of the oppressors foretold, ver. 4-10. And a famine of the word of God, ver. 11-14.

2. The end - Of God's patience towards Israel, the end of their ripening, they are now fully ripe, fit to be gathered. Pass by them - God had with admirable patience spared, but now he will no more pardon or spare.

3. With silence - So great will be the cruelty of the enemy, that they dare not bury them, or if they do, it must be undiscerned.

4. To fail - Either to root them out, or to enslave them.

5. When - Ye that could wish there were nothing to interrupt your marketing, that look on solemn times of worship as burdensome, such was the first day of every month, and the weekly sabbath. Small - So the ephah being too little, the poor buyer had not his due. The shekel great - They weighed the money which they received, and had no more justice, than to make their shekel weight greater than the standard; so the poor were twice oppressed, had less than was their right, and paid more than they ought to pay.

6. That we may buy - They would have new moons and sabbaths over, that they might go to market to buy the poor. And when these poor owed but for a very little commodity, as suppose a pair of shoes, these merciless men would take the advantage against them, and make them sell themselves to pay the debt. The refuse - This was another kind of oppression, corrupted wares, sold to those that were necessitous.

7. Hath sworn - By himself. Forget - Suffer to pass unpunished.

8. The land - The people of it. For this - This that you have done, and this that God will do. And it - The judgment, the displeasure of God, shall rise and grow like a mighty wasting flood. It - The land. Drowned - As Egypt by the overflowing of the Nile.

9. At noon - So Israel's sun did as at noon set under the dark cloud of conspiracies and civil wars by Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hosea, 'till the midnight darkness drew on by Pul, Tiglath-Pilneser, and Salmaneser. Darken - Bring a thick cloud of troubles and afflictions. In the clear day - When they think all is safe, sure, and well settled.

10. Upon all loins - All sorts of persons shall put on mourning. Baldness - Shaving the head and beard was a sign of the greatest sadness. A bitter day - A bitter day, which you shall wish you had never seen, shall succeed your dark night.

12. Shall wander - Search all places for a prophet or preacher, from the Mid-land sea to the dead sea, they shall search all corners for a prophet.

14. They - Who sacrifice to and swear by the calves at Daniel and Beth-el. By the sin - Who say the idol at Daniel is the true and living God. The manner - The idol which is worshipped at Beersheba.

## IX

Judgments are threatened upon all, but the remnant, ver. 1-10. Mercy is promised, ver. 11-14.

1. The altar - Of burnt-offering before the temple at Jerusalem, this altar and temple Israel had forsaken, and set up others against it; and here God in his jealousy appears prepared to take vengeance. Possibly it may intimate his future departure from Judah too. There Ezekiel, Ezek. ix, 2, saw the slaughter-men stand. The door - The door of the gate that led into the priests court. And cut them - Wound deep, the people who were visionally represented as standing in the court of the temple.

2. Hell - The center of the earth, or the depth of hell.

3. The serpent - The crocodile or shark.

4. Set my eyes - I will perpetually watch over them.

5. Toucheth - He needs not take great pains therein, a touch of his finger will do this. Shall melt - As snow before the sun.

6. His stories - The celestial orbs one over another, as so many stories in an high and stately palace. And he hath founded his troop in the earth: all the creatures, which are one army, one body; so closely are they connected, and so harmoniously do they all act for the accomplishing of their creator's purposes. Calleth for the waters - Either in judgment to drown, or in mercy to give rain.

7. The Arabians - A wild, thievish, and servile nation. Have not I brought - And whereas you boast my kindness to you, bringing you out of Egypt, and thereupon conclude, God cannot leave you whom he hath so redeemed; you argue amiss, for this aggravates your sin. From Kir - Conquered by some potent enemies, and sent away to Kir, a country of Media, yet at last delivered. Should these nations, argue themselves to be out of danger of divine justice, because I had done this for them.

8. The sinful kingdom - Every sinful kingdom.

9. The least grain - Though tumbled and tossed with the great violence, yet the smallest, good grain, shall not be lost or destroyed.

10. All the sinners - The great, notorious sinners. The evil - Is far off, we shall die first, and be safe in the grave.

11. In that day - In the set time which I have fixt. Raise up - Bring back out of captivity, and re-establish in their own land, the house of David, and those that adhere to his family. Fallen - By the revolt of the ten tribes. The breaches - Which are in it by that long division.

12. They - Literally the Jews. Possess - Both the lands of Edom, and some of the posterity of Edom; these as servants, the other as their propriety. The remnant - Left by Nebuchadnezzar. All the heathen - That is, round about. That doth this - But this is also a prophecy of setting up the kingdom of the Messiah, and bringing in the Gentiles.

13. Behold the days come - Here is another promise literally of abundant plenty to the returned captives, and mystically of abundant grace poured forth in gospel-days. The plowman - Who breaks up the ground, and prepares it for sowing, shall be ready to tread on the heels of the reaper who shall have a harvest so large, that before he can gather it all in, it shall be time to plow the ground again. The treader of grapes - So great shall their vintage be that e'er the treaders of grapes can have finished their work, the seeds-man shall be sowing his seed against the next season. Shall drop - The vineyards shall be so fruitful, and new wine so plentiful as if it ran down from the mountains. Shall melt - Or, as if whole hills were melted into such liquors. If any object, it never was so: I answer, the sins of the returned captives prevented these blessings, which are promised under a tacit condition.

15. Pulled up - On condition that they seek the Lord. This was on God's part with admirable constancy performed through six hundred years, perhaps the longest time of freedom from captivity they ever knew.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF OBADIAH

WHO Obadiah was, does not appear, neither the exact time when he prophesied. It is generally thought he was cotemporary with Hosea, Joel, and Amos. After the preface, ver. 1. we have first threatenings against Edom, ver. 2-16. and then gracious promises to Israel, ver. 17-21.

1. Obadiah - His name speaks a servant or a worshipper of the Lord, but who he was we know not. We - The prophets, have heard. A rumour - Not an uncertain report, but it comes from God. Is sent - By the Lord first, and next by Nebuchadnezzar who executed on Edom what is here foretold. The nations - Those that were with, or subject to Nebuchadnezzar.

2. Small - Thou art a small people. In comparison with other nations. Despised - What ever these Edomites had been, now they were despised.

3. The pride - The Edomites were, as most mountaineers are, a rough hardy, and daring people. And proud above measure. Deceived thee - Magnifying thy strength above what really it is.

4. Bring thee down - God who is in the heavens would throw thee down. When men could not marshal armies against thee, stars should fight in their courses against thee. Nothing can stand which God will cast down, Jer. xlix, 16, 17.

5. If thieves - If thieves by day had spoiled thee, they would not have thus stripped thee. Robbers - If robbers in the night had been with thee, they would have left somewhat behind them. 'Till they had enough - But here is nothing left. Some grapes - But here have been those that have cut up the vine.

6. Esau - The father of this people, put for his posterity. Sought up - All that the Edomites had laid up in the most secret places, are seized and brought forth by soldiers.

7. Thy confederacy - Thy confederates have marched with thee until thou wert come to the borders of thy country. Deceived thee - Proved treacherous. Prevailed - Treacherously. A wound - A snare armed with sharp points. No understanding - Thou wast not aware of it.

9. Teman - A principal city of Idumea.

11. In the day - During the war which the Babylonians made upon Judea. Stoodest - Didst set thyself in battle array against thy brother. Jerusalem - Upon the citizens and their goods. As one of them - As merciless and insolent as any of them.

12. Looked - With joy on the affliction. A stranger - As a stranger, one who had no more right to any thing in the land. Proudly - Vaunting over the Jews, when Jerusalem was taken.

13. Entered - As an enemy.

14. The breaches - Of the walls, by which when the city was taken, some might have made their escape. Delivered - To the Chaldeans. Remain - Survived the taking of the city.

15. The day - The time which the Lord hath appointed for the punishing of this, and other nations. As thou hast done - Perfidiously, cruelly, and ravenously, against Jacob.

16. As ye - As ye, my own people, have drunk deep of the cup of affliction, so shall other nations much more, yea, they shall drink of it, 'till they utterly perish.

17. Zion - Literally this refers to the Jews: typically to the gospel- church. Deliverance - A remnant that shall be delivered by Cyrus, a type of Israel's redemption by Christ. Holiness - The temple, the city, the people returned from captivity shall be holy to the Lord. Their possessions - Their own ancient possessions.

18. Shall kindle - This was fulfilled in part by Hyrcanus and the Maccabees, 1Macc v, 3, but will be more fully accomplished, when the Lord shall make his church as a fire to all its enemies.

19. They - The Jews who live in the south parts of Canaan, next Idumea, shall after their return and victories over Edom, possess his country. Of the plain - The Jews who dwell in the plain country, shall enlarge their borders, possess the Philistines country, together with their ancient inheritance. The former was fully accomplished by Hyrcanus. And if this were the time of fulfilling the one, doubtless it was the time of fulfilling the other also. And all the land which the ten tribes possessed, shall again be possessed by the Jews. Gilead - Here is promised a larger possession than ever they had before the captivity; and it does, no doubt, point out the enlargement of the church of Christ in the times of the gospel.

20. The captivity - Those of the ten tribes that were carried away captive by Salmanesar. Of the Canaanites - All the country they anciently possessed with this addition, that what the Canaanites held by force, and the Israelites could not take from them, shall now be possessed by these returned captives. Zarephath - Near Sidon. Of Jerusalem - The two tribes carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar. Sepharad - Probably a region of Chaldea. The cities - All the cities which were once their own.

21. saviours - Deliverers, literally the leaders of those captive troops, who shall come up from Babylon, such as Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Mystically, Christ and his apostles, and other preachers of the gospel. To judge - To avenge Israel upon Edom. The Lord's - The God of Israel, Jehovah, shall be honoured, obeyed, and worshipped by all.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF JONAH

PROBABLY Jonah himself was the penman of this book. In 2 Kings xiv, 25, we find, that he was of Gath-hepher in Galilee, a city that belongs to the tribe of Zebulon. We find also, that he was

a messenger of mercy to Israel in the reign of Jeroboam the second. We have here a remarkable instance of God's mercy, toward repenting sinners. And in Jonah we have a most remarkable type, of our Lord's burial and resurrection.

**I**

Jonah disobeys the command of God, ver. 1-3. Is arrested by a storm, ver. 4-6. Discovered to be the cause of the storm, ver. 7-10. Cast into the sea and swallowed by a fish, ver. 11-17.

2. That great city - It is said to have been one hundred and fifty furlongs in length, that is eighteen miles and three quarters, and eleven miles and one quarter in breadth.

3. From the presence - From the place where God usually had shewed himself present, by revealing his word and will to his prophets. Perhaps he might think God would not put him upon this work, when he was got into a strange country.

5. Into the sides - ln some cabin or other, whither he went before the storm arose.

6. Will think upon us - With pity and favour.

7. Cast lots - "Lots are an appeal to heaven in doubtful cases, and therefore not to be used but where the matter is undeterminable in any other way."

8. Tell us - What hast thou done, for which God is so angry with thee, and with us for thy sake?

9. I fear - I worship and serve the true God; the eternal and almighty God, who made and ruleth the heavens.

13. Rowed hard - They were willing to be at any labour to save him.

14. Unto the Lord - Now they all cry to Jonah's God, to Jehovah. And said - Let us not perish for taking away his life. Hast done - Sending the tempest, arresting the prophet by it, detecting him by lot, sentencing him by his own mouth, and confirming the condemning sentence by the continuance of the storm.

16. Feared the Lord - Perhaps as Jonah's casting over-board was a type of Christ's death, so the effect it had upon the mariners might be a type of the conversion of the Heathen from idols unto God. Made vows - Probably they vowed, they would ever worship him whom Jonah preached, the Creator of heaven and earth.

17. A great fish - The Hebrew word is, numbered, has appointed him for Jonah's receiver and deliverer. God has the command of all his creatures, and can make any of them serve his designs of mercy to his people.

**II**

Jonah's prayer and deliverance.

2. Affliction - Straits with which he was encompassed, his body and mind being both shut up, the one by the monstrous dungeon of the fish's belly, and the other by the terrors of the Almighty. Heardest my voice - Of which undoubtedly God gave him an assurance in his own soul.

4. I said - With myself, I thought in the midst of my fears and sufferings. Cast out - Cut off from all hope of life, and as it were forgotten of God. I will look - Toward heaven.

5. The weeds - It seems to mean, my case was as hopeless as that of a man wrapt about with weeds in the depth of the sea.

6. I went down - The fish carried him down as deep in the sea as are the bottoms of the mountains. With her bars - I seemed to be imprisoned where the bars that secured were as durable as the rocks, which they were made of. Yet - By what was first my danger, thou hast wonderfully secured me. From corruption - Or the pit, a description of the state of the dead. O Lord - In the assurance of faith, he speaks of the thing as already done.

7. Thine holy temple - Heaven, the temple of his glory, whence God gives the command for his delivery.

8. They - Whoever they are that depend upon idols. Mercy - The Lord, who is to all that depend upon him, the fountain of living waters; who is an eternal fountain of mercy, and flows freely to all that wait for him.

9. Vowed - Which probably was to go to Nineveh, and preach what God commanded him. The Lord - He only can save.

10. Spake - Though fishes understand not as man, yet they have ears to hear their Creator.

## III

Jonah's mission renewed and executed, ver. 1-4. The humiliation and reformation of the Ninevites, ver. 5-9. Their sentence revoked, ver. 10.

3. Exceeding great - The greatest city of the known world at that day, it was then in its flourishing state greater than Babylon, whose compass was three hundred eighty-five furlongs, but Nineveh was in compass, four hundred and eighty. It is said, her walls were an hundred foot in height, her walls broad enough for three coaches to meet, and safely pass by each other; that it had fifteen hundred towers on its walls, each two hundred foot high, and one million, four hundred thousand men employed for eight years to build it. Of three days journey - To walk round the walls, allowing twenty miles to each day's journey.

4. Shall be overthrown - The threat is express. But there was a reserve with God, on condition of repentance.

5. From the greatest - Great and small, rich and poor.

6. The king - Probably Phul Belochus. His robe - Put off his rich apparel.

7. Taste any thing - Man and beast are to forbear to eat and drink, that the fast might be most solemn, that the cry of man, seconded with the cry of hungry cattle, might enter the ears of God, who preserveth man and beast.

8. And beast - Their horses and camels, both which they adorned with rich and costly clothing, they must now in testimony of an hearty repentance, clothe with sackcloth; the clothing of beasts must witness for men. The violence - Oppression and rapine. In their hands - Which are practiced by them.

**IV**

Jonah repines at God's mercy, ver. 1-3. Is reproved, ver. 4. His discontent at the withering of the gourd, ver. 5-9. God improves it for his conviction, ver. 10, 11.

1. It - The divine forbearance sparing Nineveh.

2. Was not this - Did I not think of this? That thy pardon would contradict my preaching.

3. Than to live - Disgraced and upbraided by hardened sinners, who will brand me for a liar.

5. A booth - Some small and mean shed, probably of green boughs. 'Till he might see - It seems the forty days were not fully expired.

6. Prepared - Commanded that in the place where Jonah's booth stood, this spreading plant should spring up to be a shade when the gathered boughs were withered. To deliver - To give some ease to his mind.

7. Prepared - By the same power which caused the gourd suddenly to spring, and spread itself. It smote - Which early next morning, bit the root, so that the whole gourd withered.

8. A east wind - A dry, scorching, blasting wind. Fainted - Overcome by the heat. Better to die - But Jonah must be wiser, and humbler, and more merciful too, e'er he die. Before God hath done with him, he will teach him to value his own life more, and to be more tender of the life of others.

9. I do well to be angry - If in the violence of this passion I should die (as some have) yet were I not to blame. What a speech! Verily the law made nothing perfect!

10. laboured - Thou didst not set it. Grow - Nor didst thou water or give growth to it.

11. I - The God of infinite compassions and goodness. That great city - Wouldest thou have me less merciful to such a goodly city, than thou art to a weed? Who cannot discern - Here are more than six-score innocents who are infants. Much cattle - Beside men, women and children who are in Nineveh, there are many other of my creatures that are not sinful, and my tender mercies are and shall be over all my works. If thou wouldest be their butcher, yet I will be their God. Go Jonah, rest thyself content and be thankful: that goodness, which spared Nineveh, hath spared thee in this thy inexcusable frowardness. I will be to repenting Nineveh what I am to thee, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and I will turn from the evil which thou and they deserve.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF MICAH.

MICAH was cotemporary with Isaiah, and began to prophesy a little after him. What we find here in writing, is an abstract of what he preached, during the reign of three kings. The scope of all is,

1. To convince Israel and Judah of their sins, and of the judgments of God ready to break in upon them;
2. To comfort the righteous with promises of mercy and deliverance, especially with an assurance of the coming of the Messiah.

## I

The title and preface, ver. 1, 2. Warning of desolating judgments at hand, ver. 3-7, The prophet's sorrow, and the general sorrow for them, ver. 8-16.

1. Hezekiah - The best son, of the worst father. How long Micah prophesied during his reign, we can but conjecture, possibly 'till the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. So this prophet may be supposed to have prophesied sixteen years in Jotham's time, as many under Ahaz, and fourteen under Hezekiah, in all forty-six years. And he survived the captivity of Israel ten years, which he lamented as well as foretold.

2. O earth - This seems to be an appeal to the senseless creatures, or a summons to bring them in evidences for God against those kingdoms. Therein - Animate or inanimate creatures, all that are on the earth. Temple - Either from his temple at Jerusalem, or from heaven.

3. The Lord - He comes forth as a judge, to hear, determine, and punish. His place - Heaven, the place of his glorious throne. Come down - Shew, by the effects of his power, justice, and wisdom, that he is more eminently present there. Tread upon - Trample under foot all that is high, excellent, and matter of your glorying.

4. Cleft - Or rent in sunder, broken up and slide away.

5. Jacob - The sons of Jacob, the ten tribes. What - Or, who is the spring, and cause of that overflowing transgression? Of Jacob - The kingdom of the ten tribes, the head of which was Samaria, where the kings had their residence, where they worshiped idols, and set an example to the rest of the Israelitish kingdom. And what - Or, who is the cause of the high places, and the idolatry there practiced? Jerusalem - Which was the chief city of that kingdom, and had the same influence over Judah, as Samaria had on the ten tribes.

6. As an heap - As a heap of ruins. Of a vineyard - In planting vineyards, they dig up the earth, and cast it up in hillocks; so shall they make this city. Into the valley - The city was built on a high hill, and a deep valley beneath it. I will discover - I will raze the walls, fortresses, and public buildings of this city, to the very foundations.

7. The hires - The rich gifts given for the honour and service of the idols by deceived idolaters. She - The kingdom of Samaria. It - Their wealth, or the rich presents made to their idols. Of an harlot - As harlots get rich gifts of their lovers. They - These rich presents shall be turned by the Assyrians to the service and honour of their idols.

8. Therefore - Because of those dreadful slaughters in Israel and Samaria. And naked - As one that in bitterness of passion hath cast off his upper garment. Dragons - Or rather, Jackals, which haunt desolate places, and make a great and hideous noise by night.

9. Her wound - The wounds of Samaria, her own sins, and God's just displeasure. It is come - The contagion of her sins, and the indignation of God against it, have reached to Judah also, yea, to Jerusalem.

10. Declare ye it not - Lest the Philistines triumph. Weep ye not - Make no public weeping. Aphrah - This was farther from the Philistines. Roll thyself - Express thy sorrow.

11. Pass ye away - The imperative is here put for the future; they shalt go into captivity. Saphir - Probably Samaria and Jerusalem. Naked - Stript by the conquering enemy. Zaanan - It is thought, this was a considerable garrison full of people and soldiers. Came not forth - To help their neighbouring town Beth-ezel. Beth-ezel - A strong town taken by the Assyrians. His standing - The enemy shall encamp among you, shall stand on your ground, so that you will have no opportunity of coming out to help your neighbours.

12. Maroth - A town in Judea. But evil - The flood of affliction by the Assyrian, swallowed up other cities, and swelled even to the head city, Jerusalem.

13. Lachish - A strong fortress on the confines of Judah. Bind the chariot - To fly from the sword of the enemy. She - Lachish, which being the nearest to idolatrous Israel, took the infection of them, and conveyed it to Jerusalem. The transgressions - Not only the idolatry, but other sins also. Of Israel - Of the ten tribes.

14. Give presents - The inhabitants of Lachish courted the assistance of the Philistines against the Assyrian. Moresheth-gath - A known city of the Philistines, called Moresheth-gath, to distinguish it from a town of the same name in the tribe of Judah. Achzib - This was also a city of the Philistines. A lie - A lying refuge, a prop that will break under them.

15. An heir - The Assyrian, who in the right of conquest shall possess thee. Mareshah - A town of the Philistines. Adullam - Perhaps this city was considerable enough at that time, to be the glory of Israel.

16. Thee - O Judea and Israel, tear off thy hair. Shave what thou canst not tear off. For thy children - For the loss of them, some being slain, others starved, or swept away with pestilence, and the residue carried captive. As the eagle - One species of which is entirely bald.

## II

The sins of Israel and the judgments hanging over them, ver. 1- 11. Gracious promises of comfort, ver. 12, 13.

1. That devise - Contrive and frame mischief. Evil work - Contrive how to work it. It is in the power - Because they can; without regarding right or wrong.

2. And his house - His family, which by this means is left to poverty. And his heritage - And this is done against ancient right and possession, nay, in a case where God hath forbidden them to sell their heritage.

3. Against this family - God will devise evil against their family, as they devised evil against the family of their neighbours. Haughty - You have made others hang the head; so shall you now. Is evil - Full of miseries on the whole family of Jacob.

4. A parable - A taunting proverb. And lament - Your friends for you, and you for yourselves. He - God. Portion - Their wealth, plenty, freedom, joy and honour, into poverty, famine, servitude, grief and dishonour. How - How dreadfully hath God dealt with Israel; removing their persons into captivity, and transferring their possession to their enemies? Turning away - Turning away from us in displeasure. God hath divided our fields among others.

5. Thou shalt have - None that shall ever return to this land, to see it allotted by line and given them to possess it. In the congregation - They shall no more be the congregation of the Lord, nor their children after them.

6. They shall not prophesy - So God doth in his displeasure grant their desire. Take shame - That will not take shame to themselves.

7. That art named - You are in name, not in truth, the seed of Jacob. Straitened - The power, wisdom, and kindness of God is not less now than formerly. Are these - Are these severe proceedings the doings your God delighteth in? Do not my words - My words promise all good, to those that with honest hearts walk in the ways of God.

8. Is risen up - They have risen up, Israel against Judah, and Judah against Israel, and of late the tribes have conspired against one another; subjects against their kings, and great ones against the meaner sort. With the garment - You strip those that fearing no evil, go about their private affairs.

9. The women - The widows. Of my people - Of Israelites, not strangers, that were by peculiar provision from God's law, to be tenderly dealt with, Exod. xxii, 22. Cast out - You have turned out of their old habitations. From their children - You have turned their children out of their houses, and estates, which were secured by the law of God from any sale beyond the jubilee; yet you have confiscated them for ever. My glory - Which was the glory of my bounty to them.

10. Arise ye - Ye inhabitants of Israel, prepare for your departure out of this land. Your rest - Though it was given this people for a rest under God's wing; yet it was on condition of continued obedience. Polluted - With many, and great, and old sins. Destroy - It shall spue you out.

11. Walking - If a man pretend to have the spirit of prophesy. Saying - You shall have plenty of days, and may eat, drink, and be merry. He shall even be the prophet - Such they like and chuse.

12. Them - All the remnant. As the sheep - ln great numbers. Their fold - Their own fold, where they are safe. The multitude of men - This was fulfilled in part, when the Jews returned out of Babylon, but more fully when Christ by his gospel gathered together in one, all the children of God that were scattered abroad.

13. The breaker - To break down all opposition. The gate - The door of escape out of their captivity. No cities so strong, which the Assyrians shall not take and possess, and enter in through the gates. The Lord - Even Jehovah, as he was at the head of Israel, when he brought them out of Egypt.

## III

The prophet reproves oppressing princes, ver. 1-4. And false prophets, ver. 5-7. And threatens both, ver. 8-12.

1. Is it not for you - Ought not you to understand, and conform to, the just laws of your God. You princes, magistrates, and ruling officers, ought of all men to know and do right.

2. The good - Ye who hate not only to do good, but the good which is done, and those that do it. The evil - Chuse, and delight in, both evil works and evil workers. Who pluck it off - Ye who use the flock as cruelly as the shepherd, who instead of shearing the fleece, would pluck off the skin and flesh.

3. The flesh - Ye who devour the goods, and livelihood of your brethren. Break their bones - An allusion to wolves, bears, or lions, which devour the flesh, and break the bones of the defenseless lambs.

4. Then - When these miseries come upon them.

5. That bite - When they are furnished with gifts, and well fed. Prepare war - They do them all the mischief they can.

6. Night - Heavy calamities. A vision - You shall no more pretend to have a vision, or dare to foretell any thing. And the sun - The hand of God shall be against them, making their sorrows the more dreadful, as darkness by the sun going down at noon.

7. The seers - So called by the deceived people. Cover their lips - Mourners did thus, Ezek xxiv, 17, 22. So these shall mourn and pine in their shame. No answer - Because the answer they had formerly, pretended to be from God, now appears not to have been from him.

8. Power - Courage, and vivacity. Of judgment - To discern times and seasons, right from wrong. Might - Resolution.

10. They - The heads and great ones enlarge, beautify, and fortify, the house in Zion, particularly the temple and the royal palace. Blood - With wealth, which they made themselves masters of by violence, taking away the life of the owners.

11. Lean - Pretend to trust in him. Among us - As our God and our shield.

12. For your sake - Because of your sins. The mountain - The mountain, on which the temple stood. This is that passage, which is quoted, Jer. xxvi, 18, which Hezekiah and his princes took well: yea, they repented and so the execution of it did not come in their days.

## IV

The prosperity of the church, ver. 1-10. Her enemies shall be destroyed, ver. 11-13.

1. In the last days - Or, in the latter days, at the expiring of the seventy years captivity, near two hundred years from Micah's time, a type of the days of the Messiah's kingdom. The mountain - The mountain on which the temple stood, the type of the church of Christ. Established - Literally

fulfilled when the second temple was built by the Jews. Spiritually, when Christ established his church by the preaching of the gospel.

2. Many nations - This was in part fulfilled when so many proselyted servants of several nations, in love to their Jewish masters, and more to the God of the Jews, came up with them from Jerusalem. Come - So the Jews, released from captivity, encouraged each other; which was a fulfilling of this prophecy in part; the conversion of the multitude of the Gentiles to Christ, was a more eminent fulfilling of it. To the mountain - To the temple at Jerusalem, a type of Christ and the gospel church. From Jerusalem - In Jerusalem is declared the only way of worshipping God, and from thence the only law of right worship shall go forth, when the Messiah is come.

3. He - The Messiah shall act as a judge and king. Rebuke - So Christ commissioned his apostles, to teach all nations.

4. They - The redeemed of the Lord, redeemed from Babylonish captivity, the type of a greater redemption by Christ. Shall sit - That is, they shall enjoy peace, security and plenty. This was more fully made good in the gospel-days.

5. All people will walk - It is the practice of all nations, to serve their gods. Will walk - Seek the Lord, embrace his law and worship.

6. That halteth - The Jews weakened with the hard usage of oppressing conquerors. Her - Captive Judah; driven out, of their own land. And Christ will much more gather to his fold those who were captives to Satan.

7. A remnant - Which as they are preserved for a seed, so they take root and increase, and continue to the coming of the Messiah.

8. O tower - One tower put for the whole city Jerusalem. The strong-hold - Ophel, a strong fort, is likewise put for the whole city. The first dominion - The former dominion; the government (after seventy years captivity) shall return to the former royal family, and continue in it 'till Shiloh come. This, in the type was fulfilled, under Zerubbabel and his successors; but the whole antitype concerns the Messiah's kingdom.

9. Now - Now I have promised such great things to you. No king - Thou hast lost thy king Zedekiah, but thy God, thy king is with thee. Thy counsellor - Hast thou none among thy wise counsellors left? Yet the Wonderful Counsellor is with thee. Messiah, the wisdom of his father, hath the conduct of thy sufferings, deliverance and re-establishment.

10. In pain - Thou shalt have troubles, sorrows, and dangers in the wars against the Babylonians, and in the captivity under them. Now - Shortly. In the field - In their journey to Babylon they were forced to lodge in the fields. Delivered - By Cyrus, by Darius, and by Artaxerxes; and this was a type of a greater deliverance. Redeem - The Hebrew word points out a redemption by the next kinsman, and so minds us of the Messiah, the great redeemer of the church.

11. Now - The time is at hand. Defiled - Let her be polluted with blood, and let us enter, sack and destroy her temple and palaces. Look - With delight on her destruction.

12. The thoughts - The design of the holy, just and faithful God. As the sheaves - The husbandman gathers the sheaves into the floor to thresh them; so God in due time will bring his enemies together, that they may be bruised, broken and destroyed.

13. And thresh - The future strength of the church employed in subduing her enemies, is here foretold. Iron - This expresses the strength of the church firm as iron, to beat down her enemies. Brass - By this figurative speech, is the strength of Zion expressed, treading underfoot, and breaking

the power of her enemies in pieces. And I - I, the church. Their gain - The spoils of my conquered enemies.

## V

The troubles of Israel, ver. 1. The birth and advancement of the Messiah, ver. 2-4. His protection of his people, and victory over their enemies, ver. 5, 6. The increase of the church and destruction of her enemies, ver. 7-15.

1. Now gather thyself - Since this must be done, do it quickly. O daughter of troops - Nineveh or Babylon. He - Sennacherib, or Nebuchadnezzar. They - The proud, oppressive enemy. The judge - The king. Of Israel - Not the ten tribes, though they are actually called by this name, but the two tribes that adhered to David's family. A rod - This is a proverbial speech, expressing the most contemptuous usage.

2. Bethlehem - Bethlehem of Judah was called Ephratah, from the fruitfulness of the land where it stood: the word whence it is derived importing fruitfulness. Art thou little - If thou art the least in other respects in this thou art honoured above them all. Ruler - King and sovereign. In Israel - Amidst the Israel of God. Going forth - Whose generation, as he is the Son of God, equal with his father, is eternal.

3. He - God. Give them up - To the Chaldeans. She - The daughter of Zion, compared here to a woman in travail, shall be delivered out of captivity. His brethren - The brethren of the Messiah. Those of Judah and Benjamin who were carried captive.

4. He - The ruler, the Messiah shall stand. This posture speaks the readiness, chearfulness, and stability of Christ, his government, and kingdom. Feed - As a shepherd that diligently guides, preserves, and feeds his sheep. By the strength - By his own almighty strength. Of the name - By commission from the Father in whose name Christ came, preached, wrought miracles, and instituted his gospel church. They - His church made up of converted Jews and Gentiles, shall continue; the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. For - The church is so redeemed, and established, that Christ the Messiah might be glorified, throughout the world.

5. This man - The Messiah. The peace - Which is promised to the people of God; all their deliverances are not only for his sake, but effected by his power. Shall tread in our palaces - Which Sennacherib did in all the cities of Judah, except Jerusalem. We - Hezekiah, and with him the prophets and people, shall prevail with God to send deliverance. Seven shepherds - A certain number put for an uncertain.

6. They - The seven shepherds, and eight principal men, those great instruments of God's revenge, and his church's deliverance. Waste the land - So did Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon. The land of Nimrod - The same with the land of Assyria. The entrance - The fortified frontiers. In this manner shall he, the Messiah, deliver the Jews, his people. The Assyrian - The type of all other enemies, to the people of God.

7. As a dew - This remnant wherever they are, shall multiply as the dew that refreshes the grass, so where this remnant is, it shall be a blessing to those about them, that use them friendly. As the

showers - God shall bless them by his immediate hand, as he alone, without the help of man, gives dew and showers. As this was fulfilled in the type, before the gospel was preached to all nations, so it hath been, now is, and ever shall be fulfilled in ages to come. God's remnant shall be a blessing to the places they live in.

8. As a lion - For strength and courage, which the beasts of the forest dare not oppose, and cannot resist.

9. Thine hand - Thou people of God.

10. I will cut off - Not in judgment, but in mercy, for there shall be no need of them, nor shall the church of God any more rely on them. Thy chariots - Chariots prepared for war.

11. The cities - Cut off the occasion of fortifying their cities, thou shalt need no other defense than what I am to thee.

12. I will cut off - God will in mercy to his people take away these occasions of sin.

13. Graven images - This was verified among the Jews, who to this day hate images for divine uses, and learnt this in their captivity.

14. Thy groves - The groves which they abused by idolatrous worship.

15. Have not heard - In an unprecedented manner. Christ will give his Son either the hearts or necks of his enemies, and make them either his friends or his footstool.

## VI

God charges his people with ingratitude, ver. 1-5. The way to please God, ver. 6-8. He sets their sins in order before them, ver. 9-15.

1. Arise - This is God's command to Micah. Contend thou - Argue the case between God and thy people; and speak as if thou wouldst make the mountains hear thee, to testify for me.

2. Foundations of the earth - The mountains properly so called; the sin of Israel is so notorious, that the whole creation may be summoned as a witness against them.

3. What have I done - What injustice or unkindness? What grievous, burdensome impositions have I laid upon thee. Wearied thee - Speak, what it is hath caused thee to be weary of me?

4. And Miriam - A prophetess to be assistant to her brothers, and to be an example and a counsellor to the women.

5. Shittim - This is the place where Balak began by the women of Midian to debauch Israel as Baalim had counselled, and so continued to do, even to Gilgal, all along the borders of his dominion. The righteousness - His mercy, justice and veracity.

6. Wherewith - One whose heart was touched by the preceeding expostulation, may be supposed to make this enquiry.

7. Thousands - Ever so many. Ten thousands of rivers - Were it possible to give them.

8. He - God hath already told you in his word, with what you ought to come before him. To do justly - To render to every one their due, superiors, equals, inferiors, to be equal to all, and oppress none, in body, goods or name; in all your dealings with men carry a chancery in your own beasts, and do according to equity. To love mercy - To be kind, merciful and compassionate to all, not

using severity towards any. Walk humbly with thy God - Keep up a constant fellowship with God, by humble, holy faith.

9. Crieth - Either by his judgments, each of which is the Lord's voice, or by his prophets. The city - To every city in Israel and Judah, but principally to Jerusalem and Samaria. The man of wisdom - Every wise man. See thy name - Will perceive God in that cry. The rod - Hear ye the voice of God in the punishments God is now sending. Appointed it - Who hath chosen it out, and strikes with it.

10. Yet - After so many express laws, and so many examples of punishment. Treasures - Gotten by injurious courses.

11. Count them pure - Approve, or acquit then as if they were righteous.

12. Thereof - Of Jerusalem and Samaria.

13. Sick - God will e're long so smite, that the strokes shall reach the heart, and make Israel heartsick of his wounds.

14. In the midst of thee - Thou shalt be cast down at home by thy own hands. Thou shalt take hold - This may refer either to persons or things, on which we lay hold in order to save them. Shalt not deliver - Where thou lodgest thy children, and layest up thy wealth, thither the enemy shall pursue thee; or if thou fly into other countries, it shall not be a safe refuge to thee. Which thou deliverest - For a little while.

15. Thou shalt not reap - An enemy shall reap it. Sweet wine - Thou shalt tread the grapes which afford sweet wine.

16. The statutes - The idolatrous worship was set up by Omri in the royal city. Ye - O house of Israel. That I should make thee - This will be the event. Thereof - Of the land. The reproach - The reproach threatened in the law, if my people forsake me.

## VII

The total corruption of the people, ver. 1-6. Those who fear God are to take courage, to be patient, to expect long trouble, ver. 7-13. And to encourage themselves with God's promises, and faithfulness, and the future downfall of their enemies, ver. 14-20.

1. Woe is me - The land is brought in complaining, that whereas it was once well stored, now it hath few good in it. As the grape- gleanings - In Israel and Judah, which in bringing forth good men, should have been a fruitful vine full of clusters: just, compassionate and humble men, are as grapes after the vintage is gathered. Desired - But in vain.

3. Both hands - With all diligence. The great man - The great man at court, who can do what he will there. Uttereth - Is bold to speak plainly. Desire - His unjust, oppressive design. They - They all jointly promote violence and cruelty.

4. As a briar - Mischievous and hurtful. The day - The day in which they shall sound the alarm. Cometh - Surely, speedily, and unavoidably. Now - When that day is come.

7. Therefore - Since all sorts of men are so perfidious. Look - As one set in a watch-tower looks round about, and diligently observes all that stirs, so will the prophet; so did they who in Israel and Judah feared the Lord.

8. Rejoice not - The prophet personates the church. Let it be no matter of glorying to thee, that the day of calamity hath overtaken me. In darkness - When affliction, war, famine, and captivity cover me. A light - Shall support, comfort and deliver me.

9. Plead - Against mine enemy, now he pleads his own cause against me. His righteousness - The truth and riches of his promised salvation.

10. She - What nation or people soever. Shall behold - The people of God shall see their enemies laid low.

11. Thy walls - O Jerusalem. The decree - Of Artaxerxes, which forbad the re-building of the temple. Removed - Abolished.

12. In that day - After the return out of captivity. He - He who is of Jewish race. To thee - O Jerusalem. The fortified cities - In which many Jews were kept for servile works. To the river - To Euphrates. To sea - From the Caspian to the Persian and to the Midland sea. From mountain - That is, from all parts of their captivity, they shall return to their own country.

13. Not withstanding - These promises of restitution, which took not place 'till more than two hundred years after.

14. Feed - So Christ directs his officers. With thy rod - In allusion to the custom of shepherds who guided their sheep by a pastoral staff. In the wood - Protect and guide those that in their present captive state are solitary, compassed with dangers. Carmel - A fruitful place and well inhabited. In Bashan - A place of note for fruitfulness. Gilead - Equal with any of the other for plenty and safety.

16. Shall be deaf - They shall neither care to hear, nor to speak of it.

17. Lick the dust - In the most submissive, servile manner, testify their subjection. Holes - Their strong holds, and fastnesses. Because of thee - So that the name of Jews, shall be terrible to their enemies.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF NAHUM

NAHUM prophesies wholly of the destruction of Nineveh. He is supposed to have lived in the time of Hezekiah, and to have prophesied after the captivity of Israel, by the king of Assyria, which was in the ninth year of Hezekiah, five years before Sennacherib's invading Judah.

### I

The inscription of the book, ver. 1. A magnificent display of the glory of God, ver. 2-8. A particular application of this, to the destruction of Sennacherib's army, ver. 9-15.

1. The burden - When the prophets were sent to denounce judgments against a nation or city, the word was usually called the burden of that nation or city. The vision - As prophets were of old called seers, 1 Sam. ix, 9, so their prophesies were called visions. Nahum - His name speaks a comforter, but it is God's people to whom he gives notice of the destruction of their oppressors.

2. Jealous - For his own glory. Revengeth - As supreme governor, who by office is bound to right the oppressed, and to punish the oppressor.

3. Hath his way - The methods of his providence. The whirlwind - Which beareth before it all things that stand in its way. The dust of his feet - Though he be surrounded with darkness, yet as an army afar off is discovered by the dust that their feet raise, so wilt God appear with great power marching against his enemies.

4. The flower - Whatever flourished thereon; the blossoms, and flowers which were wont to be the glory of it.

7. Knoweth - He approves, owns, and preserves them.

8. An over-running flood - His judgments like a mighty flood that overflows all banks, shall swallow up Assyria. Thereof - Of Nineveh, that is Nineveh itself. Darkness - Troubles, and desolating afflictions.

9. Against the Lord - What you imagine or design against his people, ye design against him? Make an utter end - He will bring you to utter desolation.

10. As thorns - They shall be like thorns easily burnt, and like thorns folded together which burn together, and help to destroy each other. As drunkards - As men drunken, and unable to help themselves, so the Assyrians drunk with pleasure and pride, shall be surprised, and easily overthrown.

11. Come - Sennacherib, or Rabshekah. Thee - From Nineveh. Against the Lord - Against the people of the Lord, 2 Chron. xxxii, 1.

12. They - The Assyrians. Quiet - Be secure, and fear no dangers. Yet thus - Irresistible, suddenly, and universally. He - The angel of the Lord. Thee - O Israel, I will no more use that rod.

14. Thee - Thee, Sennacherib, and the whole kingdom of Assyria. Be sown - None shall bear thy name, and title; but thy kingdom shall be swallowed up.

15. Keep - Be careful to serve God. Thy vows - Made in thy distress. The wicked - That wicked oppressor, Sennacherib.

## II

The approach of the enemy and taking the city, ver. 1-6. The consequences thereof, ver. 7-10. Sin the cause of all, ver. 11-13.

1. He - The Medes or Chaldeans, that dash Nineveh in pieces. The munition - The forts. Make thy loins strong - Strengthen thyself.

2. For - Israel and Jacob were more to God, yet he punished them; much more will he punish Nineveh. Turned - Laid low. The excellency - The wealth, the valiant men, all that Jacob gloried in. Jacob - The two tribes. Israel - The ten tribes. Emptied them - Quite exhausted them. Their vine-branches - Destroyed all the fruit of the land.

3. The shield - One part for the whole of the armour, and furniture. Mighty men - Medes or Chaldeans. Red - With the blood of the slain. Torches - Torches were always carried in them. In the day - When he shall muster his armies. Shaken - By axes cutting them down for the war.

4. In the streets - Of Nineveh, when taken. Justle - By reason of their multitude and fury. In the broad ways - Where is most room, and yet scarce enough for them to move. Like torches - What with sparkling fire caused by their horses and chariots, what with the glittering of the polished irons about them, and what with the light of flaming torches carried in them. Like the lightnings - Both for speed, irrestibleness and terror.

5. He - The king of Babylon. His worthies - Approved officers and commanders. Stumble - Shew such forwardness, that they shall not stand to pick their way. They - The Assyrians to defend, the Chaldeans to assault the walls of Nineveh.

6. The gates - Of the city toward the river. The rivers - Of the Tigris, upon which Nineveh stood. Dissolved - While the Chaldeans besieged Nineveh, a mighty deluge overthrew the walls of Nineveh, by the space of twenty furlongs, through which breach the besiegers made their entrance. Dissolved - As if melted, it shall drop to pieces.

7. Huzzab - The queen. The voice of doves - Sighing out their complaints. Upon their breasts - Instead of musical instruments, on which they were used to play, now they only strike their breasts.

8. Like a pool - Very populous, like a pool which hath been long breeding fish, and is full of them. Yet - Yet these multitudes shall flee discomfited and terrified. They - The chieftains, and most valiant among the Ninevites.

9. Take - Thus the Chaldeans encourage one another in the plundering of the city.

11. Of the lions - Tyrants and bloody warriors.

12. Did tear - Formerly fell upon his neighbour nations. His lionesses - Queens, concubines, or ladies in the Assyrian court.

13. I will burn her - Nineveh. In the smoke - The city being first plundered, then burnt; these chariots were burnt in that smoke. Thy prey - Cause thee to cease from making a prey any more. Thy messengers - Embassadors or muster-masters. Probably this refers to Rabshaketh who had blasphemed the living God. Those are not worthy to be heard again, that have once spoken reproachfully against God.

## III

The sins of Nineveh, and judgments pursuing them, ver. 1-7. Instances of like judgments for like sins, ver. 18-11. The overthrow of all wherein they trusted, ver. 12-19.

1. The prey - Extortion and rapine.

3. The horsemen - The Chaldeans and their confederates.

4. The whoredom - The idolatries, which were multiplied by the many people that served the Assyrian idols. And whoredoms literally understood, did undoubtedly abound, where wealth, luxury, ease, and long continuance of these were to be found. Well-favoured - Glorious in their state and government, and in the splendour of their idols, temples, and sacrifices. Of witchcrafts - Bewitching

policies; or it may be taken for witchcrafts or necromances, which abounded among the Assyrians. That selleth - That dispose of them as imperiously, and absolutely as men do slaves. And families - This may intimate the seducing of some particular and eminent families to an hereditary service of the Assyrian idols, or to witchcrafts, in which the devil imitated God's institution, in taking a family to his service.

5. Discover - l will strip thee naked, and deal with thee as inhuman soldiers deal with captive women.

7. Shall flee - With loathing and abhorrence. Will bemoan - Whose bowels will be moved for her that had no bowels for any one.

8. Thou - O Nineveh. No - It is supposed this was what we now called Alexandria. Art thou greater, stronger, and wiser? Yet all her power was broken, her riches spoiled, and her glory buried in ruins. Rampart - The defense of its walls on one side. Her wall - A mighty, strong wall, built from the sea landward.

9. Her strength - Furnishing soldiers and warlike assistance. It was infinite - There was no end to their confidence and warlike provisions. Put - Or the Moors, who lie westward of Alexandria. Lubim - The people that inhabited that which is now called Cyrene.

11. Thou also - Thou shalt drink deep of the bitter cup of God's displeasure. Hid - Thou shalt hide thyself. O Nineveh, as well as Alexandria. Shalt seek - Shalt sue for, and intreat assistance.

12. Ripe figs - Whose weight and ripeness will bring them quickly to the ground. Shaken - If but lightly touched.

13. Are women - Were very cowards. The gates - The strong frontiers. Wide open - Either through fear or treachery. Thy bars - With which the gates were shut and strengthened.

14. Draw thee waters - Fill all thy cisterns, and draw the waters into the ditches. Tread the mortar - Set thy brick-makers on work to prepare store of materials for thy fortifications.

15. There - In the very fortresses. Eat thee - As easily as the canker-worm eats the green herb. Many - They are innumerable; be thou so if thou canst; all will be to no purpose.

16. The canker-worm spoileth - So these are like the canker- worms, which spoil wherever they come, and when no more is to be gotten, flee away.

17. Thy crowned - Thy confederate kings and princes. Captains - Commanders and officers are for number, like locusts and grasshoppers; but 'tis all for shew, not for help. In the cool day - While the season suits them. The sun - When trouble, war, and danger, like the parching sun, scald them. Is not known - Thou shalt never know where to find them.

18. Thy shepherds - Thy rulers and counsellors. Slumber - Are remiss, heartless, or dead. No man gathereth - No one will concern himself to preserve thy dispersed ones.

19. Shall clap the hands - Insulting and rejoicing. Thy wickedness - Thy tyranny, pride, oppression and cruelty; treading down and trampling upon them.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

IT IS probable, Habakkuk lived and prophesied in the reign of king Manasseh. His book is a mixture of the prophet's addresses to God in the peoples name, and to the people in God's name.

The whole, particularly, refers to the invasion of the land of Judah by the Chaldeans: but it is of general use especially to those who are tempted, concerning the prosperity of bad, and troubles of good men.

**I**

The prophet complains of the violence practiced by the Jews, ver. 1-4. God foretells the punishment of it, ver. 5-11. The prophet complains of the mischief done by the Chaldeans, ver. 12-17.

1. The burden - The prophet seems to speak of these grievous things, as a burden which he himself groaned under.

4. Therefore - Because the wicked go on with impunity. The law - The whole law, moral, ceremonial, and judicial. Is slacked - Is slighted, and not observed. Go forth - From magistrates, Judges, and public officers. Doth compass about - As it were besieges, with design to oppress and ruin.

5. Behold ye - Here God begins to answer the prophet. Among the heathen - See what judgments have been executed upon the heathen for like sins.

6. Bitter - Cruel, and without mercy. Hasty - Speedy in executing their merciless purposes.

7. Their judgment - The law they observe, is their own will. Their dignity - Their authority is all from themselves, without respect to any other law or rule whatever. 8. The evening wolves - Which with fasting in the day, came out in the evening, fierce and ravenous. Shall spread - All over the land.

9. For violence - To enrich themselves by making a prey of all. Their faces - Their very countenances shall be as blasting as the east-wind.

10. At the kings - Which opposed their designs. And take it - By mighty mounts cast up.

12. Shall not die - Be utterly destroyed. Ordained - Set up, and designed. Them - The Chaldean kingdom. For judgment - To execute this judgment, which is tempered with mercy. For correction - To chastise, not to destroy.

14. And makest - Not infusing cruel appetites, but permitting them to act according to such appetite which was already in them. As the fishes - Of which the greater greedily devour the smaller. Creeping things - Which in the waters are food for the lesser fry; so the world, like the sea, is wholly oppression. No ruler - None to defend the weak, or restrain the mighty.

15. They - The Chaldeans draw out all alike, good or bad. In their net - Destroying many together. And gather - As if they could never have enough, they drive men into their nets.

16. They sacrifice - Ascribe the praise of their victories. Their net - To their own contrivances, diligence, and power.

17. Empty their net - As fisher-men empty the full net to fill it again.

## II

God answers, that the Chaldeans themselves shall at length be a prey, ver. 1-8. A woe denounced against the covetous, the oppressive, the drunkards, and idolaters, ver. 9-12.

1. Upon my watch - I will stand as a watchman on my watch- tower. He - The Lord. Reproved - Called to give an account of the mysteriousness of providence; either to satisfy doubters, or to silence quarrellers.

2. Upon tables - What was of publick concern, and therefore to be published, was anciently written or engraven upon tables, smooth stones, or wood, and then hung up in a publick place to be read. May run - That none may need to stop, but every one may plainly and clearly discern what is written.

3. At the end - When the period appointed of God shall come. Shall speak - Be accomplished, and not disappoint your expectation.

4. Which is lifted up - That proudly contests with the justice and wisdom of the Divine Providence, and provides for his own safety by his own wit. The just - The humble and upright one, who adores the depth of divine providence, and is persuaded of the truth of divine promises. Shall live - Supports himself, by a firm expectation of the deliverance of Zion.

5. He - The king of Babylon. Wine - Hereby Belshazzar, his city and kingdom of Babylon fell a prey to Darius and Cyrus. At home - Is ever abroad warring upon some or other. Unto him - To his kingdom. All nations - That are round about him.

8. Of the land - Of the whole land of Chaldea. The city - Babylon.

9. To his house - His family which he would enrich, and raise high. Delivered - Kept secure and out of danger from all below him.

10. Thou - Nebuchadnezzar.

11. Shall cry out - As if it had a voice, it cries to God for vengeance. Answer it - Confirm the charge against thee.

13. Is it not of the Lord - Is it not a judgment from God? Shall labour - That men go thro' the most painful labour. For very vanity - For nothing; without any reward of their labour.

16. Thou - O king of Babylon. Shall be turned - They turned the cup of pleasure about, God will carry the cup of indignation about also, and make them drink deep of it. Shameful spewing - Thou shalt be as much loathed as a shameful drunkard is in his vomit.

17. The violence - The violence thou hast done to Judea shall overwhelm thee. The spoil of brass - Such spoil as by hunters is made among wild beasts, when they endeavour to destroy the whole kind.

20. The Lord - He is Jehovah, the fountain of being, life, power, and salvation to his people. Keep silence - Fear, submit, and depend on him; let his enemies be silent, reverence, hope, pray and wait for him, who will arise and have mercy on them, who will make it to be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked, who will fully and satisfactorily solve the doubts, and unfold the riddles of his providence.

## III

Habakkuk begs of God to succor his people, ver. 1, 2. He calls to mind God's former appearances for his people, ver. 3-15. He encourages himself to trust in God, ver, 16-19.

1. Upon Sigionoth - A musical instrument.

2. Thy speech - In answer to the inquiry made chap. i, 13, 14. Was afraid - Trembled at what thou speakest. In the midst of the years - Even before the seventy years are expired. Make known - Thy truth, wisdom, power, and compassion.

3. God - The God of our fathers, discovered himself from Teman, a mountain not far from mount Sinai, where the law was given. Paran - Near Sinai. His glory - This the prophet mentions as a support of his faith, that God so gloriously appeared among their fathers. Full of his praise - Of works which were worthy of all praise.

4. As the light - Pure, clear as the sun, but much more dazzling. His hand - The face of Moses shined; the face, yea, hands of our God, shine with glorious light. There - In that light wherewith he appeared. The hiding - Which discovered much of it, but hid much more; it was light inaccessible.

5. Before him - When God was leading the Israelites out of Egypt, he made the pestilence go before him, so preparing room for his people.

6. He stood - Gave his presence with Joshua, as one that stood by while the work was done. The land - The promised land. He beheld - Looked with a frowning countenance. Drove asunder - Cast them out, his eye did this, for he looked on them, and did this. His ways - The wisdom, goodness, justice, holiness, and power of God, which he shews in governing his people.

7. The tents - The people that dwelt in them. Arabia - Near whose borders Israel marched. In affliction - In fear and pain, lest that mighty people should fall on them. The curtains - Those that dwelt within them; these people dwelt in tents, which were made up on the sides with curtains.

8. The sea - The Red Sea. Ride - As a general in the head of his army. Upon thine horses - Alluding to the manner of men. Salvation - No; but he came to save his people.

9. Thy bow - One part of armour is put for the whole. The Lord is represented as armed, in readiness to smite through all his enemies. According to the oaths - In pursuance of his oath made to our fathers, and their posterity. Cleave the earth - When they were to march through a dry and thirsty land.

10. Overflowing - The inundation which at that season was wont to be very great in and round Jordan, passed away at the word of God; the waters below flowed, and ran from those above, which stood on a heap to make a path for Israel. The deep - Either the deep channel in which Jordan flowed, or the Red Sea with dreadful roaring parted its waters. Lift up his hands - Its waves which stood on an heap.

11. Stood still - At the prayer of Joshua. In the light - Which was most miraculously continued.

13. With thine anointed - Under the conduct of thine anointed, Joshua, the type of the Messiah. Thou woundest - Gavest a deadly wound to the kings of Canaan. The house of the wicked - The courts of these kings were houses of the vilest wickedness. By discovering - Destroying all from head to foot.

14. Villages - All the cities and all the unwalled towns. They - The inhabitants of Canaan. As a whirlwind - With violence invading me on every side. To scatter - To disperse and drive away the Israelites. Their rejoicing - They rejoiced in full confidence of swallowing up Israel unawares.

15. Didst walk - Thou heldest on thy way, from thy entering in on the east of the land, to the west thereof.

16. When I heard - What dreadful desolations God threatened against Israel. My heart trembled - Another effect of surprising fears and astonishment. Rottenness - A decay of all my strength. That I might rest - These fears made me betake myself to God, that I might rest in him. He - The king of Babylon. The people - The Jews.

17. The labour - The labour bestowed upon the olive. Yield no meat - Corn. Flock - Of sheep.

19. Like hinds feet - That I may escape to God my refuge. He will make me - To conquer and triumph.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH.

ZEPHANIAH was the last of the minor prophets, before the captivity. He foretells the captivity of Judah by the Chaldeans, sets their sins in order before them, calls them to repentance, threatens the neighbour-nations, and gives encouraging promises of their return.

### I

The title of the book, ver. 1. The destruction of Judah foretold, ver. 2-4. A charge against them for their sins, ver. 5-9. A description of the day of the Lord, ver. 10-18.

1. Zephaniah - He is thought to have been the great-grandson of king Hezekiah. In the days of Josiah - So he was cotemporary with Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and foretells what Jeremiah and Ezekiel did.

4. The remnant - Whatsoever remains of the idolatry of Baal. This place - Jerusalem. The name - Both the persons, and the memory of them. The Chemarims - Either called so from their black garments they went in, or, from their swarthy colour occasioned by the black smoak of incense: they were door-keepers, and sextons of Baal. The priests - The priests of Baal.

5. House-tops - On the flat roofs of their houses. And that swear - That mixt idol-worship, and the worship of the true God; that devote themselves to God, and Baal, or Malchim, that is, Moloch.

7. Hold thy peace - Thou that murmurest against God, stand in awe. The day - A day of vengeance from the Lord. A sacrifice - The wicked Jews, whom he will sacrifice by the sword. His guests - summoned the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, to eat the flesh, and drink the blood.

8. The princes - The great ones, who dreamed of shifting better than others, but fell with the first, 2 Kings xxv, 19-21. Children - Sons and grand-children, Josiah: Jehoahaz died a captive in Egypt, 2 Kings xxiii, 34, Jehoakim died in Babylon, and was buried with the burial of an ass, Jer. xxii, 18, 19, Jeconiah died a captive: and Zedekiah and his children, fared still worse. Strange apparel - The garb of foreigners, imitated by the wanton Jews.

9. In the same day - At the same time. Their masters houses - Either the oppressing kings, whose officers these were, or publick officers and Judges, whose servants thus spoiled the poor. Violence - Goods taken by force, by false accusations, or by suborned evidence.

10. The noise - The great out-cry and lamentation. The fish gate - At which gate the Babylonians first entered into the city. The second - This gate was in the second wall of Jerusalem, which on that side was fortified with three walls. Crashing - Of things broken into shivers; possibly the noise of doors, windows, closets, and chests broken up. The hills - On which the city stood.

11. Howl - Cry aloud, and bitterly. Maktesh - The lower town. Merchant people - Who were wont to lodge in this place. That bear silver - That brought it with them to pay for what they bought.

12. I will search - God speaks after the manner of men, who searches dark places with candles. He will fully discover and punish. Their lees - In allusion to liquors, which not being poured out from vessel to vessel to refine them, grow thick and foul.

14. The voice if the day - The day which will come with a great noise.

15. A day - Of unparalleled calamities.

17. Like blind men - Not knowing where to go. As dust - As abundantly, and as carelessly as dust in the highway.

18. In the land - Therefore let not sinners be laid asleep by the patience of God; for when the measure of their iniquity is full, his justice will both overtake and overcome them, will make quick and thorough work.

## II

An exhortation to repentance, ver. 1-3. A denunciation of the judgments of God against the Philistines, ver. 4-7. The Moabites and Ammonites, ver. 8-11. The Arabians and Assyrians, ver. 12- 15.

1. Gather yourselves - Call a solemn assembly, proclaim a fast. Not desired - Or, not desirous. Unwilling to return, and unworthy to be received on your return.

2. The decree - Before God's decree is put in execution. The day - Before the day of your calamities. As the chaff - Carry you away as the wind carries chaff away.

3. Seek - Fear, worship, depend on him alone. Ye meek - Ye humble ones. Wrought his judgment - Obeyed his precepts. Seek righteousness - Continue therein. Seek meekness - Patiently wait on the just and merciful God. Hid - Under the wing of Divine Providence.

4. For - It is time to seek God; for your neighbours, as well as you, shall be destroyed. Gaza - A chief city of the Philistines. They - The Babylonians. Shall drive - Into captivity. At the noon day - It shall be taken by force at noon.

5. The inhabitants - All the Philistines. Cherethites - Or destroyers, men that were stout, fierce, and terrible to their neighbours. O Canaan - That part that the Philistines kept by force from the Jews.

6. For shepherds - Instead of cities full of rich citizens, there shall be only cottages for shepherds.

7. The coast - The sea-coast, the land of the Philistines. The remnant - That survive the captivity. Shall feed - Their flocks. In the houses - In places where these formerly stood. They - Both shepherds and flocks. Shall visit - In mercy.

8. I - God. Magnified themselves - Invading their frontiers.

9. Of nettles - Not cultivated, but over-run with nettles. Salt-pits - A dry, barren earth, fit only to dig salt out of. The residue - That return out of Babylon. Possess them - Settle upon those parts of their lands, that are fit for habitation.

11. Famish - Take away all their sacrifices and drink-offerings. The gods - Idols of those lands. From his place - Not only at Jerusalem, but every where.

12. By my sword - The Chaldeans are called God's sword; because God employed them.

13. He - God. The north - Assyria, which lay northward of Judea, and due north from Babylon.

14. All the beasts - All sorts of beasts which are found in those countries. The bittern - A bird that delights in desolate places.

15. This - So the prophet triumphs over her. There is none - None like me, or that can contend with me.

## III

Jerusalem threatened for her wickedness, ver. 1-7. A promise of a glorious reformation, ver. 8-13. And deliverance consequent upon it, ver. 14-20.

1. To her - Jerusalem.

2. The voice - Of God by his mercy and judgments crying aloud.

3. Her princes - Persons of principal place and authority. Lions - Which hunt for prey, and are ever affrighting or devouring. Wolves - Insatiable and cruel, like wolves of the evening, whetted with hunger. Gnaw not the bones - They leave nothing but the bones to be eaten on the morrow.

4. Her prophet - So called, false prophets. Light - Unstable and inconstant. Violence to the law - Wresting it by perverse interpretation.

5. In the midst - Observing all. Not do iniquity - He will judge them righteously. Every morning - Daily he discovers his displeasure against the wicked. Faileth not - Lets no season slip to convince them, by public and visible punishments. The unjust - But the wicked Jews proceed without shame, and without fear.

6. The nations - Of old, the Canaanites, lastly the ten tribes, and later yet, the Assyrians.

7. I said - I thought (speaking after the manner of men). Thou - O Jerusalem. Fear me - For the many and great judgments executed upon others. I punished them - In some measure.

8. Therefore - Since you will not be amended. Wait ye - Attend my resolution. Until - Until I rise up to destroy first, and next to take the spoil. Upon them - The incorrigible Jews. Devoured - Consumed as if burnt up. My jealousy - That jealousy wherewith God is jealous for his own glory.

9. A pure language - I will give them a pure way of worshipping me, the issue of a pure heart.

10. My dispersed - The praying remnant of the scattered Jews shall return to their own land, and bring themselves an offering unto the Lord.

11. Thy doings - Thy sins formerly committed. In thy pride - Proud formalists. No more be haughty - Ye shall no more boast, because of the city, or the temple.

12. Of thee - In Judea and Jerusalem.

13. Shall feed - Shall enjoy peace and plenty.

15. Taken away - Abolished, and put an end to the judgments thy sins brought upon thee. Thine enemy - The Babylonian. Is in the midst - He is returned to redeem and govern thee. Any more - While thy carriage is as becomes my presence with thee, thou shalt neither fear, nor feel the like evils.

18. Sorrowful - That mourn their distance from the solemn worship of God. Who are of thee - Thy children. Reproach - The taunts of their enemies.

19. Undo - I will break their power and dissolve their kingdom. That halteth - Who is in trouble and ready to fall. Driven out - Into remote countries.

20. A praise - So the universal church of the first-born will be, in the great day. And then the Israel of God be made a name and a praise to all eternity.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF HAGGAI

NINE of the twelve minor prophets preached before the captivity; but the three last, some time after it. Haggai and Zachariah appeared about the same time, eighteen years after the return, and encouraged the people to build the temple, when the work had stopped for some time, notwithstanding all the opposition they met with. Haggai began two months before Zachariah, who was raised up to second him. But Zachariah continued longer at the work: for all Haggai's prophecies which are recorded, were delivered within four months in the second year of Darius; but we have Zachariah's prophecies dated above two years after. They both prophesied of Christ. Haggai speaks of him as the glory of the latter house, Zachariah as the man, the branch. In them the light of that morning-star shone more bright, than in the foregoing prophecies, as they lived nearer the time of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness.

### I

A reproof of the Jews for their delay in building, which had provoked God to punish them, ver. 1-11. The peoples return to the work, whom the prophet, in God's name, encourages therein, ver. 12-15.

1. Son - Adoptive son to Shealtiel, being of the royal line, but by nature, son of Pedaiah. Governor - Appointed to this by the Persian king, over the remnant returned out of Babylon. Joshua - A type of the great deliverer; one Joshua leads them into Canaan, another restores the temple.

4. Ceiled - Arched and richly adorned.

6. Have not enough - But what you eat doth not nourish or satisfy you. Are not filled - Your water quenches not your thirst, your wine does not revive your spirit. None warm - You have no comfort therein. With holes - Loses all his labour.

8. Take pleasure - I will accept your offerings, and hear your prayers. Glorified - Shew my majesty and account myself glorified by you also.

9. Came to little - But it answered not the expectation. I did blow - I blasted it. Ye run - You with eagerness carry on your own particular buildings.

10. Is stayed - God hath forbidden them, to drop down dew.

11. Upon men - The very blood, and constitutions of men were changed, and many diseases afflicted them.

13. In the Lord's message - ln the words of his master. The people - The whole assembly.

14. The Lord of hosts - By which name he delights to be known among the returned captives; and it was a name best suited to their present state, compassed on all hands with enemies.

## II

Haggai assures the builders, that the glory of this house should exceed the glory of the former, ver. 1-9. That God would bless them and give them success, ver. 10-19. That he would peculiarly bless Zerubbabel, ver. 20-23.

3. That saw - Near fourscore years ago. This house - The temple built by Solomon.

5. My spirit - Of strength and courage, of wisdom and understanding.

6. Yet once - After many confirmations of the new covenant, one more, remains to be made. A little while - Tho' above five hundred years, yet this was but a little time compared with that between the promise to Adam and Christ's coming. I will shake - Whether it be metaphorical or literal, it was verified at the time of Christ's coming into the world. After the return of the captivity, by the commotions among the Grecians, Persians, and Romans, which began soon after this time; this was metaphorically fulfilled. And it was literally fulfilled by prodigies and earthquakes, at the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ.

7. All nations - Which was literally fulfilled in the overthrow of the Persian monarchy by the Grecians, in the civil wars, and succeeding troubles among Alexander's successors, the growth of the Roman power by subduing their neighbours, and their dissentions and home-bred wars. The desire - Christ the most desirable, to all nations, and who was desired by all that knew their own misery, and his sufficiency to save them who was to be the light of the Gentiles, as well as the glory of his people Israel. With glory - The first temple had a glory in its magnificent structure, rich ornaments, and costly sacrifices; but this was a worldly glory; that which is here promised, is a

heavenly glory from the presence of Christ in it. He that was the brightness of his father's glory, who is the glory of the church, appeared in this second temple.

8. The silver - The treasures of both: doubt not therefore but I will give enough to build this house.

9. In this place - In my house, a type of Christ. Peace - A spiritual, internal, and heavenly peace.

11. Concerning the law - What the law saith in this case.

12. Holy flesh - Part of the sacrifice, legally sanctified, or made holy by the altar on which the whole was sanctified. In the skirt - In the lap of his garment, or in any other cloth, and if this cloth touch any common thing as bread, &c., shall that become legally holy?

13. Said - Now the second case is proposed. These - Bread or pottage, wine or oil, or meat. Unclean - Shall that which the unclean doth touch, become unclean? Though a mediate touch of what is holy will not make holy, yet will not a mediate touch of what is polluted defile?

14. So - Polluted persons, touching what is clean, pollute it, so polluted Jews, polluted God's ordinances, while the outward performing of legal duties, left them as unholy in themselves, as they were before: somewhat more then is to be done. The soul is first to be purified, that they and we may offer up a pure offering. The people - The body of the Jews. Every work - Whatever they do, they pollute all by polluted hands. Offer - What they bring to the altar with impure hearts, is polluted by them.

15. Upward - Through past years. Before - Before you would set upon the re-building of the temple after you had intermitted it.

16. Since - All the while the temple lay neglected. When one came - Men are disappointed half in half. But ten - Which he expected would prove twenty measures, ephahs or bushels. It proved but half your hope, thus your corn failed, and your oil much more.

17. Blessing - Burning, and scorching winds. All the labours - In your plowing and sowing, in planting of olives and vines.

18. From the day - When you began to build on the old foundation.

19. Is the seed - Your seed for the next harvest is yet in your barns. Hath not brought forth - No sign yet appears what vintage you shall have, what store of wine, oil, figs, and pomegranates. Yet in the word of God I tell you, you shall be blest in them all, and have a large produce.

23. My servant - A type of him who was God's most beloved servant. As a signet - Which is very highly valued, and carefully kept. So shall the antitypical Zerubbabel, the Messiah, be advanced, loved, and inviolably preserved king, and supreme over his church. He is indeed the signet on God's right-hand. For all power is given to him, and derived from him. In him the great charter of the gospel is signed, and sanctified, and it is in him, that all the promises of God are yea and amen.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH

Zechariah prophesies more particularly concerning the Messiah than Haggai had done. In the five first verses of his prophecy, he declares the scope of it. Thence to the sixth chapter he relates the visions he saw, and the instructions he received by them. He shews the Jews their present duty,

chap. 7. and encourages them to hope for God's favour, chap. 8. Thence to the end, he reproves for sin, threatens the impenitent, and encourages them that feared God with gracious promises.

## I

A call to repentance, ver. 1-6. The vision of the horses, ver.7-11. The prayer of the angel for Jerusalem answered, ver. 12-17. The vision of the four carpenters, ver. 18-21

1. In the eighth month - Two months after Haggai began to encourage the Jews to build the temple. Zechariah - Probably this is that Zechariah whom the Jews slew between the temple and the altar, Matt. xxiii, 35.

5. Where are they - But where are your disobedient fathers? Were they not consumed with famine and sword, as I threatened them? Do they live - The prophets died as others; they must not live always to warn you.

6. My words - The dreadful menaces which I spake. My statutes - The decreed judgments which I resolved to execute on them, which by my prophets I proclaimed. Take hold - Overtake as a pursuing enemy overtakes, and seizeth on his enemy. They returned - By this it should seem that Zechariah gave them time to consider what answer to give. So hath he dealt - It is true, as God said he would do, so he hath done against us.

8. A man - Christ Jesus in the shape of a man. Riding - In a posture of readiness. A red horse - This colour is a symbol of his coming to avenge himself on his enemies. The myrtle-trees - He posted himself in a convenient place to observe and be ready, among verdant, fragrant trees, emblems of the saints of God. In the bottom - This bottom or valley in which the myrtles grew, is an emblem of the church in a low, afflicted state. Behind him - Christ was, as becomes a captain, at the head, the rest, as his soldiers, are behind attending on him. Red horses - Horses and horsemen, and those are angels, ver. 10. And the colour of these horses is red, probably denoting the bloody condition of states and kingdoms, by wars one against another when God punisheth his church, or when he avengeth himself. Speckled - Of a mixt colour; perhaps an emblem of affairs, not all dark, nor all light, such as those during the last seventy prophetic weeks. White - An emblem of the best days of the church.

9. O my Lord - This was Christ, the Lord of hosts. What are these - What is the meaning of these appearances. The angel - Christ, the angel of the covenant.

10. These - Horsemen, are angels, who are ministers of the Divine Providence in the government of the world.

11. Is at rest - All men sit still to take their ease. All is peaceable. This was the state of the empire which at that time ruled all.

12. Angel of the Lord - The angel, the Lord Christ.

14. Cry thou - Now publish what thou hearest, and assure my poor captive church, that God will do good for her.

15. A little displeased - With mine own people, that is, in comparison of the anger I bear against the Heathen. Helped forward - Attempted to destroy whom I would but correct.

16. A line - The builder's measuring line shall be stretched out, to mark out the walls, gates, streets, and houses in Jerusalem.

17. Through prosperity - Through increase of families, they shall send forth colonies, and plant new cities, and thro' increase of wealth, and cattle, be able to build their cities, and stock their colonies.

18. Four horns - Emblems of the enemies of the Jews.

19. The horns - Powers, states, and kingdoms, which have from all sides pushed at, broken and tossed my people. Judah - The two tribes. Israel - The ten tribes.

21. He - Christ. These - He first points to the four horns. But these - These carpenters are emblems of those instruments God will employ in breaking those destroyers. Who lift up - Who employed their arms and strength against the kingdom of Judah, to drive them out of God's inheritance.

## II

A vision signifying the prosperous state of Jerusalem, ver. 1-5. An exhortation to the Jews, to hasten into their own land, ver. 6-9. Encouragement to them that were returned, and advice to wait patiently for God, ver. 10-13.

1. With a line - Ready and prepared to lay out the platform of Jerusalem.

2. To measure - To take the exact dimensions of it, that it may answer God's promise, and be capable to receive its inhabitants. Jerusalem - The city which was to be built hereafter.

3. The angel - Christ, who had so long talked with Zechariah. Went forth - From the midst of the myrtle-trees.

4. And he said - Christ to that angel who came to meet him. Run - Hasten and tell Zechariah. As towns - The suburbs of it shall be as towns unwalled, for extent and for safety.

5. The glory - My presence and favour shall make her glorious.

6. Ho, ho - Ye sleepy Jews. Come forth - Come out from your prisons. Flee - Make all the haste you can. From the land - Babylon, which lay north of Canaan. For I have spread you abroad - As I executed my threats in scattering you, so I will perform my promise, and gather you.

7. Deliver thyself - Accept of thy deliverance.

8. After the glory - After that he is become your glory, I am to avenge you of your enemies.

9. Upon them - Against the nation that doth violence to my people. Unto their servants - Unto the Jews, who were first spoiled by, and then made servants to them. Hath sent me - To inform them of my father's will.

10. I come - To execute judgments on thine adversaries, and to compleat thy deliverance and salvation. I will dwell - This was fulfilled in part to the Jews, but more fully to the gospel church.

11. Shall be joined - Shall worship the God of Israel. In that day - When Christ shall come in the flesh, and take down the partition wall. Sent me - The Messiah.

12. Shall inherit - Claim, recover, possess, and delight in, as a man doth in his paternal inheritance.

13. Be silent - Reverence and adore God, and expect the accomplishment of his word. All flesh - Both Jew and Gentile. He is raised up - God is on this work already, and he will not sit down again, 'till he has accomplished his whole work.

## III

Joshua accused, cleared, and clothed with clean and fair apparel, ver. 1-5. A promise made to him, ver. 6, 7. A prophesy of Christ, the Branch, ver. 8-10.

1. And he - The Lord represented to me in a vision. Standing - Ministering in his office. The angel - Christ.

2. The Lord - Christ, as a mediator, rather chuses to rebuke him in his father's name, than in his own. Is not this - Joshua.

3. With filthy garments - The emblem of a poor or sinful state. The angel - Christ.

4. And he - Christ. Unto those - Ministerial angels. I have caused - What angels could not take away, Christ did; he removed the filth of sin, the guilt and stain of it. With change of raiment - Clean and rich, the emblem of holiness.

5. I said - Zechariah takes the boldness to desire that for Joshua, which might add to his authority, and he asks the thing of Christ. A fair mitre - The proper ornament for the head of the high-priest. With garments - All the garments which appertained to the high priest. The angel - Christ.

6. Protested - Solemnly declared.

7. My charge - The special charge and office of the high-priest. Judge - Be ruler in the temple, and in the things that pertain to the worship of God there. Keep - Not as a servant, but as the chief, on whom others wait, and at last thou shalt have place among my angels.

8. Thy fellows - Thy associates in the priestly office. That sit - As assessors in a council. Wondered at - The unbelieving Jews wonder at them; at their labour and expense in attempting to build such a house. Bring forth - God the Father will bring forth a much more wonderful work. The Branch - The Messiah.

9. Behold - Behold (pointing to a particular stone) that stone which I have laid in the sight of Joshua. Upon one stone - On that stone are seven eyes, probably so placed, that they may look many ways; so it was a more exact emblem of Christ, and of his perfect knowledge and wisdom. I have removed - I have pardoned the iniquity of this land at once. The temple, founded on such a corner-stone, guarded and watched over by all-seeing Providence, is the blessing and honour of that people, whose sins are all forgiven.

10. In that day - Of removing the sins of my people. Shall ye call - Ye shall invite one another to refresh yourselves with the sweet fruit of the vine and fig-tree. When iniquity is taken away, we receive precious benefits from our justification, more precious than the fruits of the vine or fig-tree. And we repose ourselves in sweet tranquillity, being quiet from the fear of evil.

## IV

The vision of the candlestick and two olive-trees, ver. 1-3. Encouragement to the builders of the temple, ver. 4-10. The explanation of the vision, ver. 11-14.

2. With a bowl - Or basin. His seven lamps - The temple candlestick had just so many. And seven pipes - So each of the lamps had a pipe reaching from it to the bowl. On the top - These lamps were so set, as to stand somewhat higher than the body of the candlestick.

3. Two olive-trees by it - All which is an emblem of the church, made of pure gold; to be a light in the world; to shine as lamps that continually burn, maintained with pure oil, distilled from the olive-trees, not pressed out by man, but continually, abundantly, and freely flowing from God.

6. This word - Is particularly designed to him, and in an emblem prefigures what a church it is, how precious, how full of light, how maintained by God himself. Power - Courage and valour.

7. O great mountain - All opposers put together. Become a plain - Thou shalt sink into nothing. The head stone - Shall assist at the laying of the finishing stone, as he assisted when the foundation stone was laid. Grace, grace - Wishing all prosperity, and a long continuance of it, to the temple and those that are to worship God therein. As the free favour of God began, and finished, may the same ever dwell in it and replenish it.

9. Thou - Zerubbabel and all the Jews.

10. For who hath despised - In the work of God, the day of small things is not to be despised. God often chuses weak instruments, to bring about mighty things: and tho' the beginnings be small, he can make the latter end greatly to increase. For - Tho' they undervalued the meanness of the second temple, yet when finished, they shall rejoice in it. The plummet - The perpendicular with which Zerubbabel shall try the finished work. With those seven - In subordination to the Divine Providence expressed by the seven eyes, which were on that stone. And those that have the plummet in their hand, must look up to these eyes of the Lord, must have a constant regard to the Divine Providence, and as in dependence upon its conduct, and submission to its disposals.

12. I answered - l went on to discourse. Unto him - The angel. What be these - Two principal branches, one in each tree, fuller of berries, and hanging over the golden pipes. Through the pipes - These were fastened to the bowl, on each side one, with a hole through the sides of the bowl, to let the oil that distilled from those olive-branches run into the bowl. Out of themselves - An emblem of supernatural grace; these branches filled from the true olive-tree, ever empty themselves, and are ever full; so are the gospel-ordinances.

14. The two anointed ones - Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Son was to be sent by the Father, and so was the Holy Ghost. And they stand by him, ready to go.

## V

The vision of the flying roll, ver. 1-4. Of the ephah, the talent of lead, and the woman, ver. 5-11.

1. A flying roll - A volume, or book spread out at large, flying in the air, swiftly.

3. This - This roll or book containeth the curse, due to sinners. The whole earth - Either the whole land of Judea, or all the world, wherever these sins are found. According to it - According to the threats inscribed thereon. Sweareth - Profanely, or falsely.

4. It shall enter - This curse shall come with commission from me. It shall remain - It shall stick close to them and theirs like Gehazi's leprosy. And the stones - Nothing shall remain, as when both the timber and stones of a house are consumed.

6. He - The angel. An ephah - A measure which held about three bushels. Goeth forth - Out of the temple. Their resemblance - This is an emblem of this people everywhere. Thus there is limited time and measure for them, while they sin, and are filling the ephah with their sins, they will find that the ephah of wrath is filled up also, to be poured out upon them.

7. And behold - Here is another part of this vision. Lifted up - Brought thither to cover it. A talent - A piece of lead of a talent weight, as large as the mouth of the ephah. A woman - A woman, the third in the vision. Perhaps this vision was purposely obscure, least a plain denunciation of the second overthrow of the state and temple, might discourage them from going forward in the present restoration of them.

8. This - This woman represents the wickedness of the Jews. He cast it - The angel cast down this woman. On the mouth - And so shut her up, to suffer the punishment of all her sins.

9. There came out - From the same place whence the ephah came. Their wings - They had wings, like the wings of storks, large and strong, and flew before the wind with great swiftness. The judgments came thus flying, and so bore away with them those that were incorrigible.

11. To build - Not in mercy, but in judgment. Of Shinar - Of Babylon whither many of the Jews fled, and others of them were forced by the Romans. Set there - There they shall be confined without hope of release. Her own base - They are settled upon the lees of their own unbelief: their wickedness is established on its own bases.

## VI

The vision of the four chariots, representing God's government of the world, ver. 1-8. Joshua crowned as a type of Christ, ver. 9- 15.

1. Four chariots - Angels who are sometimes styled chariots of God. These as employed in the affairs of church and empire, act their part in the revolution and changes of things, 'till the gospel be preached by the Messiah, and the apostles. Of brass - These denote the immoveable decrees of God, his steady execution of his counsels and the insuperable restraints upon all empires and countries, which God keeps within the barriers of such impregnable mountains.

2. Red horses - Perhaps denoting bloody times, Rev. vi, 4. Black horses - Perhaps a time of mortality, and wasting diseases, Rev. vi, 5.

3. White horses - Signifying joyful and prosperous affairs, chap. i, 8. Grisled - A mixt state of affairs.

5. These are - The angels of heaven, who have a great share in the management of the affairs both of the church and states. Of the heavens - Which reside in heaven, 'till employed, go thence when employed, and having done their work, return thither. Standing - They stand as servants attending the command of their Lord.

6. The black horses - The angels signified by the black horses are the executioners of God's just displeasure. Therein - In the second chariot. The north-country - Babylon. The grisled - The angels signified by these, managed the Roman power, which was sometimes favourable, sometimes fierce and severe, to those they had to do with. The south-country - Egypt and Arabia, which lay south of Judea. It may perhaps point at their invading Africa too, whose punishments were mixed, with kindness and mercy more than the punishments of Babylon were.

7. Sought to go - Waited for a commission. He said - Christ who hath all power in heaven and on earth. Through the earth - Thro' the rest of the kingdoms of the world remote from Judea, but not remote from God's wise and sovereign providence.

8. Cried he - Christ spake aloud, and called to him. Quieted my spirit - By doing what I appointed them in revenge of my peoples injuries, and by bringing my people back into Canaan.

10. Take - Of those that are come out of Babylon. Come thou - Go fetch them, if they lodge elsewhere. The same day - The same day in which they come.

11. Make crowns - One of silver, the other of gold. Set them - Put both of them, one after another. Joshua - Who herein is now a type of Christ, king and priest for ever for his people.

12. Unto him - Joshua, but in the hearing of others. Whose name is the Branch - Whom you know by the name of the Branch, who was called so long since. Thou, O Joshua art the portrait, he is the Branch itself. Out of his place - Of the tribe and family, and in the place foretold. He shall build - He it is, though unseen, that stands by you, who build the material temple, far inferior to the spiritual temple, which Christ will build, preserve, and dwell in for ever. 13. The glory - Of both kingly and priestly office; the glory of both those crowns shall abide on him. Shall sit - Which speaks both his royal magnificence, and the perpetuity of it. A priest - The great high-priest, to offer the great sacrifice to God, to make reconciliation, to intercede for his people. The counsel of peace - The peace made for God's people shall rest upon these two, the kingly and priestly office of Christ; by his priestly office he shall make their peace with God, by his kingly office he shall deliver them from their spiritual enemies.

14. The crowns - The two crowns before mentioned. Helem - These persons we know no more of than their names. A memorial - Of the Messiah's certain and speedy coming.

15. They that are far off - This verse hath a double reference, one to the Jews, and the building of the material temple, the other to the bringing in of the Gentiles. And this - The literal part shall come to pass in your day, if you will obey the voice of the Lord. The mystical part shall come to pass also, and, if you will believe and obey, the Gentiles shall come in and be your brethren, and help to build the temple, the spiritual temple. But if you rebel and obey not, you shall be cast out and the Gentiles be taken in, to be God's people.

## VII

In answer to a question concerning fasting, the prophet reproves them for the mismanagement of their fasts, ver. 1-7. Exhorts them to reform their lives, ver. 8-14.

2. When they - The captives who still continued in Babylon. The house of God - The temple, which now half built began to be frequented. Regem-melech - It appears not who these were, but no doubt they were eminent in dignity and piety. Their men - The train of friends that accompanied them. To pray - To intreat the Lord for pardon of what was past, acceptance of them at present, and an answer to their enquiry.

3. The prophets - Haggai and Zechariah. Weep - Fast, in remembrance of the burning of the temple on the tenth day of that month. Separating myself - From worldly cares and designs.

5. Unto all the people - By their messengers. And seventh - For the murder of Gedaliah, slain by Ishmael. Even to me - You pleased yourselves in it, not me; you wept more for the inconveniences of the thing than the sinfulness of it.

6. For yourselves - I was as little minded by you in your fasts, as in your feasts.

7. Hear the words - You needed not have thus inquired, had you heeded the written word. Prophets - Who have called for repentance, and sincere love to God, and man, and shewed how light, formal services are. Prosperity - Did such observances preserve Jerusalem in its prosperity? Were they sufficient to save the men that inhabited the south of the plain? Did they do no good when things were all safe and well? And do you imagine they can profit you, now all is in ruins?

9. Spake - To your fathers.

10. Imagine evil - Neither think ill of, or with ill to, nor plot evil against one another.

11. Pulled away - Withdrew their shoulder from the yoke of the law.

12. In his spirit - By his Holy Spirit.

14. They laid the land desolate - By their sins.

## VIII

A promise that Jerusalem shall be restored, ver. 1-8. That the whole church shall be established and increased, ver. 9-23.

2. Jealousy - With great care that she should not, as formerly, sin against my love, and her own welfare, and with a great desire to do her good, and to rescue her from her enemies. Fury - With heat of anger against her enemies.

3. Shall be called a city of truth - Her citizens shall love the truth and speak it, shall worship me in truth of heart, as well as in the true manner prescribed to them.

4. Old men - Formerly war, or famine or pestilence, and wasting diseases, cut off men and women before they came to old age.

6. marvelous - These things may seem strange to this people.

7. The east-country - Persia and Media, which lay east from Jerusalem, and were now masters of Babylon.

8. In truth and in righteousness - This signifies both God's part, and their part; on God's part truth, on their's righteousness, obedience to God's righteous law.

9. The prophets - Haggai and Zechariah.

10. Before these days - For eighteen years together. No hire - No profit by the labour of man or beast, no sowing or planting. Affliction - Distress, and want, through the barrenness, which attended all their labour.

11. I will not be - That is, I will not deal with them as in former days.

14. I repented not - I did not fail to do it.

15. So - So with like steadiness of mind I have purposed to do well to you.

16. Judgment of truth - True judgment. Peace - That may restore, and settle peace among you. Gates - The places of judicature, where the Judges sat.

19. Thus saith the Lord - This verse is a final decision of the case: provided they do these things required, ver. 16, 17, then shall the fasting cease, and turn into joyful feasts. The fourth month - Wherein the city was taken by the Babylonians. The fifth - In which the temple was burnt. The seventh - Wherein Gedaliah was killed. The tenth - On the tenth day whereof the king of Babylon's army sat down before the city.

20. People - Multitudes.

21. I will go also - The invited, shall with as much zeal embrace the motion, as others made it.

22. In Jerusalem - Literally understood, you have the first fruits of them mentioned, Acts ii, 10-12. Mystically, Jerusalem is the church of Christ. To pray - To perform all gospel-worship.

23. Ten men - That is, many men. All languages - No nation is any longer excluded. A Jew - To whom the gospel was first preached. We have heard - And now see, and are assured. That God - The true God, the only true God, whom to know is life eternal.

## IX

A prophecy against the Syrians and others, ver. 1-7. God will protect his people, ver. 8. A prophecy of the Messiah, ver. 9, 10. Of the deliverance and victories of the Jews, ver. 11-17.

1. Hadrach - This is the name of a city in Celosyria, and here signifies the country also. It was not far from Damascus. The rest thereof - This burden shall lie long as well as heavy on Damascus. Towards the Lord - For as all men's appeals in cases of wrong are to heaven, so they who have been wronged by Syrian injustice, look to heaven for right.

2. Hamath - A principal town of Syria. Shall border - Shall be so near the storm, that they shall not quite escape. Very wise - Each of them are subtle, and think by craft to save themselves, but God derides their wisdom.

4. Cast her out - Of her inheritance, as the word properly means.

5. Her expectation - Her hope that Tyre would break Alexander's power, or hold out against it. Ashamed - Turned into shame and confusion. The king - The government shall be overthrown. Shall not be inhabited - For many years.

6. A bastard - Strangers, who have no right of inheritance.

7. Take away his blood - Though proud and warlike nations have delighted to shed blood, and, as it were, to eat the blood of their enemies, yet God will overthrow their power, and take the prey out of their mouth. Abominations - Their abominable sacrifices which they offered and feasted on. God will punish their idolatries, and by destroying the cities of those abominations, will remove them for ever. The remnant - That small select number who escape the sword, shall be the Lord's peculiar ones. As a governor - For the honour which shall be given them. As a Jebusite - The city is put for the people, and this one city and people for all the other: all the remaining Philistines shall be as Jebusites, servants to the people of God.

8. I will encamp - To defend it from all its enemies. Mine house - This temple, but as it is an emblem of the church. The army - Of the Persian and the Grecian army, whose march lay through Judea.

9. Thy king - The Messiah. He is just - The righteous one, who cometh to fulfil all righteousness. Having salvation - To bestow on all that believe in him.

10. I will cut off - When the Messiah comes and sets up his kingdom, he will need no external force. Neither chariot, bow nor sword, brought salvation to him, neither shall they be mentioned in the day of his conquest. The heathen - The Heathens through him shall be reconciled unto God, and one another, Eph. ii, 17. From the river - From Euphrates to the utmost end of Canaan, to the Mediterranean sea; a type of all the world, which was in due time to be the inheritance of Christ.

11. As for thee - Oh Jerusalem; these words are Christ's words to her. By the blood - By my blood, in which thy covenant as confirmed; 'tis God's covenant as made by him, 'tis Zion's covenant as made for her, 'tis Christ's also as made in him. Sent forth - I have delivered the Jews out of Babylon: compared to a pit in which no water was, wherein the Jews must have perished, had not God visited them.

12. Turn ye - The prophet exhorts the Jews to hasten to Christ, who is the salvation and high tower of the church. Prisoners of hope - Captives, yet not without hope. Even today - In this day of lowest distress. Double - Twice as much good as thou hast suffered evil.

13. When I have bent Judah - In the day's when Judah shall be in my hand as a strong bow, already bent. Ephraim - Ephraim, the remainder of the ten tribes (which returned with Judah) shall be for a supply of warriors; as the quiver filled is a supply of arrows to the bow-man. O Greece - Against the Grecians or Ionians, who had oppressed the Jews, and bought them for slaves, against whom the Jews took arms, under the conduct of the Maccabees, to whom Christ made good much of this promise.

14. Shall be seen - Shall manifestly appear for them. His arrow - His judgments, swift, irresistible, and sudden. As the lightning - Which breaks forth with violence, and runs from east to west in a moment. The Lord God - Their God, the God of Israel, shall give the alarm to them, and sound the call to bring them together. Of the south - In which the mightiest whirlwinds are raised; some think the prophet alludes to the tempest at the delivery of the law.

15. Devour - Destroy their enemies. With sling-stones - As David did Goliath. Shall drink - In their festivals, when they offer sacrifices of thanksgiving for their victories. Make a noise - Shout

with shouts of triumph, as men do whose hearts are glad with success, and cheared with wine. Shall fill - With the blood of the sacrifices they offer.

16. As the flock - As a shepherd saves his flock. As the stones of a crown - Precious in my sight. As an ensign - Or trophy.

17. His goodness - Infinite goodness is the fountain of all the good done for this people. His beauty - How wonderful the beauty of Divine Providence in Israel's deliverance and salvation? Corn - Plentiful harvests shall make the young men chearful in sowing, reaping, and eating the fruits thereof. New wine - There shall be such plenty of wine, that all, young and old, shall be cheared with it.

## X

The Jews are directed to eye God in all events, ver. 1-4. To expect strength and success from him in all their struggles, ver. 5- 12.

1. The latter rain - This made plenty of all provision, and is proverbially used to signify a great blessing. Bright clouds - Bright through the lightnings which break from them. Them - The Jews.

2. Vanity - Their predictions were vain. They went - They went into captivity. Troubled - Oppressed and afflicted. No shepherd - No ecclesiastical or civil governors, that would faithfully do their duty.

3. The shepherds - Officers in the church and state. The goats - The officers among them, who were like he-goats, that push, and wound, and trample under foot the feebler cattle. Visited - In mercy. As his goodly horse - Hath given them strength and courage.

4. Out of him - From God. The corner - The prince or ruler, who is in a polity as a corner-stone in buildings. The nail - Which fastens the tents of war, or the timber together in a house. The battle bow - All warlike provision. Every oppressor - Or collector of tribute. It was from God that Nebuchadnezzar mightily prevailed, and opprest Israel; and it is from God also, that Judah grows up to such power, as to be able to cope with his adversaries, and to impose tribute on them.

6. Of Joseph - The remnant of the kingdom of Israel, the residue of the ten tribes. To place them - To settle them in their own land, and in their own cities.

7. Their children shall see - These blessings shall continue through your generations, to children that shall be born.

8. I will hiss - Though they are now scattered far off, I will call them as a shepherd, and they shall run with speed back to the flock. As they have increased - As they did of old time.

9. I will sow them - Their increase shall be like the increase of rich soil that hath much seed cast on it. The people - The Heathen. In far countries - Whithersoever they were driven. With their children - The children born to them shall live, and grow up with them. Turn again - To their city and country.

10. Place shall not be found - The land shall be too narrow for them.

11. And he passed through - The whole verse is an allusion to what God had done in the two famous deliverances of his people, bringing them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through

Jordan, and destroying the Egyptians, and delivering them out of Assyrian bondage, and in order thereto, destroying that kingdom.

12. Walk up and down - Shall manage all their affairs. In his name - By power and wisdom given from above, to the glory of our God, and our Redeemer.

## XI

A prediction of the final destruction of the Jews, ver. 1-6. The Messiah will rule them, ver. 7, 8. But at length, provoked by their contempt of him, give them up, ver. 9-17.

1. Open thy doors - That destruction of the Jewish church and nation, is here foretold in dark and figurative expressions, which our Lord, when the time was at hand, prophesied of very plainly. Lebanon - Lebanon, a great mountain boundary between Judea and its neighbours on the north, is here commanded to open its gates, its fortifications raised to secure the passages, which lead into Judea. That the fire - Fire kindled by the enemy in the houses and buildings in Judea, and in Lebanon itself. The cedars - Palaces built with cedars.

2. Fir-tree - Houses and towns built with firs. The cedar - Much less shall ye escape. Ye Oaks - Used in that country for building palaces, cities, towns, and fortresses. The forest - Jerusalem, compared to a forest, in regard of the many and tall houses in it. In short, all are called to cry, for the miseries that will come upon all. Come down - Is laid desolate.

3. Of the shepherds - The enemy having driven away their flocks and herds. Their glory - What was their honour. Of Jordan - The great forests on the banks of Jordan, where the young lions were wont to range.

4. My God - God the father speaks to Christ. Of the slaughter - Appointed to the slaughter. The Jews, during four hundred and fifty years, were a flock of slaughter to the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and afterwards the Romans.

5. Whose possessors - Governors. Not guilty - Think they do no ill. That sell them - For slaves. For l am rich - Profanely give God thanks, that they thrive by cruelty and oppression.

6. I will deliver - To rob, imprison, banish, or kill each other. Of his king - The Roman Caesar, whom the Jews had chosen to be so. The land - Their king and his armies shall destroy the land.

7. Bands - The beauty of grace and glory, the bands of love and peace.

9. Then - After that time of his patient feeding the flock, and cutting off the unfaithful shepherds. Cut off - By the sword or famine. The flesh - Either live to be besieged, 'till hunger makes the living eat the dead, or by seditions and bloody intestine quarrels, destroy each other.

10. Even beauty - Which was the beauty and glory of them, the covenant of God, with all the blessings of it. That I might break - Declare it null. Christ calls it his covenant, for he was the mediator of it.

11. Broken - The covenant was disannulled. That waited - Believed in him, and obeyed him. Knew - Saw, and owned God in all this.

12. And I said - Upon parting, Christ seems after the manner of men, to mind them of his claims for them, and desire them to reckon with him. If ye think good - He puts it to them, whether they

thought he deserved ought at their hands? So they - The rulers of the Jews, the high priest, chief priests, and pharisees. Weighed - Which was the manner of paying money in those days. Thirty pieces - Which amounts to thirty-seven shillings and six- pence, the value of the life of a slave, Exod. xxi, 32. This was fulfilled when they paid Judas Iscariot so much to betray Christ.

13. The Lord - God the Father. Cast it - As being so little, it would hardly purchase any thing but what was the cheapest among them. A goodly price - God upbraids the shepherds of his people, who prized the great Shepherd no higher. Cast them to the potter - Or rather, cast them into the house of the Lord for the potter; all which the Jewish rulers acted over. 14. Then - So soon as I saw what value they put upon me. I cut asunder - Christ did it really, the prophet did it in the type. Break - Declare it broken. The brother-hood - That friendship which had been among them. Judah - The two tribes, and the remnant of the ten tribes.

15. Take unto thee - O Zechariah, personate a shepherd quite different from him thou hast represented.

16. Who shall not visit - Who seeks not out those that are lost. The young one - Which are aptest to perish through weakness. Nor heal - But leaves it to die of its wounds. That stand still - Not able to go forward. Will eat - Feast on the fattest of the flock. Tear their claws - Tear off their skin unto the very nails; in brief, a sluggish, negligent, covetous, riotous, oppressive, and cruel government, is shadowed out by a foolish shepherd.

17. The idol shepherd - To them that are but the images of shepherds. That leaveth - Casts off the care of the flock. The sword - Of the enemy, shall break his strength and be-fool his counsels. Dried up - They that have gifts which qualify them to do good, if they do it not, they will be taken away. They that should have been workmen, but were slothful, and would do nothing, will justly have their arm dried up. And they that should have been watchmen, but were drowsy, will justly have their eye blinded.

## XII

The enemies of the church shall not prevail against her, ver. 1-6. God will strengthen the weakest of his people, ver. 7, 8. A spirit of prayer and repentance promised, ver. 9-14.

2. Jerusalem - That weak, unwalled city, and much more the church which is the antitype of Jerusalem. In the siege - Now when all this is in readiness, and no visible means of escape, then will God make them drink the wine of astonishment.

3. In that day - The day of the full accomplishment of this prophecy is a day known to the Lord. A burdensome stone - Too heavy for them, though many join together to remove it.

4. I will open mine eyes - I will watch over my people for good. This eye of God open upon his people, is his wise, powerful, gracious providence for them. With blindness - All their warriors in their consults shall have as little of foresight, as a blind man hath of sight.

5. The inhabitants of Jerusalem - Though but few, and poor, yet they shall be my strength. Not in their own power, but in the power of the Almighty Lord of all.

6. Like a hearth - A hearth on which fire is thoroughly kindled. In her own place - Not built as Nineveh, Babylon, or Rome, in some place near old cities, but in the very same place where old Jerusalem stood.

7. The tents - The unfenced places, the open country, the cottages, or tents. First - First the weaker are saved, next the stronger. The glory - That the illustrious house of David, and the glorious citizens of Jerusalem may not boast of their power, policy and courage.

8. As David - A mighty man of valour. The house of David - Those of the royal line shall be for prudence, and prowess in the conduct of the armies of Israel, most excellent; exprest here in an hyperbole. As the angel - Nay, like the angel of the Lord, like Christ who is captain of our salvation.

9. I will seek - I will purposely and effectually do it.

10. I will pour - This was fulfilled on Christ's exaltation, when he sent the Comforter to his disciples, it is daily performed to the children of God, and will be continually, 'till we are brought to be with Christ for ever. The house of David - The whole family of Christ, his house who was the seed of David, and who is called David, Ezek. xxxvii, 24. The spirit of grace - Which is fountain of all graces in us. Pierced - Every one of us by our sins pierced him, and many of the Jews literally. Mourn - They shall literally lament the crucifying of the Lord Jesus. In bitterness - True repentance will bitterly lament the sins which brought sorrows and shame upon our Lord.

11. In that day - When the Jews shall mourn for their sins, and for that great sin, crucifying the Lord of glory. A great mourning - A mourning exprest by the greatest the Jews ever were acquainted with, and which for its greatness grew into a proverb. The mourning for Josiah slain at Hadadrimmon, a town in the valley of Megiddo.

12. The house of Nathan - The royal family in both branches of it, Solomon's and Nathan's.

13. The house of Levi - The sacerdotal tribe were the most bitter persecutors of Christ, they hired the traitor, they sought witness; the high priest, (head of that family) condemned him to die, for all which they shall one day reckon with God, and therefore above other tribes they are particularly named as chief mourners for their cruelty to Christ.

## XIII

A promise of pardon, of reformation, and of the conviction and silencing of false prophets, ver. 1-6. A clear prediction of the sufferings of Christ, the destruction of the Jews, and the purifying of a remnant, ver. 7-9.

1. A fountain - The blood of Christ. Opened - The spouse is to Christ a fountain sealed, but Christ is to sinners a fountain opened. Inhabitants of Jerusalem - The inhabitants of Jerusalem are all to whom the gospel is preached. For uncleanness - For purging away all manner of sins and uncleannesses.

2. Cut off - I will utterly destroy idols and idolatry. The prophets - The false prophets. The unclean spirit - The devil who sets the false prophets to work.

3. Prophesy - Falsely. His father - His dearest friends. Shall thrust him through - That is, shall wound, shall chastise him with stripes that may leave their marks behind.

4. A rough garment - Such as the true prophets were wont to wear.

6. With which I was wounded - To recover me from ruining myself and others by imposture, see ver. 3.

7. O sword - Afflictions, persecutions, and the cross. My shepherd - Who is my faithful shepherd, and will lay down his life for my sheep. My fellow - This speaks Christ; man with us, and God with his father, God-man in one person. The shepherd - This great and good shepherd. Turn mine hand - God will turn his hand in favour, and for protection will keep the new, and weak disciples.

8. Two parts - Not precisely two, but the greater part shall die a temporal death, by the sword of Titus, or in eternal death under unbelief. The third - A remnant, the lesser part, shall escape or be preserved.

## XIV

The gates of hell threaten the church; but all issues well at last, ver. 1-7. The spreading of the church, ver. 8-16. The punishment of those that fought against Jerusalem, and that neglect to worship there, ver. 17-19. The increase and purity of the church, ver. 20, 21.

1. The day - Of vengeance, Joel ii, 1, 2, cometh, or will soon overtake you, O sinful, unthankful! bloody! Jews. Thy spoil - All thou hast, O, Jerusalem, shall become a prey to thine enemy.

2. All nations - The Roman who at that time had the rule over all the nations of that part of the world. The residue - That small number of the Jews who were spared by Titus. Shall not be cut off - Were not forbidden to dwell about the city.

3. Then - After he hath sufficiently punished the Jews. As when he fought - As in those days when he fought for his people.

4. Shall cleave - Sinai melted, at the presence of the God of the whole earth. Great valley - So rich shall be a plain access from the place of the feet of the Lord unto Jerusalem.

5. The valley of the mountains - A place provided of God for their safety. O Lord my God - As if it were said, though it will, O Lord, put us into fear; yet without such wonderful works we shall not see thy salvation; therefore, O Lord my God come, and bring thy holy ones with thee.

6. In that day - While God is fighting with the enemies of his church, the nations that fought against Jerusalem. Nor dark - There shall be some mercy to allay the bitterness of judgment, and some judgment with our mercy.

7. One day - One continued day, no setting of the sun to make it quite night: God will always act in order to the full salvation of his spiritual Jerusalem. Known unto the Lord - The Lord knows when it shall begin, and how, and when it shall end.

8. In that day - When the days of ignorance, and idolatry shall end. Living waters - The quickening, saving truths of the gospel, with all its ordinances in purity. From Jerusalem - The church of Christ, the true Jerusalem. The former sea - Or eastern sea. The hinder sea - Or western sea. In summer and in winter - Perpetually, without intermission, these waters shall never dry away, or lose their healing virtue.

9. In that day - All men shall agree in worshipping one God, in one way of spiritual worship, and hearty obedience.

10. All the land - The whole land of Judea, a type of the whole earth, shall be filled with the knowledge of God. As a plain - All high, uneven places, all rocky and barren grounds, shall be changed into fruitful vineyards. So the church of Christ shall be fruitful, humble and lovely. Geba - The north boundary of the land. Rimmon - The south boundary of Judea. Jerusalem - Which taken mystically, is the church of Christ, and by the repair of all to this Jerusalem, is shadowed out of the compleat building of the church on all sides, north, south, west and east. Lifted up - Raised out of the dust. Benjamin's gate - Benjamin's gate northeast, corner-gate northwest; Hananiel's tower south, wine-presses north; that is in brief, compleatly around the city.

11. And men - Many for number, eminent for worth. Utter destruction - There may be afflictions but no utter wasting of Jerusalem; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

13. A great tumult - Confusion. Shall rise up - From murmurs one against another they shall at last run into civil wars, and so destroy themselves, and revenge Jerusalem.

14. Judah - The Jews, and possibly Judas Maccabeus might be intended.

15. The horse - Those creatures which the enemy in the wars made use of, shall by the hand of God be suddenly and strangely destroyed.

16. That is left - That escapes the stroke. To worship - By a ceremonial usage which shadowed out a better worship, the prophet foretells the constant zeal of the converted Gentiles to worship the Lord. The feast of tabernacles - One solemn festival is by a figure, put for all the days consecrated to God for holy worship.

20. Shall there be - Written as it were on every common thing. Holiness unto the Lord - Their persons shall bear the dedicating inscription of holiness to the Lord, and by their study of holiness they shall make good their motto. The pots - Which were used in the kitchens of the temple, and were not accounted so sacred as the utensils near the sacrifices, and altar. The bowls - Which received the blood of the sacrifices, were esteemed more holy; so shall thy holiness in these days exceed the holiness of those former days.

21. Every pot - The utensils of private houses shall be all dedicated to God's service. That sacrifice - So the prophet expresses all religious affections, practice, and worship, which shall be as pleasing to God, as were the sacrifices of his people offered up with divine warrant and approbation. Seethe therein - That part of the sacrifice which pertaineth to the priests, and to the offerer to feast on. The Canaanite - Any of the accursed nation, or one who makes merchandise of religion. But all shall know that the Lord hath the greatest pleasure in upright, and sincere love and holiness.

## NOTES ON THE BOOK OF MALACHI

THO' Malachi be the last of the prophets, and in him prophecy ceased: yet the spirit of prophecy shines as clear, as strong, as bright, in him, as in any that went before. The Jews call him the seal of prophecy, because in him the succession of prophets came to a period: God wisely ordering, that prophecy should cease, some ages before the Messiah came, that he might appear the more

conspicuous, and be the more welcome. Haggai and Zechariah were sent to reprove the people, for delaying to build the temple: Malachi to reprove them for their neglect of it, now it was built, and for their profanation of the temple-service. And the sins he reproves, are those complained of by Nehemiah, with whom he is supposed to have been cotemporary. And now prophecy was to cease, he speaks more clearly of the Messiah, than any other of the prophets had done.

## I

The prophet reproves the Jews for their ingratitude to God, ver. 1-5. For their neglect of his institutions, ver. 6-14.

2. Loved you - Both personally considered and relatively, in progenitors. Us - Who have been captives, and groaned under it all our days 'till of late. Was not Esau - Did not one father beget them, and one mother bear them? I loved Jacob - I preferred him to the birthright, and this of free love. I loved his person, and his posterity.

3. I hated - I loved not Esau's posterity as I loved Jacob's. His heritage - Mount Seir with the neighbouring mountains. Waste - By Nebuchadnezzar's arms five years after the sacking of Jerusalem, and whereas Jacob's captivity returned, and their cities were rebuilt, Esau's never were. The dragons - Creatures which delight in desolate places, by which the utter desolation of Esau is signified.

4. Throw down - So he did in the times of the Maccabees. The border of wickedness - They will be a most wicked people, and so notorious, that all their neighbours shall brand them for it. Hath indignation - They will so highly provoke God, that his indignation will be kindled against them for ever. 5. From the border of Israel - Let Israel from all his borders give God praise.

6. O priests - Had undutifulness been found among the ignorant people, it might have been a little excusable. But you, O priests, whose business is to know me, have like Eli's sons despised me yourselves, and made others do so too.

7. Bread - Either the meal-offerings, or rather in a more large sense, all sacrifices and oblations. Ye say - Perhaps in words; at least your deeds speak your thoughts. The table - This comprehends all that was offered to God.

8. Evil - Is it not against the express command of God.

9. I pray you - O priests. Beseech - Intercede with God for his sinful people. This - This contempt of God.

11. Incense - A law term for a gospel duty, and under this type are contained the prayers and praises, nay, the whole gospel-worship. A pure offering - Both sincere, in opposition to hypocrisy, and holy, in opposition to impurity, superstition and idolatry.

12. But ye - O priests! And the people by your examples. Ye say - By your deportment. Is polluted - Not a sacred thing. His meat - Either the meat which fell to the priest's share, or the portion which was laid upon the altar.

13. What a weariness - What a toil and drudgery to observe every point of the law. This - With such minds snuffing at my service, and with such sacrifices, unfit for mine altar.

14. The deceiver - The hypocrite that would seem to offer a sacrifice of the best, but puts God off with the worst. A male - A perfect male, such as God requireth.

## II

The priests reproved for profaning the holy things of God, ver. 1-9. The priests and people for various abuses with regard to marriage, ver. 10-17.

2. I have cursed them - I have already sent out the curse, and it is in part upon you.

3. I will corrupt - I will take away the prolific virtue and strength of it, that it shall bring forth no fruit. Spread dung - It is an expression of the greatest contempt. Of your solemn feasts - Your most solemn days and feasts, shall be as loathsome to me as dung, and shall make you, who offer them as unclean, and loathsome, as if I had thrown the dung of those sacrifices into your faces. Take you away - You shall be taken away with it, removed as equally unclean with the dung itself, equally fit to be cast out to the dunghill.

4. My covenant - If you will not confirm, and keep Levi's covenant among you, I will make it firm on my part, by punishing the violators of it.

5. With him - With Levi. Peace - Of long life, and prosperous, assured to the Levites in their due ministrations before God. Before my name - Behaved himself with reverence before God.

6. Was in his mouth - He taught to the people. Aaron, Eleazar, Phineas, every one of those priests or Levites, in what age soever they lived; who feared God, and were humble. Iniquity is not found - He judged not with respect of persons, or for bribes. He walked - His whole life was a continual walking with God; he lived with God, and to him. In peace - With God, and it was his aim to live peaceably with others.

7. Should keep knowledge - It is this that their office binds them to; it is the duty of all God's people to know his law, but the priest's duty to know it more than others. And they - The people.

8. But ye - Priests. Stumble at the law - By your false expositions of it. Have corrupted - You have violated it, have contradicted the great intentions of it, and done what in you lay, to defeat them.

9. Have been partial - You have perverted the law to please great men, or to serve some unworthy design. When we inquire into "the reasons of the contempt of the clergy," ought we to forget this?

10. One father - Abraham, or Jacob, with whom God made the covenant by which their posterity were made a peculiar people. Created us - The prophet speaks of that great and gracious work of God, creating them to be a chosen people. And so we Christians are created in Christ Jesus.

11. Hath profaned - Profanely violated the law, confining Israel to marry within themselves, and not to endanger themselves, by contracting affinity with idolaters. Which he loved - Which he, Judah, once loved. The daughter - Idolatresses. Even tho' they had wives before, whom they now cast off.

12. The master and the scholar - There shall be left neither any to teach nor any to learn. Him that offereth - The priests.

13. And this - Beside that first fault, you have committed another, you misuse, and afflict your Jewish wives, whom alone you should have cherished. With tears - Your despised wives fly to the temple, weep and cry to God for redress. With weeping - This is added to shew the abundance of their tears. He - The Lord.

14. The wife of thy covenant - To whom thou art so firmly bound, that while she continues faithful, thou canst not be loosed.

15. One - But one man, and one woman. Yet - Yet he could have made more. Wherefore one - One couple, and no more. A godly seed - A holy seed born to God in chaste wedlock, and bred as they were born, in the fear of God. Take heed - Keep your heart from wandering after strange wives.

16. Putting away - Divorce, such as these petulant Jews used to make way for some new wives, which God hates as much as putting away.

17. Your words - Your perverse reasoning, and impious quarrellings against God. Is good - This wicked inference they drew, from their prosperity in the world. He delighteth in them - As appears (say these atheists) by his prospering them. Where is the God of judgment - If he is there, judging and governing the world, why does he not punish these men?

## III

A promise of the coming of the Messiah, and of his fore- runner, ver. 1-6. A reproof of the Jews, and charge to amend, ver. 7-12. A description of the wicked, ver. 13-15. And of the righteous, ver. 16-18.

1. I - The Messiah. My messenger - John the Baptist. The Lord - The Messiah. Whom ye seek - Whom ye, who truly fear God, long and wait for. Suddenly come - After the coming of his fore-runner. To his temple - That which was the second temple at Jerusalem, lately built by Zerubbabel and Joshua. The messenger - The angel of the covenant, the Messiah, in whose blood the covenant between God and man was confirmed. Whom ye delight in - You Jews, among whom, few there are, who do not please themselves to think of his coming, tho' from various motives.

2. Abide - Who shall be able to stand under the weight of those crosses which in that day, will fall on all sorts of men? The day - This day was from his preaching, 'till the utter destruction of Jerusalem, about seventy years after the birth of Christ. A refiner's fire - Some are like metals, which nothing but a fierce fire can purge, such fire shall the troubles of these days be. Fuller's soap - As boiling waters, into which, spotted cloaths are thrown, and as the rubbing of them with soap; so that day will prove to all, a day of great trial, to purge and refine.

3. He shall fit - As resolved to attend his work and finish it. He shall purify - The effect of this fiery trial, shall be the thorough cleansing of the persons that are to pass through it. Sons of Levi - Either the Jewish Levites, or all Christians, who are made priests unto God. In righteousness - That they may offer themselves, their souls and bodies to God, in righteousness and true holiness.

4. The offerings - The services and duties of the whole Christian church. Pleasant - Well pleasing to him.

5. I will come near - You have spoken as if you thought I was far off, but you shall see I am near. To you - O Jews, not those very persons Malachi preached to, but those who were living when the Messiah came.

6. I change not - I have an unchangeable hatred to sin: and my long suffering also changeth not, therefore you are not consumed in your sins. Not consumed - God is the same in his wisdom to order the rewards of good and bad in the fittest season, therefore neither the one nor the other are consumed, but preserved to the season appointed of God.

7. From mine ordinances - Which either directed my worship, or your dealings one with another.

9. Cursed with a curse - Are greatly cursed.

10. Bring ye - Make a punctual and full payment of all tithes; about this did Nehemiah contend with the rulers, and made them comply, and then all Judah obeyed and did the like, Nehem xiii, 10-13. To the store-house - This was one or more large rooms, built on purpose for this use. That there may be meat - For the priests and Levites to live upon. Prove me - Make the experiment. The windows of heaven - A kind of proverbial speech, to express great abundance. A blessing - First of rain to water the earth, next a blessing of corn, wine and oil, and all other products of the earth.

11. The devourer - All kind of devourers, the locusts, the canker- worm, and the caterpillar, which though they are in incredible multitudes, yet a rebuke from God will check them all at once, as if they were but one. For your sakes - For your good. Your vine - Your vine shall carry their fruit 'till they are fully ripe.

12. All nations - All that are about you. A delightsome land - The revival of religion in a land, will make it delight-some, both to God, and to all good men.

15. And now - You say, we see before our eyes, that the proud contemners of God and his law, are the flourishing ones. Delivered - Escape all punishment.

16. Then - When contempt of God was grown so high. That feared the Lord - Those that were truly religious. Spake often - Conversed together the more frequently. And a book - All this is spoken after the manner of men. For them - On their behalf.

17. Make up my jewels - This shall be fully made good in the last great day, and in heaven to eternal ages. I will spare them - In the mean time they shall be spared, pitied, preserved, and loved.

18. Ye - Ye contemners of God and religion, return to your reason, forced by the convincing power of God's judgments. Discern - Clearly see the happiness of the righteous, and your own misery, who perish in your wickedness.

## IV

The approaching misery of the wicked, and happiness of the righteous, ver. 1-3. A direction to keep to the law, and to expect Elijah, that is, John the Baptist, the fore-runner of the Messiah, ver. 4-6.

1. Cometh - Tho' it be at a distance from you, yet it is coming and will overtake you and overwhelm you too. As an oven - The refiner's fire, chap. iii, 2, is now represented as a fire, burning more dreadfully, as it did indeed when Jerusalem and the temple were on fire, when the fire raged

every where, but most fiercely where the arched roofs made it double itself, and infold flames with flames. And this may well be an emblem of the day of judgment.

2. The sun of righteousness - Christ, who is fitly compared to the sun, being the fountain of light, and vital heat to his church. And of mercy and benignity; for the Hebrew word imports both. With healing - His beams shall bring health and strength, with delight and joy, safety and security. Go forth - Go out of Jerusalem, before the fatal siege. Grow up - In strength, vigour and spiritual stature. Of the stall - Where they are safe guarded and well ordered.

3. Tread down the wicked - When believers by faith overcome the world, when they suppress their corrupt appetites and passions, and when the God of peace bruises Satan under their feet, then they indeed tread down the wicked.

4. Remember - Now take leave of prophecy, for you shall have no more 'till the great prophet,' till Shiloh come, but attend ye diligently to the law of Moses. For all Israel - So long as they should be a people and church. Statutes and judgments - Be not partial; statutes and judgments, that is, the whole law must you attend to, and remember it as God requires.

5. Behold I will send - Though the spirit of prophecy cease for four hundred years, yet at the expiring of those years, you shall have one sent, as great as Elijah. Elijah - Namely John the Baptist, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah, Luke i, 17, and therefore bears his name. Before - That is, immediately before; so he was born six months before Christ, and began his preaching a few years before Christ began to exercise his publick office. The great and dreadful day of the Lord - This literally refers to the times of vengeance upon the Jews, from the death of Christ to the final desolation of the city and temple, and by accommodation, to the end of the world.

6. And he - John the Baptist. Shall turn the heart - There were at this time many great and unnatural divisions among the Jews, in which fathers studied mischief to their own children. Of the children - Undutiful children estranged from their fathers. With a curse - Which ends in utter destruction; leaving Jerusalem a desolate heap, and a perpetual monument of God's displeasure. Some observe, that the last word of the Old Testament is a curse: whereas the New Testament ends with a blessing, yea, the choicest of blessings, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all! Amen. Dec. 24, 1766.

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